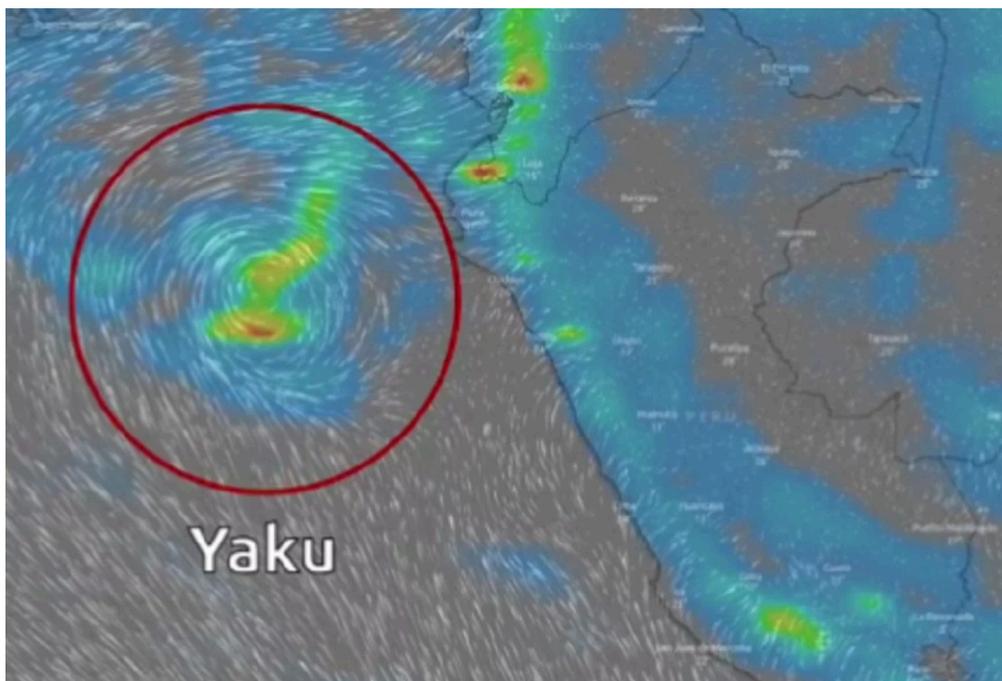


What is the Yaku Cyclone and why is it affecting Peru so devastatingly?

El Ciudadano · 15 de marzo de 2023

The northern part of the country has been the most affected by the storm, which during the last week left almost 10 people dead in the midst of heavy rains.



The sudden passage of Cyclone Yaku in recent days on the coast and northern part of Peru has caused a natural catastrophe that, for now, has left almost a dozen people dead, thousands of victims and the declaration of emergency in more than 400 towns in the South American country.

According to the National Meteorology and Hydrology Service of Peru (*Senamih*), the climatic phenomenon is an unorganized cyclone that is «very unusual» and has caused rainfall to increase disproportionately in regions that were dry. In just one day, the affected regions received a year's worth of rainfall.

Thus, the presence of Cyclone Yaku has caused heavy rains accompanied by hurricane-force winds that have caused severe flooding in northern Peru and left serious damage in urban and rural areas of the coastal departments of Áncash, La Libertad, Lambayeque, Piura and Tumbes, a region bordering with Ecuador.

Many of the affected areas have been left completely isolated and under the mire. Meanwhile, the rains continue to increase and destroy hundreds of homes, leaving thousands of families out in the open, and damaging private and public infrastructure such as roads, hectares of food crops, educational institutions, health centers, fire stations and building sites of other authorities.

In the midst of the natural disaster, which adds to the already delicate governance crisis and political upheaval that the country has been facing since last December, (after the removal of President Pedro Castillo) the Government of Dina Boluarte held a National Risk Management Council for Disasters on Sunday (*Conagerd*) and ordered the declaration of a state of emergency in 400 districts in the north and center of the country.

The first declaration of a state of emergency includes 148 districts of some provinces of the departments of Cajamarca, La Libertad, Lambayeque and Piura, due to the impact and damage caused by rainfall; while the second decree adds another 335 towns in Áncash, Ayacucho, Cusco, Huancavelica, Huánuco, Ica, Junín, Moquegua, Puno, Tacna, Lima and Callao, «due to imminent danger» of heavy rains. How many people have died during the passage of Yaku?

The exact number of fatalities caused by Cyclone Yaku in Peru has not been recently confirmed by the authorities, which last Friday reported the death of six people, four of them in the province of Piura and another two in Lambayeque.

However, local media handle figures that are close to ten deaths. In the last few hours, other deaths related to the impact of the rains have been reported. On Saturday, a man who drowned after saving his parents in the province of Trujillo was reported.

Another death occurred in Chiclayo, when a man died Sunday night after receiving an electric shock by inadvertently touching an exposed power cable from a traffic light as he tried to cross a flooded street.

In addition, there are other areas in the north of the country that are completely cut off, where possible deaths or material damage caused by avalanches, floods and river overflows cannot yet be specified. According to local media, only in Piura there would be more than 600 families affected in various communities.

At the moment, governmental authorities, through the National Civil Defense Institute (*Indeci*), reported that the passage of Cyclone Yaku has worsened the total number of people affected by the rains that have been recorded in the country since September 2022.

On this, Carlos Yáñez, head of *Indeci*, said that since September 59 people have died in incidents related to rains, more than 12,000 victims, 49,111 people affected, 57 injured and eight missing. In addition, 1,326 destroyed homes have been reported, another 3,173 declared uninhabitable, and 21,862 affected. What is the Government doing?

On Saturday, Boluarte traveled to Tumbes, Piura, Lambayeque and La Libertad «to inspect and attend to the emergency» and announced the delivery of a 'pack' of machinery to each municipality, so that those affected «can face this crisis situation due to natural phenomena».

«We are coming with humanitarian aid in this effort, articulated with the private sector, since the State does not have enough machinery to deal with this situation at the national level», said the president, who promised «two helicopters» to each town she visited to mobilize affected families.

Boluarte also reported that she will grant a bonus of 500 soles, (about 132 dollars) which will last two years for the victims who lost their homes. In addition, she promised an agricultural subsidy to the farmers who were affected.

To the affected areas, the authorities have sent tons of food to appease the emergency situation that the population is facing. Defense Minister Jorge Chavez stated that the Armed Forces are providing «air and maritime support in favor of the victims», with military personnel, planes, helicopters and vehicles of all kinds. In addition, he said that «the scenarios that they are witnessing are very complicated».

Regarding the central region, including the capital of the country, Lima, the minister announced that they are establishing «all the mechanisms and protecting the population that live near the water streams».

«The Rímac (Lima) river, like the Chillón, has been increasing its flow, and they are already affecting some homes in highly vulnerable areas because they are located on the banks of the rivers, and as they are precarious structures, they are at greater risk», added Chavez. What is the forecast for the next few hours?

According to *Indeci*, for Tuesday, March 14, an «intense rain» is forecasted for Lima, the capital of the country, for which they have urged the authorities of the metropolitan region to prepare so as to reduce «risks».

For its part, *Senamhi* predicted that the strong activity of Cyclone Yaku could begin to dissipate on Wednesday, March 15, when the waters in the Pacific are expected to begin to cool.

According to the authorities, said cyclone has tropical characteristics, is not related to other climatic phenomena, and has been developing off the Peruvian sea since March 4.

¿Qué es el ciclón Yaku y por qué afecta tan devastadoramente a Perú?

Fuente: El Ciudadano