

CHINA

Deadly storms hit Chongqing

3 fatalities and 19 missing as rainfall causes flash floods, geological disasters

By TAN YINGZI
and DENG RUI in Chongqing

Devastating rainstorms struck parts of Southwest China's Chongqing over the weekend, resulting in multiple casualties and missing persons in the municipality's Yongchuan and Beibei districts. Rescue efforts are ongoing.

As of 2:30 pm on Sunday, local authorities reported three deaths and 17 people missing in Yongchuan, with another two people missing in Beibei.

According to a release from the authorities in Yongchuan on Sunday afternoon, the district was hit by extreme torrential rain that triggered flash floods and geological disasters. Chashanzhuhai subdistrict recorded 296.6 millimeters of rainfall between 2 am and 4 am on Sunday, with a peak hourly rainfall of 103.6 mm.

In Beibei, Xinglong township was severely affected by the rainstorm, recording 122.9 mm of rainfall from midnight to 3 am on Sunday, with a peak hourly rainfall of 59.4 mm. Local authorities are continuing search and rescue operations in response to the severe weather. In Yongchuan, 168 people have been evacuated as a precautionary measure, and 82 have been relocated to emergency shelters.

Later on Sunday, Chongqing authorities placed Yongchuan on a Level I emergency response for flood control, the highest alert level, due to



Rows of greenhouses in Yongchuan district, Chongqing, are submerged on Sunday, after extreme overnight rainfall triggered flash floods and geological disasters in the municipality. Rescue and emergency response operations are ongoing. HE PENGLI / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

the severity of the situation. In addition, 29 other districts and counties were upgraded to a Level II response. Specialized rescue teams have been deployed to support ongoing efforts.

In response to the flooding and geological hazards, the National Commission for Disaster Reduction activated a Level IV national disaster relief emergency response in the municipality on Sunday, and a work team has been dispatched to the affected areas to assess the damage and assist local disaster relief work.

Wu Zhengqian, deputy chief forecaster at the Chongqing Meteorological Observatory, said the recent rainfall, influenced by warm and humid air currents, intensified overnight, resulting in intermittent periods of heavy rain. More heavy rain is expected in the northwestern and northeastern parts of central and western Chongqing between midnight and 11 am on Monday.

Nationwide, the Ministry of Water Resources activated a Level IV emergency response for floods in

Anhui, Henan and Shaanxi provinces on Sunday.

Jiangxi, Hubei and Hunan provinces are maintaining a Level IV emergency response status.

The country is locked in a seasonal transition heavily influenced by strong, warm and humid air currents pushing up from the south and colliding with cooler northern air systems.

Contact the writers at
dengrui@chinadaily.com.cn

Advances hailed 75 years since Xizang liberation

By PALDEN NYIMA
and DAQIONG in Lhasa

Foreign experts and scholars praised the Xizang autonomous region's achievements in development since its peaceful liberation 75 years ago at a symposium held in the regional capital Lhasa on Saturday.

As an important event marking the historical milestone, the international academic symposium brought together domestic and overseas experts, scholars and researchers to review Xizang's 75-year journey and discuss valuable experiences in regional development in the new era.

Michael Alan Crook, a guest speaker at the symposium and cofounder of the Western Academy of Beijing, offered his thoughts on the region's development based on decades of investigation and the experience of his family in Tibetan areas spanning three generations. Crook categorized Xizang's major transformations in three areas: health, education and life expectancy.

He added there has been infrastructure that respects nature, and the preservation of traditional Tibetan culture. "These are the true achievements of these 75 years," said Crook, who also serves as chairman of the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives.

He said his grandparents witnessed people suffering without medical treatment in Xizang when they visited the region in the 1930s, and many died from even minor diseases because of a lack of timely medical intervention.

"I now see modern hospitals, community health centers, and trained doctors reaching every county and township. Vaccination programs, maternal care and treatment for chronic diseases are routine," he said.

As a result, life expectancy in Xizang has risen from just over 35 in the 1950s to more than 72 today, he said, adding that such progress is more than just statistics.

"That is a grandmother watching her grandchild grow up. That

I now see modern hospitals, community health centers, and trained doctors reaching every county and township."

Michael Alan Crook, chairman of the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives

is a father living to see his daughter become a doctor. And that is the most profound change any society can achieve," he added.

Experts and scholars also shared their views on the ecological conservation efforts in the plateau region.

Krishna Prasad Oli, a former Nepalese ambassador to China and an expert in ecology, delivered a speech on how Asian philosophical traditions contribute to ecological civilization alongside modern environmental discourse.

"Ecological civilization is not merely a policy framework or a development model. It is a way of being, a reorientation of human consciousness that recognizes the profound interdependence between humanity and nature," Oli said.

Speaking on governance, Oli said the Chinese government and the Xizang autonomous regional government have adopted a model of ecological civilization by promoting and enforcing strict environmental protection policies and conservation regulations, carrying out large-scale greening initiatives, and expanding clean energy development in Xizang.

"It has followed a people-centered approach to development, prioritizing eco-environmental protection, innovation, coordination and green development," he said.

Contact the writers at
palden_nyima@chinadaily.com.cn

Shanghai's Chongming transformed into 'eco-island'

By HOU LIQIANG
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

After more than two decades of pursuing an ecology-first strategy, Shanghai's Chongming district has achieved a balance between environmental protection and economic growth.

Chongming has made progresses in building into a "world-class eco-island," according to information released by the Shanghai Bureau of Ecology and Environment at an event held on the sidelines of the 2026 Shanghai Chongming Eco-Island International Forum on Saturday.

Since 2001, when the "eco-island" vision was initiated, more than 600 high-energy-consumption and high-pollution enterprises in Chongming have been shut down or restructured.

Thanks to vigorous afforestation efforts, forest coverage in the district has increased from no more than 10 percent at the turn of the millennium to 30.7 percent today.

As a key stopover on the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, Chongming has also made significant progress in bird conservation.

The number of migratory birds stopping over at the Shanghai Chongming Dongtan National Nature Reserve has increased from under 40,000 in 2009 to nearly 500,000 last year.

When the reserve was established in 1998, a little over 10 tundra swans wintered there.

Last year, that number had risen to nearly 5,000.

Addressing the event, Hu Jun, director of the Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, stressed that the progress has been achieved following President Xi Jinping's instruction to steadfastly build Chongming into an eco-island.

In April 2007, only two weeks into his tenure as Shanghai's Party chief, Xi devoted a full day to a field inspection of the Chongming Eco-

Island construction, then still in its infancy, Hu recalled.

"He emphasized the importance of steadfastly forging ahead with the vision of building an eco-island, urging that once the direction is set, there should be no wavering," Hu said.

"Now standing at a new historical starting point, we must strive to bring biodiversity protection to a new level under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization," he added.

Tang Chendong, deputy head of the Shanghai Bureau of Ecology and Environment, said that without harming ecology or biodiversity, Chongming has preliminarily established a green energy system based on wind and solar power, and has vigorously promoted circular agriculture.

According to a report jointly released by the Chongming government and the Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy, renewable sources supplied 38 per-

cent of Chongming's total electricity consumption in 2025.

Chongming's energy intensity — energy consumption per unit of GDP — last year declined by 13.5 percent from 2020 levels.

Tang added that Chongming has registered rapid growth in green and eco-friendly industries such as ecotourism, sports and wellness care.

"Compared with the early 2000s, Chongming's economic value added has increased more than fivefold and its per capita GDP nearly sevenfold, marking initial success in converting ecological strengths into development gains and greater well-being for the people," he said.

Kaveh Zahedi, director of the Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment at the Food and Agriculture Organization, said, "The development of Dongtan, a city of the future in Shanghai's Chongming district, is an example of how sustainable agriculture and green development work together in an urban context."



Seniors play cards at a care center in Lhokha city, Xizang autonomous region, on March 25. The region has expanded elderly care services and increased the coverage of basic medical insurance to above 95 percent. JIGME DORJE / XINHUA

SAVE WATER, SAVE THE PLANET.

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IN THE OCEAN.
IT'S LIFE.

