

Philippine rain, flooding cause at least 25 deaths

December 28, 2022

The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: The death toll from heavy rains and floods that devastated parts of the Philippines over the Christmas weekend has risen to 25, with 26 others still missing, the national disaster response agency said Wednesday. Nearly 400,000 people were affected, with over 81,000 still in shelters and nine others injured, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said.

Sixteen of the 25 deaths were reported in Northern Mindanao region in the south, while 12 of the 26 missing are from the eastern Bicol region, the council added. A shear line — the point where warm and cold air meet — triggered rains in parts of eastern, central and southern Philippines, the state weather bureau PAGASA said. The weather disturbance disrupted Christmas celebration in affected provinces, with photos from the southern province of Misamis Occidental showing rescuers carrying an elderly woman on a plastic chair as they waded through a flooded street. Some residents in the province were seen hanging on to floaters as coast guard rescuers pulled them across chest-deep flood using a rope.

The disaster management council said 1,196 houses were damaged by the floods, while sections of 123 roads and 12 bridges were affected. Some areas remain without power or water supply. While the effect of the shear line has weakened, a new low pressure area may bring moderate to heavy rains within the next 24 hours to the same areas affected by the Christmas weekend floods. The weather bureau said Wednesday that flooding and landslides are likely, especially in areas with significant prior rainfall. Each year about 20 typhoons and storms batter the Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries. The archipelago is located on the "Ring of Fire" along the Pacific Ocean's rim, where many volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur.