

Storm Eta death tolls rise in Mexico, Honduras

November 8 2020



A man wades through water flooding the road from El Progreso to La Lima n Honduras

Torrential rain and a bitter cold front linked to storm system Eta have claimed at least 20 lives in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas,

officials said Saturday.

And authorities in Honduras said flooding in the north and northwest caused by torrential downpours had now left 23 people dead after another 10 people lost their lives on Friday.

The government of Chiapas—which borders Guatemala, where about 150 people are dead or missing in the wake of the storm—said 10 bodies were found in the river in the town of Chenalho.

Early reports indicated they had been swept away by powerful currents.

Eight other people died in the cities of El Bosque and La Grandeza, the government said. Another person was washed away by a stream in Oxchuc, while a youth died in Mitontic.

The storm caused landslides that blocked roads in at least 20 locations in Chiapas, a poor region with a majority indigenous population.

The government said five rivers had overflowed their banks, and flooding cut off three towns.

The United States and Guatemala have sent helicopters to Honduras to help with a [rescue mission](#) that involves 50,000 emergency services workers, authorities said.

More than 16,000 people have been rescued by boat and helicopter from regions ravaged by Eta, government disaster relief agency the Permanent Contingencies Committee said.

Honduras has declared a "zero zone" in the northern Sula Valley—the largest alluvial valley in the country.

It is where the second largest city in Honduras, San Pedro Sula, is located.

The Ulua, Chamelecon and Humuya rivers burst their banks, flooding the valley.

Authorities said that more than 1.7 million people and over one million homes in the country of 9.5 million have been affected.

Central America has been badly hit since Eta made landfall in Nicaragua on Tuesday as a powerful hurricane before losing strength.

Authorities in Panama reported 17 deaths and 68 people missing, Security Minister Juan Pino said.

Cuba is bracing for impact, expected on Sunday, as Eta approaches. It has gained strength from a [tropical depression](#) to a [tropical storm](#).

Havana has placed provinces in the center of the island nation on alert.

The Civil Defense agency said on Saturday it expected "strong and intense" rainfall over "large parts" of the archipelago.

The meteorological institute said Eta was packing winds of up to 50 miles (80 kilometers) an hour.

Authorities have suspended bus and train services and begun evacuating people from vulnerable areas.

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