

## world

# Flash floods kill 58 in Indonesia

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A damaged aircraft is seen at a silt-covered airstrip



Indonesian Military shows a soldier caring for a rescued boy in Sentani

AFP | Sentani, Indonesia

Flash floods in Indonesia's eastern Papua province have killed at least 58 people, an official said yesterday, as rescuers battled mud, rocks and fallen trees in the hunt for survivors.

The death toll was expected to rise as emergency services struggled to reach people in hard-hit areas, with more than 70 people injured and 4,150 evacuated.

The floods -- triggered by torrential rain and landslides on Saturday -- damaged numerous homes in the northeastern town

of Sentani, said national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho.

"The number of casualties and impact of the disaster will likely increase as search and rescue teams are still trying to reach other affected areas," he said.

The waters had receded but officials were still trying to evacuate people from areas obstructed by "fallen trees, rocks, mud and other material", Nugroho added.

In Doyo, one of the most affected areas, a housing complex was littered with huge rocks

believed to have rolled down from a nearby mountain, an AFP reporter at the scene said.

Sediment and waste swept by the floods piled up on the pavement.

The non-stop wail of ambulance sirens could be heard, as heavy equipment was used to clear the roads.

The government has announced a 14-day state of emergency, said Jayapura police chief Victor Dean Mackbon.

Video footage showed rescuers administering oxygen to

a victim who appeared to be trapped beneath a fallen tree.

Officers rescued a five-month-old baby who was trapped for hours under the rubble, Papua military spokesman Muhammad Aidi said. The whereabouts of the parents are unknown.

A propeller plane lay partly crushed on a runway at the airport of nearby provincial capital Jayapura.

"The rain started last night and went on until around 1:00 am this morning," said Lilis Puji Hastuti, a 29-year-old mother of two young children in Sentani.

"Our house was flooded with thick mud ... we immediately grabbed our valuables and ran to a neighbour's (two-storey) house to seek refuge.

"It's hard to get out of the area because many roads are blocked... I'm worried, sad and scared all at once," she said.

In Sentani, tents have been set up to take in flood victims and treat the wounded.

Papua shares a border with independent Papua New Guinea on an island just north of Australia.

Flooding is common in Indo-

nesia, especially during the rainy season which runs from October to April.

In January, floods and landslides killed at least 70 people on Sulawesi island, while earlier this month hundreds in West Java province were forced to evacuate when torrential rains triggered severe flooding.

The Southeast Asian archipelago of some 17,000 islands is one of the most disaster-prone nations on Earth, straddling the Pacific Ring of Fire, where tectonic plates collide. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are common.

## 'Horror, stunned, anger'



Greg Robertson, Christchurch Hospital  
Christchurch, New Zealand



Visitors leave the hospital in Christchurch

### Brutal ammunition

In a city battered by quakes, Christchurch's medics were tragically well-schooled in tackling mass casualty events -- but none could have prepared for the injuries unleashed by a white supremacist with assault rifles bent on mass murder.

Doctors, surgeons and nurses have been working around the clock at Christchurch Hospital since Friday's mass shooting at two mosques, frantically trying to stem bleeding, patch up shattered bodies and save lives.

Yesterday, 34 patients remained in the hospital in Christchurch, twelve of them still in critical condition.

Another of the injured --

The kind of injuries surgeons were facing this time around were also particularly horrifying.

Robertson said his teams do sometimes encounter gunshot wounds but never on such a scale. Many of those brought to the hospital have been in and out of operating theatres multiple times, as surgeons prioritise the worst parts of the injuries -- such as stemming the bleeding, clearing blocked airways, trying to save limbs -- before dealing with the less severe wounds.

First responders and paramedics played a crucial role.

"I guess that's reflected in the fact we've had only one death

in a patient that arrived at the hospital. Those who got here, have a chance," Robertson said.

It is likely Pakistani national Mohammed Amin Nas only survived because of the paramedics.

His son Yasir Amin said they encountered the alleged assailant driving outside the Al Noor mosque. "He took out this big gun and just shot at us as we were running," Yasir said.

His father was struck four times. Yasir called emergency services who spent 10 minutes treating his father where he lay before rushing him to hospital.

He has been into surgery three times and remains in intensive care.

four-year-old girl Alin Alsati -- was in intensive care at a specialist children's hospital in Auckland.

Greg Robertson, the chief surgeon at Christchurch Hospital, spoke on Sunday of the sheer magnitude of Friday's massacre.

"Horror, stunned, anger," he said, describing how his team of doctors, nurses and surgeons felt as the wounded poured in -- initially in private cars and then in an ever-increasing stream of ambulances.

This is not the first time the city has dealt with mass casualties. A series of earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 killed more than 180 people and left many more injured, honing the medical skills of the city's doctors to deal with a sudden influx of complex wounds.

"I don't think there's any doubt the earthquake did have a bearing on it -- the old adage practice makes perfect works on a lot of things and that's part of our processes," he said.

But he admitted the horrifying, man-made nature of the latest tragedy had a much greater psychological impact on staff.

"The earthquake was something that we couldn't control," he said. "It's the fact that someone has done this to our people, our friends, our colleagues, this is just unbelievable."

### Five Indian nationals killed

New Delhi, India

Five Indian nationals were among the 50 worshippers killed in the Christchurch mosque attacks, with at least two others reported to be injured, officials said yesterday.

India's embassy in New Zealand confirmed the deaths in a tweet.

Three of the dead from the mass shooting at Al Noor mosque were from Gujarat state. They were father and son victims Asif and Ramiz Vora, and 65-year-old retiree Mahboob Khokhar, who was visiting his son in Christchurch.

Ansi Karippakulam Alibava -- a 23-year-old from Kerala, who had lived with her husband in Christchurch since last year as she studied for a masters -- was also confirmed dead.

The fifth victim, Ozair

Kadir, was an aspiring commercial pilot from Hyderabad city.

An Indian foreign ministry official in New Delhi said that they are "in process of ascertaining information about all Indians affected by the terror attack".

The official denied Indian media reports that claimed seven people were killed in the attack.

Mohsin Vora, the brother of Asif, said that they were initially told his brother and nephew were injured in the attack, before a family member identified their bodies when they flew to New Zealand.

Vora said his 56-year-old brother had gone to meet his new grandchild a month ago.

"I and (the) parents of Ramiz's wife have been granted visas. We will be leaving for New Zealand soon," Vora said.

### Trump renews attacks on late senator

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump lashed out at the late war hero John McCain for a second straight day yesterday, amid reports an aide to the US senator had shared a dossier of allegations about his ties to Russia back in 2016.

A day earlier, the president drew a stern rebuke from Mc-

Cain's daughter Meghan after he attacked McCain -- a fellow Republican who remained one of Trump's toughest critics right up until his death of brain cancer last August.

In a tweet, Trump quoted the independent counsel Ken Starr as saying it was a "very dark stain" against McCain that he apparently helped spread the dossier.