

# New cyclone barrels toward disaster-struck Indonesia

April 9 2021

---



Joko Widodo arrived in hard-hit Lembata island Friday morning

A new cyclone was barreling toward Indonesia and threatened to spark more floods and landslides, authorities warned Friday, as the archipelago

reeled from a storm that killed more than 200 people, including victims in neighbouring East Timor.

Tropical cyclone Odette was set to dump torrential rains on south Sumatra and other parts of the country including central Java and holiday island Bali.

While the new storm was not expected to be as destructive as cyclone Seroja, which pounded eastern Indonesia this week, the national weather agency said it had the potential to do serious damage.

"Everybody should remain alert for the potential of strong winds and heavy rains... as well as floods and landslides," said weather agency head Dwikorita Karnawati.

Cyclone Seroja, one of the most powerful storms to hit the region in years, turned [small communities](#) into wastelands of mud and uprooted trees, sending thousands fleeing to shelters amid widespread blackouts.

The threat of a new storm came as President Joko Widodo arrived in hard-hit Lembata island Friday.

"I would like to express deepest condolences to the victims," the leader, better known as Jokowi, said from the [disaster zone](#).

"I hope their souls will be accepted by God."

His visit came as the death toll from the floods-and-landslide disaster rose again.

At least 165 people have been listed as dead in Indonesia.



Torrential rains from Tropical Cyclone Seroja turned small communities into wastelands of mud and uprooted trees

Another 42 were killed in East Timor—a nation of 1.3 million sandwiched between Indonesia and Australia that is officially known as Timor-Leste.

More than 50 people are still missing in the two Southeast Asian nations, and disaster agency officials are still searching mountains of debris for bodies.

With thousands filling evacuation centres, authorities were scrambling to avoid a spread of COVID-19, and treat children affected by the disaster.

"We are starting to provide counselling services for traumatised kids," said Josef Nae Soi, vice governor of disaster epicentre East Nusa Tenggara province.

Indonesian cargo planes and navy ships packed with aid have arrived in the region with more than 4,000 [military personnel](#) sent to help in the relief effort.

A hospital ship was also en route to help treat survivors in the region, where local medical clinics have been overwhelmed.

More than 20,000 people have been evacuated from disaster-struck communities and many have been left homeless by the storm.

The cyclone is now headed for Australia, where authorities urged holidaymakers to evacuate a stretch of the country's [west coast](#) before it makes landfall late Sunday or early Monday.

Fatal landslides and flash floods are common across the Indonesian archipelago during the rainy season, with deforestation often the cause, environmentalists say.

The disaster agency has estimated that 125 million Indonesians—nearly half of the country's population—live in areas at risk of landslides.

© 2021 AFP

Citation: New cyclone barrels toward disaster-struck Indonesia (2021, April 9) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-04-cyclone-barrels-disaster-struck-indonesia.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.