

Tropical storm kills 17 in El Salvador and Guatemala

June 1 2020



Vehicles stand damaged by the Acelhuate River after a flash flood at a neighborhood in San Salvador, El Salvador, Sunday, May 31, 2020. According to the Ministry of the Interior, at least seven people died across the country after two days of heavy rains. (AP Photo/Salvador Melendez)

Rains from Tropical Storm Amanda left at least 17 dead and seven

missing while causing extensive damage across El Salvador and Guatemala that pushed thousands of people into shelters amid the coronavirus pandemic.

EL Salvador Interior Minister Mario Durán said Monday some 7,000 people were scattered across 154 shelters. He said a quarter of the rain that the country normally receives in a year fell in 70 hours.

That set off landslides and flooding, especially in the western part of the country. A day earlier officials had said at least 900 homes had been damaged.

President Nayib Bukele visited one of the most affected communities on the outskirts of San Salvador. Some 50 families lost their homes and Bukele said the government would give them \$10,000 to rebuild.

One whose home was damaged was María Torres. "We've never experienced this," she said. "The rain was so strong and suddenly the water entered the homes and we just saw how they fell."

The Legislative Assembly approved the government's use of a \$389 million loan from the International Monetary Fund to deal with the pandemic and the storm's impact.

El Salvador reports more than 2,500 infections and 46 deaths.

In Guatemala, a 9-year-old boy was swept away by a river and drowned and another person was killed when a home collapsed, said David de León, spokesman for the national disaster agency.



Vehicles stand damaged by an Acelhuate River flash flood at a neighborhood in San Salvador, El Salvador, Sunday, May 31, 2020. According to the Ministry of the Interior, at least seven people died across the country after two days of heavy rains. (AP Photo/Salvador Melendez)



The swollen Los Esclavos River flows violently under a bridge during tropical storm Amanda in Cuilapa, eastern Guatemala, Sunday, May 31, 2020. The first tropical storm of the Eastern Pacific season drenched parts of Central America on Sunday and officials in El Salvador said at least seven people had died in the flooding. (AP Photo/Moises Castillo)



The swollen Los Esclavos River flows violently during tropical storm Amanda in Cuilapa, eastern Guatemala, Sunday, May 31, 2020. The first tropical storm of the Eastern Pacific season drenched parts of Central America on Sunday and officials in El Salvador said at least seven people had died in the flooding. (AP Photo/Moises Castillo)



A man seeks to salvage some of his belongings from what used to be his home, destroyed by the waters of the Acelhuate River, in the New Israel Community of San Salvador, El Salvador, Sunday, May 31, 2020. According to the Ministry of the Interior at least seven people died across the country after two days of heavy rains. (AP Photo/Salvador Melendez)



Residents salvage a couch from their home after a flash flood by Acelhuate River, in a neighborhood of San Salvador, El Salvador, Sunday, May 31, 2020. According to the Ministry of the Interior, at least seven people died across the country after two days of heavy rains. (AP Photo/Salvador Melendez)

Amanda pounded El Salvador with rain for days before moving ashore as a tropical storm on Sunday and pushing across Guatemala.

It quickly dissipated, but the U.S. National Hurricane Center said Monday afternoon its remnants had formed into a tropical depression in the Bay of Campeche off Mexico's gulf coast and was expected to move through the Gulf of Mexico in coming days.

Mexico issued a tropical storm warning from Campeche west to the port

of Veracruz, expecting the depression to become a tropical storm Monday night or Tuesday.

It had sustained winds of 30 mph (45 kph) and was expected to move slowly just off the Mexican coast for the next couple days. The storm is expected to dump 10 to 15 inches of rain over the Mexican state of Tabasco and Veracruz with up to 20 inches in some isolated areas.

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