

# Flash floods across China kill at least 20, dozens missing

July 21 2024, by Sébastien RICCI

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Large portions of China have been battered by heavy rains that have caused flooding and significant damage.

Flash floods in northern and southwest China have killed at least 20 people and left dozens missing, state media said Saturday, after a week

of deadly downpours across the country.

Several vehicles in northwestern Shaanxi province plunged into a swollen river late Friday after a bridge collapsed, with at least 12 people killed and over 30 missing, state news agency Xinhua reported.

Initial investigations indicated that 17 cars and eight trucks had fallen into the river in the city of Shangluo, Xinhua said.

Images on state television showed a partially submerged section of the bridge with the river rushing over it.

One witness told local media that he had approached the bridge but that other drivers started "yelling at me to brake and stop the car".

"A truck in front of me didn't stop" and plunged into the water, the witness, surnamed Meng, said.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged "all-out rescue and [relief efforts](#)" to find those still missing, Xinhua said.

Meanwhile, in southwestern Sichuan province more than 30 people were reported missing Saturday after a violent thunderstorm caused flash flooding overnight in the town of Ya'an, according to Xinhua.

Eight bodies had been recovered as of Saturday evening, while four people were rescued without serious injuries, it added.

On Friday, state media had reported at least five people dead and eight missing after the rains sparked flooding and mudslides in Shaanxi's Baoji city.

State television broadcast images of neighborhoods completely flooded

by [muddy water](#), with excavators and residents attempting to clear the damage.

## Extreme weather

The semi-desert province of Gansu, which neighbors Shaanxi, and Henan in central China were also hit by heavy rains this week.

In Henan's Nanyang city, the equivalent of a year's worth of rain fell at the start of the week, CCTV said.

And in Sichuan province, two people were reported killed and seven others missing Friday after heavy rain triggered landslides, Xinhua said.

China is enduring a summer of [extreme weather](#), with heavy rains across the east and south coming as much of the north has sweltered under successive heat waves.

Climate change, which scientists say is exacerbated by [greenhouse gas emissions](#), is making such extreme weather phenomena more frequent and more intense.

In May, a highway in southern China collapsed after days of rain, leaving 48 dead.

This month, a tornado passed through a town in eastern China, killing one, injuring 79 and causing major damage.

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