

Philippines: Several killed and 180,000 evacuated as Typhoon Vamco hits the Philippines

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(CNN)At least six people have died and 10 others are missing after Typhoon Vamco made landfall in the Philippines on Wednesday night, according to a report by CNN affiliate CNN Philippines.

Citing national police, CNN Philippines reported a 68-year-old and 70-year-old were among those killed. More than 180,000 people were evacuated as the typhoon battered the country, hitting many of the same communities that were devastated by Super Typhoon Goni just 10 days before.

Typhoon Vamco, referred to as Ulysses in the Philippines, is equivalent in force to a Category 2 hurricane, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). It made its first landfall at 11 p.m. local time near Patnanungan, Quezon, then continued moving westward, making a second landfall in Luzon. According to PAGASA, the storm has caused flooding and two to three meters of storm surge. The agency warned the rains could cause landslides.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said the impact of the storm in central Luzon is particularly damaging because it is hitting the same 1.6 million people affected by Super Typhoon Goni. Vamco is the fifth storm to impact the Philippines in just over three weeks.

"The Red Cross holds particularly grave concerns for more than 240,000 people who lost their homes to Typhoon Goni, especially those who are living in makeshift shelters along the coast as this latest storm hits," the organization said in a statement, adding that the situation is particularly dire because local government emergency response funds have been depleted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Scientists are warning that climate change is making storms like this more destructive. A study published in May said it was becoming increasingly evident that hurricanes, typhoons, and tropical cyclones worldwide are becoming stronger and potentially more deadly as the globe warms due to the climate crisis.

"These non-stop storms are slamming our communities during a deadly pandemic, making this one of the most complicated disaster responses ever," Richard Gordon, Philippine Red Cross chairman, said in a statement.

Philippine Interior Secretary Eduardo Año was quoted by PNA as saying the search and rescue operations were ongoing across Luzon, especially in the affected areas in Cainta, Montalban, and San Mateo in Rizal and Metro Manila, particularly in Marikina City, which has suffered from flooding.

Marikina Mayor Marcy Teodoro told reporters on Thursday that the air rescue efforts were hampered by the weather and appealed for more rescue resources to be made available as the city was overwhelmed by the number of residents trapped on the rooftops of their flooded homes.

More than 25,000 police officers have been deployed to assist in disaster response, according to PNA.

Situation reports from the command center indicated 411 flooded areas, 519 areas without electricity, and 104 areas without telecommunication service, the Philippine National Police Chief General Debold Sinas told PNA.

According to PAGASA, the center of the storm is moving away from the Philippines and heading towards Vietnam. The long term forecast from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center shows a weaker Vamco is likely to affect Vietnam this weekend, with more flooding possible.

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P.S.

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<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/11/12/asia/typhoon-vamco-philippines-intl/index.html>