

Flash floods kill at least 50 in Indonesia's Papua province

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The town of Sentani near the provincial capital Jayapura was hit by flash floods triggered by torrential rain on Saturday, national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement.

At least nine houses, two bridges and a Twin Otter plane parked at the region's main airport were damaged by the floods. But the Sentani airport, the province's main transport hub, remains open, national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said. (Representational Image)

Jakarta: Flash floods in Indonesia's easternmost province of Papua have killed at least 50 people and badly injured dozens of others and damaged a small plane at the region's main airport, authorities said on Sunday.

The town of Sentani near the provincial capital Jayapura was hit by flash floods triggered by torrential rain on Saturday, national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement.

A search operation was still under way, Nugroho said, warning that the death toll could rise.

At least nine houses, two bridges and a Twin Otter plane parked at the region's main airport were damaged by the floods. But the Sentani airport, the province's main transport hub, remains open, Nugroho said.

Disaster authorities have warned local governments of flash flood risks due to deforestation in the mountains surrounding the town, he said.

"We've told local authorities to be careful of floods or flash floods considering forest destruction that has been happening in the Cyclops mountains," Nugroho told Kompas TV.

TV footage showed waters have receded, leaving mud, logs and debris on Sentani's main roads.

More than 120 residents were taking shelter at government offices after their homes were hit by the floods, the disaster agency said earlier.

Authorities, aided by the Red Cross and volunteers, were helping the displaced.

- Reuters