

Dozens buried, three killed in southwest China landslide

January 22 2024, by Matthew WALSH

China landslide



AFP 

Map of China locating Zhenxiong County in southwestern Yunnan province where dozens of people were buried in a landslide on Monday.

Dozens of people were buried and three were confirmed killed when a

landslide struck a remote and mountainous part of southwestern China on Monday.

The pre-dawn landslide buried 18 homes and sparked the evacuation of more than 200 people when it struck in Zhenxiong County, Yunnan province, [state media](#) said.

Three people are confirmed dead and rescuers have saved four, according to a report by state broadcaster CCTV just before 4:00 pm (0900 GMT).

Two hundred [rescue workers](#) have been dispatched as well as dozens of fire engines and other equipment, CCTV said.

One local told the state-run Beijing News outlet that she was asleep when the disaster hit and that parts of her ceiling had fallen onto her head.

"At the time I thought it was an earthquake, but later I knew it was the hillslope collapsing," another resident told the outlet.

Both were quoted under pseudonyms.

Footage shared on [social media](#) by a local broadcaster showed emergency workers in orange jumpsuits and helmets forming ranks outside a fire station as snowflakes whirled through the air.

Other images showed rescuers picking through towering piles of collapsed masonry in which a few personal belongings could be seen.

Chinese President Xi Jinping ordered "all-out" rescue efforts, CCTV reported.

Xi "demanded that rescue forces are organized quickly... and efforts

made to reduce casualties as far as possible," the broadcaster reported him as saying.

He added that it was "necessary to properly handle the work of comforting the families of the deceased and resettling affected people".

CCTV broadcast an image it said showed a firefighter working to pull a trapped villager from inside a home affected by the disaster.

The local village head declined to speak about the landslide when contacted by phone, telling AFP he was "too busy".

Landslides common

Landslides are common in Yunnan, a far-flung and largely impoverished region of China where steep mountain ranges butt against the Himalayan plateau.

Monday's disaster occurred in a [rural area](#) surrounded by towering peaks dusted with snow, state media footage showed.

Temperatures in Zhenxiong hovered at around minus four degrees Celsius (24.8 degrees Fahrenheit) on Monday morning, weather data showed.

There was no immediate official explanation for what may have caused the landslide.

Efforts to establish what happened are underway, Xinhua reported.

China has experienced a string of natural disasters in recent months, some following extreme weather events such as sudden, heavy downpours.

In September, rainstorms in the southern region of Guangxi triggered a mountain landslide that killed at least seven people, according to media reports.

Heavy rains sparked a similar disaster near the northern city of Xi'an in August, causing the deaths of more than 20 people.

And in June, a [landslide](#) in southwestern Sichuan province—also remote and mountainous—killed 19 people.

© 2024 AFP

Citation: Dozens buried, three killed in southwest China landslide (2024, January 22) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-01-dozens-southwest-china-landslide.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.