

Flash floods in Bosnia prompt evacuations, power outages

November 6 2021, by Sabina Niksic



Rescuers from Bosnia's mountain rescue evacuate residents from their flooded homes in the village of Rajlovac, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo

Heavy rain caused severe flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting

evacuations, causing power outages in most of the capital, closing a key facility for oxygen used for COVID-19 patients and submerging roads in some parts of the Balkan country on Friday.

The only certified medicinal oxygen filling plant in Bosnia, part of Germany's Messer Group, was among workplaces and homes in the suburbs of Sarajevo that had to be evacuated after being overrun by fast-moving [flood water](#).

Avdo Delic, general manager of Messer's Bosnia branch, said the plant was completely submerged, and voiced concern that hospitals around the country treating COVID-19 patients might run out of medicinal oxygen cylinders unless the company's operations are quickly restored at alternative locations.

"We could not save the equipment, we had to save lives," Delic said.

"Water came fast like a tsunami and it is fortunate that the Civil Protection was there with rescue boats," he added.

Bosnia is seeing an increase of COVID-19 hospitalizations amid a recent surge of the virus. The country of 3.5 million has one of the lowest vaccination rates in Europe at under 20%. On Friday, it reported some 1,100 new daily infections and 32 deaths.

So far, Bosnia has confirmed more than 250,000 infections and over 11,000 deaths, one of the highest death rates in Europe per capita.



Rescuers from Bosnia's mountain rescue services help an elderly lady down the stairs before evacuating her from her home in the flooded village of Ahatovici, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo

Hundreds of homes in the Sarajevo suburbs, along the rivers Bosnia, Tilava and Zeljeznica, and in the southwest part of the country, around the town of Konjic, had to be evacuated under unrelenting heavy downpours.

"Everything is under water, I just spoke with a friend who told me he cannot get out of his house because the water came up to the first floor," said Salih Ramadani while walking away from his flooded home in the

Sarajevo suburb of Otes.

"The situation is bad and we do not expect it to improve soon," said Danis Memagic, a firefighter coordinating evacuations in the area.

Most parts of Sarajevo were left for hours without [electric power](#) due to the flooding of one of the main substations on the outskirts of the city. The power transmission company, Elektroprijenos, said the heavy rain was hindering attempts to get the power rerouted. By evening, electricity was back in most of the city.



Rescuers from Bosnia's mountain rescue services drag a boat with people rescued from their homes in the village of Ahatovici, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday.

Credit: AP Photo



A man sits on sandbags in the flooded village of Rajlovac, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday.
Credit: AP Photo



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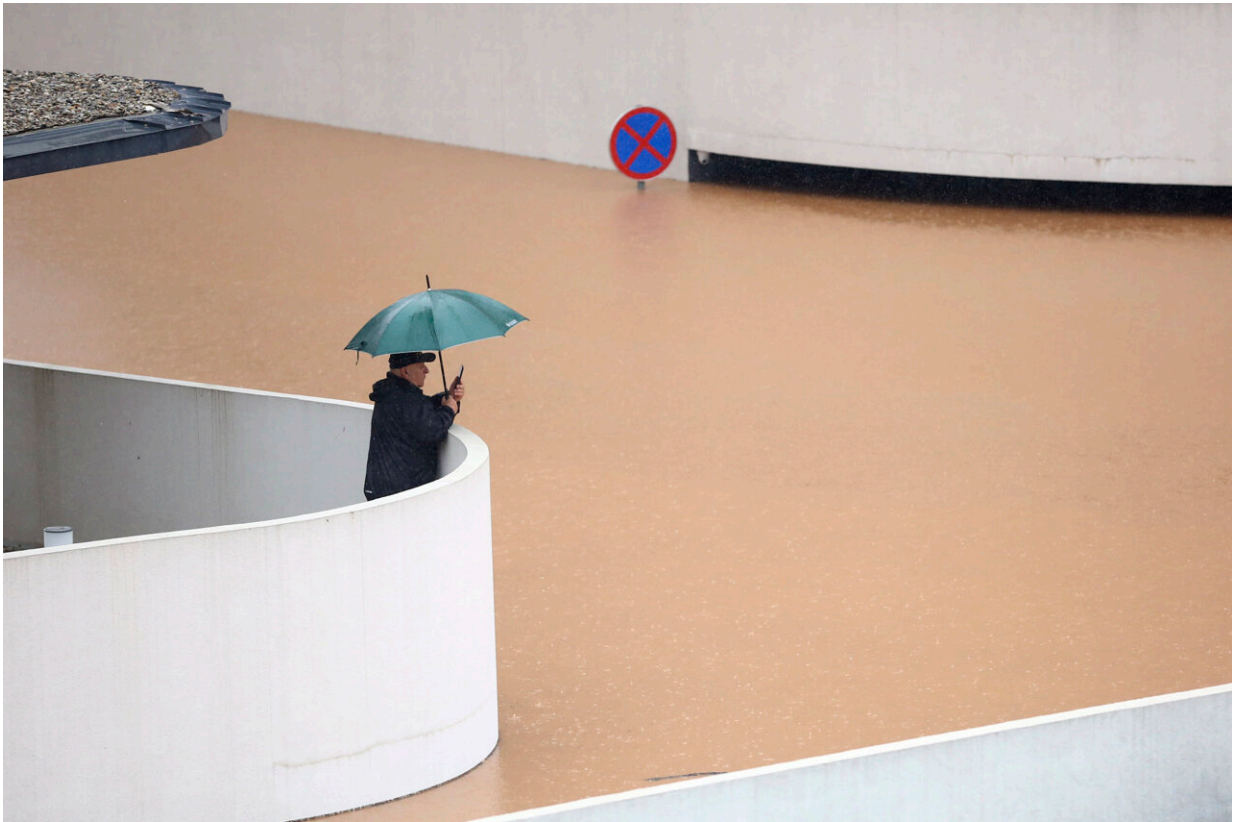
A vehicle is partially submerged in the flooded village of Rajlovac, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



Rescuers from Bosnia's mountain rescue services drag a boat while looking for people to be rescued from their homes in the village of Ahatovici, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



Police officers look at an overflowing river threatening buildings in Vojkovići near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Homes were flooded around Sarajevo while local roads were submerged in the southwest of the country, prompting some schools to cancel classes. Credit: AP Photo



A man uses his phone on a balcony overlooking a flooded street in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



Parts of residential areas are submerged in high water in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



Rescuers from Bosnia's mountain rescue services help an elderly lady down the stairs before evacuating her from her home in the flooded village of Ahatovici, near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



A dog stands in a flooded yard in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



A wooden cross brought by overflowing river is stuck in the railing of a bridge in Butmir near Sarajevo, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



A man wades through a flooded street as a car drives by in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday. Credit: AP Photo



Men protect a house on a flooded street in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday.
Credit: AP Photo



A car is submerged in a flooded street in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday.
Credit: AP Photo



Men wade through a flooded street in the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, Bosnia, Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Heavy rain has caused flash flooding in Bosnia, prompting evacuations and submerging local roads in some parts of the country on Friday.
Credit: AP Photo

Footage of the floods in Vojkovici, outside Sarajevo, showed a local gas station and motel sitting precariously close to the fast-flowing, swollen and muddy Zeljava river which had eaten away its banks.

Rising rivers flooded many local roads around Bosnia, forcing some schools to cancel classes.

Rain started late on Thursday and forecasts say it will continue to fall until Sunday, raising fears of a repeat of record flooding that affected

about a third of the population in 2014.

It followed days of unseasonably warm weather with temperatures over 20 degrees Celsius.

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