

Two killed in Mexico as storm John weakens and Helene moves in

September 24 2024, by Daniel Rook



Hurricanes hit Mexico every year on both its Pacific and Atlantic coasts, usually between May and November.

At least two people died after Hurricane John slammed into Mexico's southern Pacific coast, but as the now-weakened storm dissipated

Tuesday, tropical storm Helene threatened over the Caribbean.

Hurricane John hit the coast as a Category 3 storm overnight with winds of up to 120 miles (193 kilometers) per hour, before being downgraded to a tropical storm and largely dissipating by Tuesday afternoon.

Forecasters nevertheless warned of strong rains and possible flash floods inundating the coast for the next few days.

The passage of John left a woman and a child dead after a landslide hit their home in the mountainous southern town of Tlacoachistlahuaca, Evelyn Salgado, the governor of the Mexican state of Guerrero, told a news conference.

The US-based National Hurricane Center (NHC) said in an afternoon update that the remnants of the storm were about 70 miles from the resort city of Acapulco, with sustained winds of 35 miles per hour.

The storm caused jitters among residents of Acapulco, where memories are still fresh of Hurricane Otis, a scale-topping Category 5 storm that left a trail of destruction and several dozen people dead in October last year.

Marta Sotelo told AFP her nerves were frayed as winds blew in, in the same way as Otis had, with "raised dust, metal sheets, everything."



A woman brings tables in from the beach in southern Mexico ahead of the arrival of Hurricane John.

"The children became hysterical," she told AFP, adding that she and her relatives preferred to wait out John in a shelter.

- 'Flash flooding' —

The southern states of Guerrero and Oaxaca were hardest hit by the storm, and thousands of military and emergency personnel have been deployed.

Some 300 shelters were set up to aid residents in high-risk areas.

The governor, Salgado, said towns in Guerrero had registered heavy rainfall, road closures, power outages and the suspension of classes.

Oaxaca has seen fallen trees in several municipalities and road damage. Airports in the region's resort towns of Huatulco and Puerto Escondido suspended operations.

The NHC had warned that while John has been downgraded, there remained a risk of "significant and possibly catastrophic, life-threatening flash flooding and mudslides" in the southern states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero.



The Cangrejo beach is seen empty ahead of the arrival of Hurricane John in Oaxaca State, Mexico, on September 23, 2024.

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On Tuesday, Tropical Storm Helene formed in the Caribbean putting the resorts of Cancun, the Riviera Maya and Tulum on alert.

According to the path predicted by the NHC, Helene is expected to gain hurricane strength at dawn on Wednesday off Cancun, but will not make landfall.

Helene is due to make landfall in the US state of Florida on Thursday as a powerful Category 3 hurricane.

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