

Nine dead after Indonesian capital hit by New Year flooding (Update)

January 1 2020



A woman crosses a flooded area in an inflated inner-tube in Bekasi, near Jakarta

Nine people died after Indonesia's capital was hit by its deadliest flooding in years, authorities said Wednesday, as torrential rains on New Year's Eve left vast swathes of the megalopolis submerged.

Thousands were evacuated to temporary shelters as electricity was switched off in scores of waterlogged neighbourhoods across greater Jakarta, home to about 30 million people, with some train lines and one of the city's airports also shut.

Indonesia's National Disaster Mitigation Agency called on residents to leave flood-hit areas.

"The first priority is saving lives," said agency head Doni Monardo.

A 16-year-old was electrocuted by a power line, while three more people died of hypothermia, according to the disaster agency.

"My son's body was covered with newspaper when my two other children passed by," said Fadrid, who identified himself as the dead teen's father.

"People asked them whether they knew the victim. If they hadn't been passing by, we wouldn't have known my son had been killed," he told AFP.

Among the victims was an elderly couple trapped inside their home in a district where floodwaters reached as high as four metres (13 feet) after a river burst its banks.

Another victim drowned while four people were killed after the Tuesday evening downpour triggered landslides in the city's outskirts.



A family evacuates their home after heavy rain caused widespread flooding in Jakarta

"We have shut down power (in many areas) to avoid more electrical shocks," Ikhsan Asaad, an official at state firm PLN, told AFP.

Asaad said he could not estimate how many residents had been affected by the power shutdown.

"We're currently focusing on taking measures to ensure people's safety," he added.

Angelina Widiyanti was among scores of residents whose houses were flooded with their possessions ruined by the disaster.

"We've had flooding several times before but it was never this high," she said from her home, where the power had been cut.

"We weren't prepared for this."

Authorities said about 19,000 people were evacuated, but that figure did not include residents in Jakarta's satellite cities.

"We're evacuating people right now," Jakarta governor Anies Baswedan told reporters.

"Everyone living near rivers should anticipate (more) flooding," he added.



People walk past a car stuck in floodwaters in Jakarta



Jakarta residents hit by flooding took shelter from heavy rain under flyovers



A horse pulls a carriage through a flooded road in Jakarta

Images from across the region showed waterlogged homes and cars submerged in muddy floodwaters, while some people took to paddling in small rubber lifeboats or tyre inner-tubes to get around.

The disaster marked Jakarta's worst flooding since 2013 when several dozen people were killed when the city was inundated by monsoon rains.

Jakarta is regularly hit by floods during Indonesia's rainy season, which started in late November.

On Wednesday, service at Halim Perdanakusuma airport, which handles

commercial and military planes, was temporarily shut due to severe flooding on its runways, according to the transport ministry.

Many flights were transferred to Jakarta's main Soekarno–Hatta International Airport.

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