

# Hurricane threatens California

By Mark Stephenson  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LA PAZ, Mexico — Ignacio weakened to a tropical storm Tuesday as it drifted slowly toward the coast of the southern Baja California Peninsula, but forecasters said it still posed a danger of floods and mudslides. The hurricane was moving northwest into the peninsula at 3 mph, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami, which said mountainous terrain would weaken it. Forecasters said the storm could dissipate before the weekend.

A tropical storm warning remained in effect for the east coast of Baja from Loreto to La Paz, and for the west coast from Puerto San Adresito to Santa Fe.

Sustained winds dropped to 50 mph early Tuesday, 24 mph below the minimum speed for a hurricane.

The hurricane left hundreds of tourists stranded by canceled flights Monday night and forced the evacuation of nearly 3,000 people as it roared along the coast.

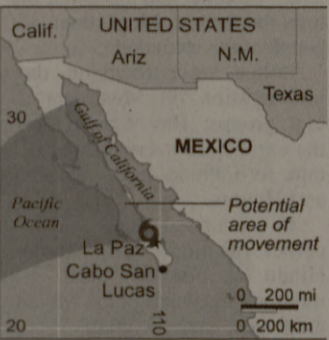
Mudslides cut one highway, and the hurricane's winds blew down trees, signposts and power cables.

There were no reports of any deaths or injuries, and the fear that marked the howling winds near dawn gave way to weariness later.

"Some people come in and

## Hurricane hovers over Baja California

**Hurricane Ignacio**  
Position: 24.5 N, 110.6 W  
Sustained winds: 75 mph  
Movement: WNW 3 mph  
As of 11 p.m. EDT Monday



SOURCE: AccuWeather, ESRI AP

say, 'Look, I just have to get back to my job, or my family,'" said airline ticket counter attendant Mauricio Bautista. "But most people are calm."

Most airline seats were booked solid through the end of the week with tourists seeking to get out even before Ignacio struck, and with the La Paz airport shut down by the storm Monday.

"We're really stuck," said Luciano Rea, 30, of Naples, Italy, as he stood on the rain-drenched sidewalk outside an airline ticket office.

Rea had been trying to get a flight to the United States for

three days, without any luck. A bright spot opened for other travelers when the airport opened again at San Jose del Cabo, about 50 miles south of La Paz, at the peninsula's tip.

Meanwhile, La Paz residents evacuated from their homes late Sunday already wanted to leave shelters and go home Monday, after spending the night on classroom floors at schools.

The state government warned of the continued threat of heavy rains.

State officials acknowledged some were already leaving shelters to check on their meager possessions in La Paz's shanty towns.

"The hard part about last night was how hard the floor was," said Paloma Garcia, who, along with her sons Angel and Christian, left their home in the Calandria neighborhood to take refuge in a classroom at a university. "Now I just want to go home and see how my house is."

Through much of the day, Mexican sailors using motorboats struggled against strong winds to pull sailboats off the rocks in the harbor of La Paz, the state capital and a center for fishermen and tourists.

The National Hurricane Center said the storm was likely to move gradually inland and weaken over the peninsula.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### American sets world record

BERLIN (AP) — An American set a world record for roller-coaster riding Tuesday, surpassing his own mark of 147 hours after six days of careening rides in a German amusement park, organizers said.

Richard Rodriguez, 43, followed Guinness Book of World Records rules requiring eight-hour periods of riding with no more than 15-minute breaks, the Holiday Park in the southwest

German town of Hassloch said in a statement.

Rodriguez used two roller-coasters at the amusement park in his record chase. For the purpose, one car on each ride was equipped with a small toilet and with seat padding.

Rodriguez first set a record of 147 hours at Holiday Park on July 16, then set out to surpass that mark last Wednesday, organizers said. He plans to stop later this week after reaching 195 hours.

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