

# HURRICANE BASH

## Katrina slams Fla., puts damper on awards show

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A DIVA NAMED Katrina played party pooper yesterday, sinking shindigs planned by Mariah Carey, Ricky Martin and other celebrities gathered in Miami for the MTV Video Music Awards.

Hurricane Katrina made landfall in South Florida at about 7:30 p.m. near North Miami Beach, pounding the coast with torrential rain and 80 mph winds, with gusts of up to 92 mph.

At least two people were killed in Fort Lauderdale as the whirring storm — a category 1 hurricane on the five-step Saffir-Simpson hurricane scale — came ashore. One man died when a hot electrical cable came down on his car, and another person was killed by a falling tree, officials said.

Gov. Jeb Bush declared a state of emergency even before the hurricane, kicking waves up to 17 feet, came to shore.

"People need to take this storm seriously," Bush warned.

A hurricane warning stretched almost the entire length of Florida's densely populated Atlantic Coast, the side of the state that has been spared damage from a series of powerful hurricanes that have ravaged the Gulf Coast this year. Katrina slammed into Broward County, which hadn't seen a hurricane for 41 years.

The hurricane was forecast to dump more than a foot of rain in some parts of South Florida, flooding out a week of parties planned around Sunday night's MTV awards.

The Port of Miami and the Port of Everglades were both closed to cruise ships yesterday, forcing Mariah Carey to cancel a party last night on a 120-foot yacht.

Stuff magazine's planned poolside bash on Miami's Palm



Island was moved indoors, and MTV officials scratched a party at the South Beach Doubletree hotel that was to be hosted by Ricky Martin.

"Activities were suspended ... and we're monitoring the situation every hour," said MTV spokesman Graham James.

But James insisted that the awards show, which is to be hosted by Sean (Diddy) Combs, would go on.

"The awards are 100% on," James said.

But some A-listers might have trouble getting to the MTV soiree. Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport was closed last night and the Miami International Airport was reporting major delays.

Some gas stations were running out of fuel because of the crush of motorists headed for higher ground.

Besides flooding and falling palm trees, officials were also worried about tornadoes. One funnel cloud was spotted just before 6 p.m. near Kennedy Space Center.

Katrina is the 11th named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, which began June 1.

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JOHN ROCA DAILY NEWS

Umbrella at restaurant in South Beach, Fla., comes down yesterday as winds rise from Hurricane Katrina.

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