

Deadly storm Noel reaches Bahamas

by UPI

MIAMI -- The Bahamas braced for a soaking from Tropical Storm Noel, which killed scores of people on Hispaniola, as South Florida was pummeled by winds and high surf. At 5 a.m., the National Hurricane Center in Miami said Noel's center was located about 115 miles southwest of Nassau and about 180 miles southeast of Miami, moving north near 6 mph. Tropical storm force winds extended 130 miles from the center, forecasters said. Forecasters said Noel was producing sustained winds near 60 miles per hour with higher gusts and was expected to strengthen and dump up to 15 inches of rain on the Bahamas. A hurricane watch was posted for northwestern Bahamas and tropical storm warnings were in effect for the the Florida coastal areas of Miami-Dade and Broward counties. A tropical storm watch was in place from north of Ocean Reef to Jupiter Inlet, Fla. Emergency officials in the Dominican Republic said 41 people were dead and 38 missing after Noel hit the nation on the island of Hispaniola Tuesday, Dominican Today reported. At least 20 people died in Haiti, with another 14 injured and two missing as a result of flooding and mudslides, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corp. reported.

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