

1405

Chinese fleet commander Zheng He sets sail to the Spice Islands on his first major expedition, leading 208 vessels, including 62 treasure ships with 27,800 sailors



1533

Pope Clement VII excommunicates England's King Henry VIII

1818

English poet John Keats writes "In the Cottage Where Burns is Born," "Lines Written in the Highlands," and "Gadfly"

1995

More than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys are massacred by Bosnian Serbs after they overrun the UN "safe haven" of Srebrenica on directive of Radovan Karadžić

Foreigners among 12 dead in Spanish wildfires

Fast-moving wildfire traps residents and tourists as search teams battle flames in southern Spain

● Twenty-three people remain missing

● Victims trapped while fleeing

● Hundreds evacuated from area

● Fire scorches 3,200 hectares

AFP | Madrid

A fast-moving wildfire that has killed at least 12 people was tearing through a tourist area in southern Spain yesterday after trapping people in burning vehicles and as they tried to flee on foot.

The authorities said many of the victims were believed to be foreigners as the fire, which started on Thursday in an area of steep ravines, destroyed forests and swathes of scrubland in the Los Gallardos area of Andalusia.

The death toll from one of Spain's deadliest wildfires rose by one to 12, said the head of the Andalusia regional government, Juan Manuel Moreno Bonilla.

He added that 23 people were



firefighters working on a wildfire that killed 11 near Bedar, in Los Gallardos district, in Almeria Province

missing, up from 19 previously. DNA testing would be needed to identify the victims as they are "badly burnt and unrecognisable", he added.

Spain has been sweltering in extreme heat, creating tinderbox conditions favourable for the rapid spread of wildfires.

Scientists agree that climate change caused by humans burning fossil fuels is making extreme weather events such as heatwaves more likely and more

intense.

Fuelled by gusts of around 50 kilometres (30 miles) per hour, the blaze moved at "an extraordinary pace", advancing 15 kilometres in just two hours, Moreno said.

The authorities said residents of the whitewashed village of Bedar had been told to either take a recommended evacuation route, or stay in their homes given that the fire was so close.

The failure of some residents

to follow these recommendations "may have led to the tragic loss of life in some cases", Moreno said.

Located about 15 kilometres (nine miles) from Spain's Mediterranean coast, Bedar is popular with those seeking a quieter alternative to the nearby beach resorts.

'Extremely difficult' to extinguish

Four of the victims are believed



The wildfire advanced 15 kilometres in just two hours, an exceptionally rapid spread driven by strong winds and extreme heat

to be British nationals who were found burned to death inside a right-hand drive car, Moreno said.

Another seven people died while trying to escape on foot, Bedar mayor Angel Francisco Collado told reporters.

The 12th victim was a man who tried to flee by bicycle, according to Spanish media reports.

Officials said eight people had been injured, four seriously, and hundreds of residents had been evacuated.

Around 500 firefighters, backed by Spain's Military Emergency Unit, battled to contain the flames which officials said have so far ravaged some 3,200 hectares of land.

Landslides kill 15 in Philippines as biggest typhoon in decades nears Taiwan

● Typhoon Bavi nears Taiwan and Japan

● Over 2,000 evacuated in Taiwan

● Strong winds and heavy rain forecast

● Schools and flights cancelled in Taiwan

● Bavi to hit eastern China soon

AFP | Manila

Fifteen people were killed in landslides in the Philippines, and more than 2,000 in Taiwan were evacuated from their homes, as the biggest typhoon in decades neared the region yesterday.

Typhoon Bavi is expected to pound Taiwan's north and east, as well as Japan's remote southwestern islands, yesterday and Saturday before smashing into China, which has been hit by deadly storms this week.



Strong waves break along the coast in Yilan as Typhoon Bavi moves toward Northeastern Taiwan

Two landslides triggered by heavy rains driven by Bavi killed at least 15 people and left six others missing on the Philippines' southern island of Mindanao, authorities said.

Locals in Taiwan's port city of Keelung, which is expected to be one of the hardest hit areas on the island, stocked up on food, taped windows, and stacked sandbags along shop fronts, heeding warnings from authorities to take precautions.

"They're saying it's going to

be huge; of course that's scary, right?" Keelung grocery store owner Chang Shih-huo, 76, told AFP.

"We've stocked up on some instant noodles and bread and stuff like that. Once the wind and rain really start picking up, we'll have to close the shop."

After hitting Guam and the Northern Marianas on Monday as a super typhoon, Bavi was downgraded to a typhoon as it moved across the Pacific Ocean.

Bavi's maximum sustained

380km

is Typhoon Bavi's strong-wind radius, making it the largest typhoon to hit Taiwan in more than 30 years

wind speeds slowed to 155 kilometres (96 miles) per hour, with gusts of around 190 kilometres per hour, yesterday, the Central Weather Administration (CWA) said.

"The typhoon is likely to continue weakening because environmental conditions are not favourable," CWA forecaster Wang Ping-hsiang said.

"The greatest impact is expected in Taipei, New Taipei, Keelung and Yilan, while the heaviest rainfall is forecast for mountainous areas in central and northern Taiwan."

Bavi's strong-wind radius of 380 kilometres will make it the largest typhoon to hit Taiwan in more than 30 years.

Many schools and businesses

were shuttered yesterday across northern and eastern Taiwan, and hundreds of flights were cancelled.

In Keelung, locals flocked to a fresh food market to buy fruit and vegetables, street vendors secured their stands, and a temple covered and tied down an outdoor statue ahead of the storm.

"What you're seeing now is the most remarkable sight we haven't seen in 10 years," Keelung restaurant owner Penny Pan, 48, said as her husband placed sandbags at the entrance to their eatery.

"In the past we never used sandbags to prepare for typhoons. But this time they're forecasting Force 10 gusts, so the captains and fishermen have all been saying we need to be better prepared," Pan said.

'Strong winds and heavy rain'

Bavi is expected to dump up to nearly a metre of rain, raising concerns about potential flooding and landslides.

People were ordered to stay away from the shore as the typhoon whipped up to nine metre (30 foot) waves.



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TWEETS

01



We mourn all the victims of the devastating fires in Andalucía. My thoughts are with their families, the affected communities and the first responders on the ground. Todo nuestro apoyo a España en este difícil momento.

@hadjalahbi

02



We must take back the House or we will lose this republic.

@GavinNewsom

03



Australia and India are kicking goals and hitting sixes. We're taking the Big Bash to India for the first time ever, and helping grow AFL across our region. Two great sporting nations, building something bigger together @narendramodi

@AlboMP

04



2030 is four school years away. That gives us a small window, but also a clear opportunity, to shape the final stretch. #TransformingEducation Summit +4 must be a turning point on the road to 2030, putting education back at the centre of the global agenda, where it belongs.

@AminaJMohammed

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