

Heat wave, torrential rain to hit China

China's meteorological agency Saturday issued warnings for a heat wave and torrential rains, calling for precautionary measures.

The National Meteorological Center (NMC) issued an orange alert for the heat wave, as temperatures in areas including in parts of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Hebei, Henan, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Hubei and Shandong, rise above 35 degrees centigrade Saturday.

Parts of those regions could see temperatures surpass 40 degrees.

The agency also issued a blue alert for torrential rain Saturday and Sunday in parts of Chongqing, Hubei, Hunan, Henan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Guangdong and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Southwest Hubei will receive precipitation of 100-120 millimeters.

The agency asked relevant departments to take precautionary measures to prepare for potential landslides and floods.

44 dead or missing in flood-stricken Chinese county



Citizens watch the flood on a bridge in Changsha, capital of central China's Hunan Province, July 2, 2017. Days of torrential rain in Hunan Province raised the water level of the Xiangjiang River, a major tributary of Yangtze River, to exceed its record flood level Sunday morning. (Xinhua/Long Hongtao)

A total of 44 people have died or are missing after floods hit Ningxiang County in central China's Hunan Province, local flood control headquarters said Friday.

Heavy downpours since June 22 have led to the area's worst natural disaster in 60 years.

About 815,000 people, or 56 percent of the county's population, suffered property damage in the floods, it said.

In south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, floods have left 26 dead and 8 missing since heavy rain started on July 1, according to the regional civil affairs department. More than 1.88 million people suffered losses in the disaster, which damaged 108,000 hectares of crops and flattened 6,102 houses. Direct economic losses have exceeded 7.8 billion yuan (1.15 billion U.S. dollars).

Torrential rain since late June has caused flooding along several tributaries of the Yangtze, China's longest river.

The level of the Xiangjiang River, a major tributary of the Yangtze, exceeded its record level Sunday morning.

Since Saturday, reservoirs in the upper and middle reaches of the Yangtze have managed to control the flood, holding back more than 10 billion cubic meters of water, according to the Yangtze flood control and drought relief

headquarters.

The efforts made by the Three Gorges Reservoir and upper reservoirs on the Jinsha River in the upper reaches of the Yangtze, and Yalong River, Jinsha's tributary, have greatly reduced water levels of rivers and lakes in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze, the headquarters said.

According to the headquarters, local water authorities have spent 100 million yuan repairing 42 sections of bank along the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze, which collapsed due to floods last year, the most severe since 1998.

Four dead, nine injured in east China hit-and-run

Four people were killed while nine others were injured in a string of hit-and-runs by a car in eastern China's Jiangsu Province, local police said Saturday.

A car ploughed into several pedestrians in a neighborhood in Jingjiang city at 8:27 p.m. Friday, a police officer said. After the incident, the car did not stop but continued the rampage.

The victims were rushed to hospital where four died despite medical treatment, while the nine injured are believed to be in stable condition.

The driver was caught in nearby Taixing city. Police found that he had taken poison in an attempt to commit suicide. He is receiving emergency treatment.

The incident is under investigation.

Premier Li stresses innovation, business environment

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has said that the government should attach more importance to encouraging innovation, optimizing the business environment and raising growth quality and efficiency.

Li made the remarks Thursday in a meeting with experts and entrepreneurs on current economic performance and suggestions about future economic work, according to a press release issued Friday.

After the economy stabilized in the first half, “we should not only have firm confidence, but also be well prepared for dealing with all kinds of difficulties,” Li said.

China should reduce transaction costs and streamline administration, delegate power to lower levels and improve regulation and services, Li said.

The government should also strive to create an internationally competitive business environment in which domestic and foreign companies are treated on an equal basis, the premier added.

China should continue to implement the strategy of innovation-driven development, improve the environment for entrepreneurship and innovation and upgrade the manufacturing and service sectors, Li said.

He also called for more progresses in technology, product upgrading and raising the quality and efficiency of growth.

China’s economy grew 6.9 percent year on year in the first quarter, the fastest pace in six quarters and higher than the government’s annual target of around 6.5 percent.

Q2 economic growth rate will be released on July 17.

“China should consolidate the foundation for the stable economic performance with sound growth momentum,” Li said.

The country will continue to stabilize macroeconomic policies, market expectations and the financial market, by sticking to its proactive fiscal policy and prudent monetary policy, taking forward-looking and effective macroeconomic regulation measures, and properly defusing risks, he added.

Efforts will also be made to ensure stable employment, reduce corporate burden, expand effective investment and make consumption play a larger role in economic growth.

The government should make sure that people get the benefits from development by fulfilling the promises of poverty relief, rundown area renovation and pollution control, among others, Li said.

“We should reduce the pains and difficulties in people’s lives, while increase their senses of gain and happiness,” the premier added.

Main structure of HK-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge completed



A ceremony was held on July 7 for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge undersea tunnel to mark the completion of the main structure of the world's longest cross-sea bridge. The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is a super large sea-crossing passage, 55 km in length. The most difficult technique is the bridge-island-tunnel main project, which is about 29.6 kilometers long. [Photo/Xinhua]

The main structure of world's longest sea bridge linking Hong Kong, Zhuhai and Macao was completed Friday, the builders said.

It took seven years to build the bridge, which will be open at the end of the year, said Zhu Yongling, director of the management bureau of the bridge.

The main structure measures 29.6 kilometers, consisting of a 22.9-km bridge section and 6.7-km underground tunnel. The bridge's total length is 55 kilometers.

"The bridge passed all engineering risks, and we will prepare it for public use in a few months," Zhu said.

Lin Ming, chief engineer of China Communications Construction Company, said they tackled great engineering challenges in building the bridge.

It used 420,000 tonnes of steel, enough to build 60 Eiffel Towers, and consumed 1.08 million cubic meters of cement.

Dubbed "the most technologically complicated bridge," it crosses shipping lanes in the Lingding Ocean.

"We had to use immersed tubes. Due to lack of experience, it took us 96 hours to lay the first tube in the ocean, and many of the engineers and workers hardly slept for four consecutive days," said Yin Haiqing, a leading engineer.

The bridge management bureau also issued a standard for the quality of

cement.

“We needed several sections to go to work simultaneously, so we had 16 cement mixing stations in operation at the same time, and we ensured the cement they produced were of the same standard,” said another engineer Lu Huaying.

Designers also minimized the impact to the environment when building the bridge, which runs water that is home to Chinese white dolphins.

During construction, the number of the dolphins rose from 1,400 in 2009 to 2,100 in 2016, according to the management bureau.

The Y-shaped bridge will cut travel time between Hong Kong and Zhuhai from three hours to just 30 minutes, further integrating cities in the Pearl River Delta, said Wei Dongqing, deputy secretary of the management bureau’s Communist Party Committee.