

Gulf cyclone dumps 3 years' rain in 1 day

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OMAN (AP) — A cyclone more powerful than any previously recorded in southern Oman slammed into the Gulf country and neighboring Yemen, deluging a major city with nearly three years' worth of rainfall in a single day.



The storm killed at least six people while more than 30 remain missing, officials said.

Cyclone Mekunu caused flash flooding that tore away whole roadways and submerged others in Salalah, Oman's thirdlargest city, stranding drivers. Strong winds knocked over street lights and tore away roofing.

Rushing waters from the rain and storm surges flooded typically dry creek beds. The holiday destination's now-empty tourist beaches were littered with debris and foam from the churning Arabian Sea.

Three people, including a 12-year-old girl, died in Oman, and another two bodies were recovered from the Yemeni island of Socotra. More than 30 people were still missing in Socotra, including Yemeni, Indian and Sudanese nationals.

Yemeni officials also reported damage in the country's far east, along the border with Oman.

Rageh Bakrit, the governor of al-Mahra province, said on his official Twitter account late Friday that strong winds had blown down houses and taken out communication lines and water services. He said there were no fatalities in the province.

India's Meteorological Department said the storm packed maximum sustained winds of 170-180 kilometers per hour with gusts of up to 200 kph. It called the cy-

clone “extremely severe.”

Portions of Salalah, home to some 200,000 people, lost power as the cyclone made landfall.

On the outskirts of the city, near the Salalah International Airport, what once was a dry creek bed had become a raging river.