

Hurricane Agatha leaves at least 10 dead, more than 30 missing in Mexico



A restaurant is destroyed in the aftermath of Hurricane Agatha in San Isidro del Palmar, Oaxaca state, Mexico [File: Jose de Jesus Cortes/Reuters]

Mexico City, June 1 (RHC)-- At least 10 people have been killed in flooding and mudslides caused by Hurricane Agatha in southern Mexico, the governor of the southern state of Oaxaca has said. The

hurricane came ashore on Monday, making it the most powerful storm on record to make landfall in May during the Pacific hurricane season.

While the Category 2 hurricane weakened as it passed over land, Oaxaca Governor Alejandro Murat said at least 10 people were killed either by rivers overflowing their banks and sweeping away homes or being buried under mud and rocks, he said.

“When Agatha made landfall, the day ended without any loss of human life, but heavy rains that occurred early Tuesday morning caused rivers to burst their banks and landslides,” Murat said on Tuesday, adding that 30 people remained missing.

He said the majority of deaths appeared to be concentrated in a number of small towns in the mountains, just inland from the coast. He added there were also reports of three children missing near the resort of Huatulco.

In the town of San Isidro del Palmar, only a couple miles inland from the coast, the Tonameca River overflowed, forcing residents to wade through neck-deep water to salvage what items they could from their homes, according to The Associated Press news agency.

Argeo Aquino, who has lived in the town his whole life, said he could recall only two other occasions when he saw such flooding. “The houses are totally flooded, so they are getting everything out,” Aquino told the news agency on Monday. “There are stores, houses. More than anything else, we have to try to save all the good material, because everything else is going to be washed away.”

In late May, US forecasters predicted a record Atlantic Ocean hurricane season for a seventh straight year. The deadliest storm to hit Mexico in 2021 was a Category 3 hurricane called Grace that killed 11 people in the eastern states of Veracruz and Puebla in August.

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