

Jakarta flood death toll hits 60



A woman swims in flood water to reach higher ground in Jakarta. (AP pic)

JAKARTA: Indonesian rescue teams flew helicopters stuffed with food to remote flood-hit communities on Saturday (January 4, 2020) as the death toll from the disaster jumped to 60 and fears grew about the possibility of more torrential rain.

Tens of thousands in Jakarta were still unable to return to their waterlogged homes after some of the deadliest flooding in years hit the enormous capital region, home to about 30 million.

In neighbouring Lebak, where half a dozen people died, police and military personnel dropped boxes of instant noodles and other supplies into remote communities inaccessible by road after bridges were destroyed.

"It's tough to get supplies in there... and there are about a dozen places hit by landslides," Tomsu Tohir — the police chief of Banten province, where Lebak is located told AFP Sunday, (January 5, 2020).

"That is why we're using helicopters although there aren't any landing spots."

Local health centre chief Suripto, who goes by one name, said injured residents were flowing into his clinic.

“Some of them were wounded after they were swept away by floods and hit with wood and rocks,” he said.

Around Jakarta, more than 170,000 people took refuge in shelters across the massive urban conglomeration after whole neighbourhoods were submerged.

Torrential rains that started on New Year’s Eve unleashed flash floods and landslides. – **Reuters, Jakarta, January 5, 2020**