

Death Toll from Flooding in France Rises to Four



Paris, June 6 (RHC)-- Flooding caused by days of torrential rain has claimed the lives of four people in France after the water level of River Seine around the capital, Paris, hit its highest in about 35 years.

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls released the death toll on Saturday following a meeting at a government crisis center. Two dozen people have also been injured, the premier said.

The Seine receded on Sunday and attention turned to other areas of France where alert warnings have been issued. The river, which runs through Paris, rose about 4.5 meters (15 feet) above average early Saturday.

More than 20,000 people have been evacuated over the past week from the Loire Valley and the greater Paris area. According to Bernard Spitz of France's association of insurers, nationwide losses could reach more than 600 million euros (\$680 million).

The head of national railways operator SNCF, Guillaume Pepy, said the rail network had suffered "catastrophic" damage which would run to tens of millions of euros.

French Environment Minister Segolene Royal announced a major flood exercise in coming weeks based on flooding on the scale of the 1910 calamity, when the river rose 8.62 meters in Paris.

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