

Fourth storm lashes Philippines

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The fourth storm to hit the Philippines in a month has lashed the eastern province of Quezon, bringing heavy rain and winds to the region.

Forecasters said Typhoon Mirinae was following the same route as September's storm, Ketsana, which dumped the heaviest rains in 40 years on Manila.

Mirinae is expected to hit the capital later on Saturday morning local time.

Many parts of the country are still reeling after the worst storm-triggered flooding in decades.

The typhoon was travelling at speeds of up to 93mph (150km/h).

Flood risk

Civil defence spokesman Ernesto Torres said officials were preparing for the worst.

"Considering our land is already saturated with water, it may cause flooding in some areas. It is hard to tell if there will be floods, but we are preparing for the worst," he said.

The capital's 12 million residents and others who live in the path of the typhoon were told to prepare supplies to last 72 hours.

Officials closed schools and grounded ferries and trucks loaded with relief supplies were sent to northern provinces in the storm's path.

Thousands were reported to be stranded on the main island, unable to return to their home provinces to visit their dead as traditional on All Saints' Day in the mainly Catholic country.

More than 900 people have died in the multiple storms, including Typhoon Parma, which have battered the Philippines over the last month.

More than 100,000 people remain in government-run evacuation centres and some communities in Manila remain flooded with residents using makeshift rafts to move around.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8334659.stm>