



Persistent Heavy Rainfall Causing Flooding in Northern Vietnam

Flooding in Vietnam from Mid-July to August, 2026

Vietnam's rainy season typically occurs from July to September, during which the country is frequently affected by flooding and landslides. Northern Vietnam is expected to experience another month of above-average rainfall, with precipitation forecast to be 10-25% higher than the long-term average. Despite the higher rainfall totals, the number of rainy days is expected to remain relatively low, with rainfall occurring in shorter but more intense episodes.

Persistent heavy rainfall throughout July was mainly associated with a stationary low-pressure trough over northern Vietnam. Upper-level atmospheric circulation and together with strong southeastern winds, which transporting abundant moisture, created conditions for recurrent thunderstorms, particularly in the northern midlands and mountainous provinces. Rainfall accumulations reached 150-300 mm, with some locations receiving more than 450 mm. Under this condition, it increased the risk of flash floods, landslides, and localized flooding across northern Vietnam and from Thanh Hoa to northern Quang Tri during 17-21 August 2026.

Meanwhile, super typhoon Dolphin was moving across the northwestern Pacific toward the eastern coast of China. Although the storm was not expected to enter the East Sea (South China Sea), its circulation was forecast to strengthen the southwest monsoon and produce hazardous marine conditions from early August. The storm was also expected to approach northern Taiwan.

The weather agency also reported that El Niño conditions were continuing to intensify and were expected to remain strong to very strong through early 2027. However, forecasters emphasized that a strengthening El Niño does not necessarily imply reduced rainfall in northern Vietnam. As a large-scale climate phenomenon, El Niño affects different regions differently and may influence local weather with a delay for two to three months. Historical records also show no consistent relationship between El Niño and rainfall in northern Vietnam, as rainfall has exceeded long-term averages in some El Niño years while remaining below normal in others.

Damage and losses

Impact on the affected area

As reported on 18 July 2026, severe flash floods and landslides affected northern Vietnam, resulting in fatalities, missing persons, and extensive damage. Heavy rainfall also damaged roads, power infrastructure, and hundreds of homes, and affected approximately 238 hectares of farmland, particularly in Lai Chau and neighboring Son La Province.

According to the Vietnam Disaster and Dike Management Authority, heavy rainfall and flooding in mid-July resulted in eight fatalities in Lai Chau Province. Rainfall across northern Viet Nam and areas from Thanh Hoa to northern Quang Tri reached 150-300 mm, with some

locations receiving more than 450 mm. In Lai Chau, Dien Bien, northern Tuyen Quang, Cao Bang, Lang Son, and northern Quang Tri, rainfall totals were generally 100-200 mm, with some areas exceeding 300 mm.

Several provinces, including Son La, Lao Cai, and Tuyen Quang, also reported significant impacts. A total of 113 houses were damaged or had their roofs blown off, including 77 houses in Son La, 10 houses in Lao Cai, and 26 houses in Tuyen Quang. In addition, 231 households were relocated because of landslide risks, including 188 households in Son La, 34 households in Lao Cai, and 9 households in Tuyen Quang. One person died in Tuyen Quang, two people were reported missing in Lao Cai, and one person was injured in Son La.

Agricultural devastation

Agricultural land: Agricultural areas in Son La, Lao Cai, and Tuyen Quang Provinces were affected by the flooding and landslides.

Affected crops: Rice and seasonal crops, as well as other crops, were damaged as follows:

- Son La province: 105.84 hectares of rice and seasonal crops and 51.25 hectares of other crops were damaged.
- Lao Cai province: 20.50 hectares of rice and seasonal crops and 2.35 hectares of other crops were damaged.
- Tuyen Quang province: 29.24 hectares of rice and seasonal crops and 1.35 hectares of other crops were damaged.

Government responses and countermeasures

Hundreds of police officers were deployed to the affected areas to search for survivors and evacuate residents to safer locations. The National Center for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting warned of a significantly increased risk of further landslides and flash floods, particularly in Lai Chau, Dien Bien, Son La, and Lao Cai Provinces.

The Son La Hydro-Meteorological Station also issued an urgent flood warning for the Nam Pan River, highlighting the potential for flooding, flash floods, and landslides in several areas. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Construction declared an emergency to facilitate urgent repairs to damaged sections of two national highways in Lao Cai and Lai Chau Provinces.

Prime Minister Lê Minh Hung instructed relevant ministries, agencies, and local authorities to take urgent and proactive measures in response to forecasts of continued heavy rainfall in northern Vietnam's mountainous and midland regions. The directive emphasized that protecting human life should remain the highest priority and called for coordinated preparedness, emergency response, evacuation, and infrastructure recovery.

In addition, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has supported community-based flood preparedness and simulation exercises in Vietnam, including testing of the early-warning chain from alert dissemination through evacuation and emergency response. These activities bring together meteorological agencies, local authorities, emergency services, and community volunteers to strengthen disaster preparedness and response capacity.

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