

= 1977 Oman cyclone =

The 1977 Oman cyclone was the deadliest tropical cyclone on record to strike Oman . The storm formed off the west coast of India in the Arabian Sea , and curved westward to reach peak winds of 110 km / h (70 mph) . The storm struck Masirah Island and later southern Oman on June 13 , before dissipating the next day over Saudi Arabia . Producing wind gusts to 230 km / h (140 mph) , the storm was the strongest cyclone on record to hit the Arabian Peninsula until Cyclone Gonu hit in 2007 . About 95 % of Marisah Island was damaged by the strong winds , including much of the military base . The cyclone dropped 430 @. @ 6 mm (16 @. @ 95 in) of rainfall over a 24 period on Marisah , which was the highest daily total in the country as of 2003 . Overall , the storm killed at least 105 people and left 50 @, @ 000 homeless .

= = Meteorological history = =

On June 6 , a monsoon depression formed in the Arabian Sea about 500 km (315 mi) south @- @ southwest of Goa , India . It initially paralleled the Indian coastline , becoming a tropical storm on June 9 with a minimum barometric pressure of 986 mbar (29 @. @ 1 inHg) . That day , the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) began tracking the system . The storm moved northward , followed by a northwest turn on June 10 . It curved toward the west , and the JTWC reported the cyclone as reaching peak 1 ? minute sustained winds of 110 km / h (70 mph) on June 11 . In addition , the India Meteorological Department estimated the system became a severe cyclonic storm , which has sustained winds of at least 118 km / h (73 mph) . On June 12 , the storm attained a minimum pressure of 975 mbar (28 @. @ 8 inHg) while continuing westward .

On June 13 , the eye of the cyclone passed over Masirah Island for a 40 minute period , producing peak sustained winds of 167 km / h (104 mph) and a minimum pressure of 956 mbar (28 @. @ 2 inHg) . The JTWC issued the final advisory at 0800 UTC that day . The Oman Department of Meteorology reported the storm as being much stronger than the JTWC , with sustained winds of 165 mph (105 km / h) and gusts to 230 km / h (140 mph) . The cyclone was the strongest on record to make landfall on the Arabian Peninsula , until Cyclone Gonu surpassed it in 2007 . Shortly after striking Masirah , the storm moved ashore mainland Oman , causing rapid weakening to tropical depression status . The system dissipated on June 14 after crossing into southeastern Saudi Arabia .

= = Impact and aftermath = =

Along the southwest coast of India , the storm produced high swells of up to 7 m (23 ft) in conjunction with the monsoon . The waves affected several drilling rigs operated by the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation , forcing work to shut down . The tanker Texaco Plymouth experienced significant structural damage from the storm , losing two lifeboats . The freighter Buxom Island in the central Arabian Sea experienced 139 km / h (86 mph) winds before sinking , which took the lives of 23 of its crew .

The military base in Masirah was first warned about the cyclone on June 11 . The next day , officials there raised a Category 3 warning , which was soon upgraded to Category 2 . Aircraft were stored in hangars , and workers inspected the roofs of buildings before riding out the storm in a shelter . Hurricane @- @ force winds struck during the morning hours of June 13 , with sustained winds peaking at 167 km / h (104 mph) and gusts to 200 km / h (124 mph) . After a lull during the eye 's passage , winds then increased out of the southwest towards 185 km / h (115 mph) . The strong winds caused buildings to collapse and roof beams to be blown through the air . Every building at the base sustained damage , and virtually all homes in the nearby village were leveled . The radio relay station on the island was also damaged . Overall , the storm wrecked about 95 % of the buildings in Masirah , leaving 2 @, @ 000 people homeless there . Rain totals were significant , with a total of 482 @. @ 3 mm (18 @. @ 99 in) falling 40 kilometres (25 mi) northeast of Salalah . A station on Masirah Island reported 430 @. @ 6 mm (16 @. @ 95 in) in 24 hours , more than six

times the average annual precipitation there . The total was the highest daily rainfall in the period from 1977 to 2003 nationwide . Floods washed away thousands of animals as well as lime and palm @-@ tree plantations , downing thousands of trees across the region . The rains flooded the main highway from Muscat to Salalah , and also accumulated in the typically dry Dhofar region . There , most drains were unable to withstand the unusual flooding .

The cyclone was considered the worst disaster in Oman during the 20th century , and remains the deadliest cyclone as of 2010 . Overall , the cyclone caused 105 deaths , and over 5 @,@ 000 injuries , and left about 50 @,@ 000 people homeless . The death toll is disputed , as another report indicated 110 deaths in Oman . After the storm , neighboring Saudi Arabia sent assistance to Oman , as did other nations in the Persian Gulf . The cyclone struck before the nation created a coordinated disaster network in 1988 ; as a result , the relief work was spread among various agencies .