

Five dead, 40,000 evacuated as monsoon floods hit Myanmar

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Floods and landslides have killed five people and displaced tens of thousands in Myanmar.

Floods and landslides caused by monsoon rains have killed five people and forced the evacuation of around 40,000 others in Myanmar, officials

said Friday.

Footage from Rakhine state, which was ravaged in May by Cyclone Mocha, showed large areas of villages and farmland submerged by murky, yellow-brown waters.

Myanmar is hit by [heavy rains](#) every year around this time, but [extreme weather events](#) have struck around the globe in recent weeks, events scientists say are made worse by climate change.

In Bago, northeast of Yangon, some residents evacuated early while others were caught off guard by the rapidly rising [water](#).

"There are floods every year in Bago but this one is the worst. Normally, the water is around knee- or thigh-deep during the [rainy season](#)," Bago resident Soe Min Aung, 23, told AFP, adding that his family had scrambled to buy a boat.

"Some families moved to a monastery but others stayed because they didn't think the water would be too high. In some quarters, the water level is higher than two times my height."

More than 870 people were crammed into a Bago monastery on Friday night and were receiving food from monks and donated supplies.

"We arranged spaces for them to stay," said local official Khin Maung.

Min Thaw, 66, said the ground floor of his two-storey house was inundated with water and the family had chosen to stay upstairs.

"I think it is the first heavy flood in seven or eight years in Bago," he said.

Evacuations

Five people have been killed, said Lay Shwe Zin Oo, director of Myanmar's [social welfare](#), relief and resettlement ministry, and the number of people evacuated across the country was expected to top 40,000 on Friday.

"Our department is giving necessary things for households evacuated to temporary camps," she told AFP.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated around 50,000 Myanmar people had been affected by heavy monsoon rainfall and rising rivers and creeks since the beginning of August.

"There has been major damage to monsoon paddy crops in Mon and Kayin (states)," the agency said in a statement, adding that water levels in the Bago, Bilin and Salween rivers were now receding.

Flooding began in late July and has affected nine of the country's states and regions, including Rakhine, Kachin, Karen, Mon and Chin.

In Karen state, a landslide cut off an important highway to a town on the border with Thailand, with the country's ruling junta saying it could take a month to build a temporary bridge.

Myanmar is in the grip of a bloody civil conflict between the junta, which seized power in a February 2021 coup, and civilian militias opposed to its rule.

According to a local monitoring group, more than 3,800 people have been killed since the coup, a figure the junta puts at 5,000.

The United Nations sharply criticized the junta for its handling of the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha, which killed at least 148 people and destroyed many homes.

It condemned authorities' refusal to allow aid workers to access the region, prompting [state media](#) to accuse the world body of "arrogance, ignorance and self-interest".

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