

47 dead, 22 missing after flood hits Hunan, Guangxi

A total of 47 people died and 22 are missing as floods wreaked havoc in central China's Hunan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in the south.

In Hunan, heavy rain starting on June 22 has killed 27 people with 8 missing.

The ensuing floods have forced the evacuation of more than 1.2 million people. More than 38,000 homes collapsed and nearly 880,000 hectares of crops were damaged. The water levels in Dongting Lake and several major rivers all rose above warning levels.

About 15,000 people have been sent to the front line and over 160 million yuan (23.5 million U.S. dollars) has been allocated to disaster relief in Hunan.

Rain is forecast to weaken in Hunan in the next few days, but heavy rain is expected in some areas.

In Guangxi, rain since Saturday has killed 20 people and left 14 missing. Around 20,000 houses collapsed or were damaged.

The disaster has inflicted direct economic losses of nearly 4.6 billion yuan. Local authorities have allocated 10 million yuan to the affected areas.

Gas pipeline explosion kills 5, injures 89 in N. China



A fire truck joins the rescue after the explosion in Songyuan city, Northeast China's Jilin Province, July 5, 2017. [Photo/Sina Weibo]

Gas pipeline explosion that happened Tuesday has left at least five people dead and 89 others injured in Songyuan city in northeast China, local government said Wednesday.

The accident occurred at around 2:45 p.m. Tuesday when workers were repairing a section of pipeline where gas leaked. The explosion affected patients and staff in a nearby hospital.

As of 6 a.m. Wednesday, five were confirmed dead and 89 injured in the accident, including 14 people who were seriously injured.

Rescue operation is under way and cause of the accident is being investigated.

[Chinese students eager to start businesses: survey](#)

Students in China are eager to start businesses and hope that their colleges can provide more opportunities to foster entrepreneurship, according to a

survey from a universities alliance Tuesday.

The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education Alliance of China (IEEAC) is a platform for universities to share their experience in entrepreneurship and nurture students' innovative and entrepreneurship spirit.

The IEEAC surveyed students from 130 colleges, and more than 80 percent of students said they are willing to start businesses.

Nearly half of the students surveyed hoped to receive training and financial support for entrepreneurship from colleges.

Only 17 percent of startup projects in colleges provide overseas exchange and cooperation opportunities, according to the survey.

"We should promote international cooperation in innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as cooperation between colleges and enterprises," said Sun Hongbin, secretary general of the IEEAC.

According to the Ministry of Education, a total of 7.95 million college students are expected to graduate in 2017.

Around 3 percent of this year's college graduates are expected to start businesses, up from only 1.6 percent of college graduates who started businesses in 2011, according to a report jointly released by the educational research company MyCOS Institute and Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

"It is important for students to learn about the country's policies and evaluate their skills before starting businesses," said Zhu Zhuohong from CAS.

[Nine confirmed dead in central China landslide](#)

Nine people have been confirmed dead, and 19 others are injured after a rain-triggered mudslide swept through part of a village in central China's Hunan Province.

The mudslide occurred about 4 p.m. Saturday in Zuta Village, Ningxiang County, after continuous heavy rain since Friday, according to the county government.

A four-day search and rescue operation recovered nine bodies, the government said Tuesday.

Southern China has been battered by continuous rain over recent weeks. China's Finance Ministry on Monday released 1.9 billion yuan (about 280

million U.S. dollars) in emergency funds for flood relief in south China.

The funds will go to 20 provinces and autonomous regions including Guizhou, Hunan, Jiangxi and Zhejiang, where torrential rains in the past week have caused severe floods.

New measures draw Taiwan people to mainland



Artists from Taiwan and the mainland stage a puppet show during the Ninth Straits Forum in Xiamen, Fujian province, in June. [Photo/ Xinhua]

A growing number of the island's residents are relocating, lured by new policies, financial incentives and a wider range of opportunities.

'Since I opened my first store in Sichuan province in December, the mainland's business potential has exceeded my expectations. I now have four stores,' said Ken Huang, an entrepreneur from Taiwan.

The 37-year-old owner of a handbag brand was among 8,000 people from the island who participated in a weeklong trade exhibition at the Ninth Straits Forum in Xiamen, Fujian province, last month. Most of the attendees were seeking opportunities to expand their businesses in the mainland and exploring the possibility of trading internationally.

Last month, communications and exchanges between people on both sides of the

Taiwan Straits continued to rise, despite recent setbacks in political ties.

Although tourism and business activity are developing rapidly, high-level communications between the mainland and Taiwan have been at a low point for more than a year. The relationship between the two sides had been developing constructively based on the 1992 Consensus, a formula for relations between Taipei and Beijing rooted in the understanding that there is only one China, and opposed to "Taiwan independence".

Things changed in May last year, when the Democratic Progressive Party in Taiwan denied the existence of the 1992 Consensus, consigning dialogue to the deep freeze. That means the Straits Forum – composed of 21 major trade fairs, symposiums and exhibitions – is now the biggest platform for people from both sides of the Straits to seek career opportunities and better lifestyles.

During a speech at the forum, Yu Zhengsheng, China's top political adviser, announced a series of new policies to be rolled out in the coming months to benefit Taiwan residents in the mainland, and help them enjoy the same status as mainlanders in terms of financial and public services.

A growing presence

The new policies have been formulated as a response to the growing number of people from Taiwan settling in the mainland. According to a report conducted in April by 1111 Job Bank Co in Taiwan, about 700,000 Taiwan residents live and work outside the island, with about 350,000 of them working in the Chinese mainland. Meanwhile, research conducted in March by the Global Views Survey Research Center in Taiwan suggested that nearly 60 percent of Taiwan residents ages 20 to 29 would be willing to work, study or invest in the mainland.

Last year, the number of new businesses in the mainland owned by Taiwan residents rose 32 percent, and by February, nearly 4,000 sole proprietors from the island were operating in the mainland.

More than 20 new policies will be released in the coming months to help Taiwan residents find their feet in mainland cities.