UNESCO surveys the damage in Ayutthaya

International experts to help with restoration process at the UNESCO World Heritage site

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A worker cleans up the ruins at Wat Mahathat temple in Thailand's ancient Ayutthaya Historical Park.

Four international experts from UNESCO are in Thailand this week to survey the damage at Ayutthaya's ancient sites.

The former capital, about 75 kilometers north of Bangkok, was hit hard by floods in October, with waters receding earlier this month.

According to a report in The Nation, two experts from Japan, one from Italy and one from Holland will join UNESCO's Thailand team to survey and restore Ayutthaya's flood-damaged Historical Park.

Founded in 1350, Ayutthaya was the second Siamese capital after Sukhothai but was destroyed by the Burmese in the 18th century. The ruins of Ayutthaya and its associated historic towns were listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage site in 1991.

But although Ayutthaya's ancient structures have survived centuries of flooding, rain and tropical heat, the latest deluge may have delivered a fatal blow, reported the Bangkok Post.

"Damage to the buildings was compounded by the floodwater both surrounding the sites too quickly, and then being released too rapidly," said the report.

"Subsidence and weakening of the structures can be eased if the floodwater surrounding a historical structure is let out slowly, but this year over-eager local officials pumped the water out too quickly."

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