



SITUATION REPORT CYCLONE AILA

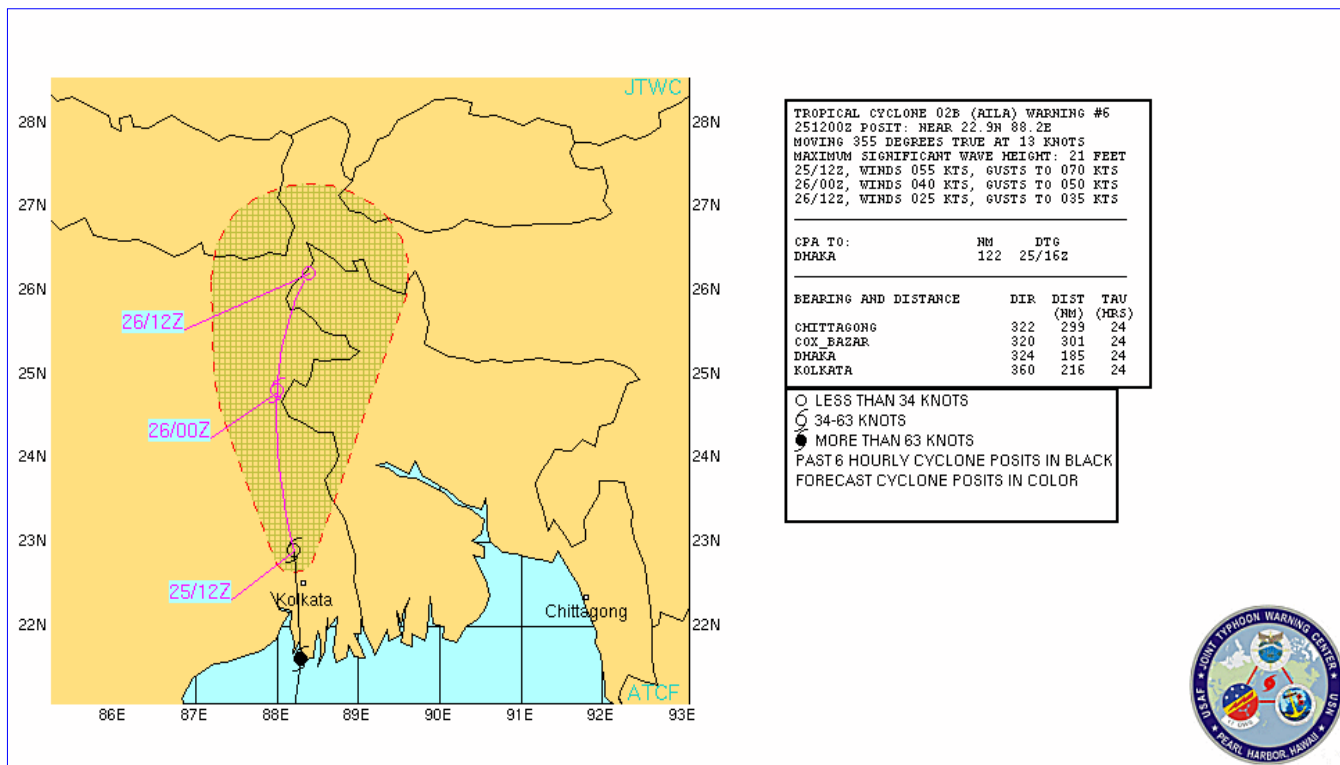
ORIGIN OF CYCLONE

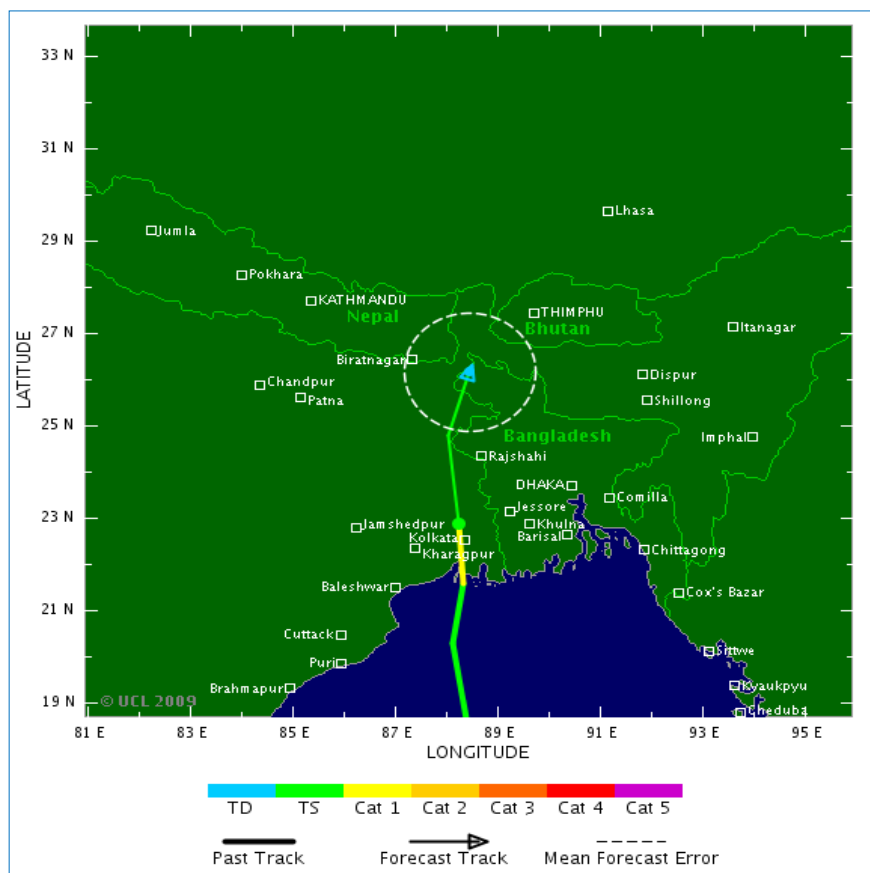
On 22 May 2009, the Kolkata Meteorological Department reported that a low pressure area had formed over West-central Bay of Bengal and adjoining East-central Bay of Bengal. The system was likely to intensify further. On 23 May, the department reported that the system had further intensified and was likely to concentrate into a Depression. On 24 May, the system intensified into a Deep Depression and lay about 550 kilometres south of Kolkata. The meteorological department predicted that the system was likely to intensify further into a Cyclonic Storm and cross West Bengal or Bangladesh coast near 89° East, about 100 kilometres east of Sagar Island by 25 May evening.

On 25 May, the Cyclonic Storm "Aila" over North West Bay, moved northwards and intensified further and lay centred at 0830 hrs IST with in half a degree of latitude 20.5°N/Longitude 88.0°E, about 250 Km south of Kolkata with estimated central pressure 984 HPA and move in a near northerly direction and cross West Bengal Coast near latitude 88.0 Deg East (near Sagar Islands).

On 26 May, Cyclone Aila over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & adjoining Bangladesh moved further northward, weakened into a deep depression and lay centred at 0830 hours IST over Sub -Himalayan West Bengal, about 50 km to the north of Malda. The system is likely to move in a near northerly direction and weaken into a depression during next six hours. Under its influence, rainfall at most places with heavy to very heavy falls at a few places and isolated extremely heavy falls (= 25 cm) is likely over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim and Assam & Meghalaya during next 24 hours. Rain/thundershower is also likely at many places with isolated heavy falls over Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura during next 24 hours. Squally wind speed reaching 50-60 kmph likely over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim, Assam & Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh during next 12 hours.

PATH OF CYCLONE AILA





DAMAGE DETAILS

Orissa: Coastal Orissa has been affected by heavy rains accompanied by high-velocity wind. Low-lying areas were inundated in the coastal districts of Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore following heavy rains since Sunday, 24 May. Around 400 thatched huts are thought to have been damaged.

West Bengal: The storm moved over the districts of North and South 24 Parganas, East Medinipur, Howrah, Hooghly and Bardhaman, to the west of Kolkata. Heavy rains were accompanied by winds of up to 120 kph, uprooting trees, causing road blockages and severe damage to electricity and telephone cables.

- All flights at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose international airport have been suspended and train services have been severely disrupted. Shops, schools and colleges and offices were closed as a preventive measure. The accompanying rains caused water logging in large parts of the Kolkata city, while power supply remained erratic. Basic services have been damaged and interrupted.
- In the Sunderban area, hundreds of mud houses are reported to have collapsed and 200 villages have been flooded following breaches in embankments. Thousands of people are seeking shelter inside schools and government buildings. About 400,000 people remained marooned.
- In the North and South 24 Parganas, more than 8 blocks including Sandeshkhali I & II (primary location for Child Domestic Workers & Trafficking project) are severely affected by flooding and wind damage.
- Local NGOs are reporting that embankments have been breached in at least 10 different places, inundating many areas.
- In East Medinipur, many mud houses in development blocks Khejuri 1 and Bhagabanpur 1 in East Medinipur are reported to have been destroyed. Both Egra and Contai Sub-Divisions of East Medinipur district are affected. In Egra 1 block, the Egra Municipality area is badly hit, with 4,600 mainly Muslim families affected. In the same area 56 houses are completely damaged and 703 houses are partly damaged. In total 17 villages are affected in this block and 4,000 hectares of vegetable crop are feared damaged. In Patashpur 1 block, 140 villages are reportedly affected.



Damage details in West Bengal as of 26 May 2009:

SN	Item	North 24 Pgs	South 24 Pgs	Kolkata	Howrah	Hooghly	Bardha- man	Purba Medinipur	Total
1	Natural Disaster	Cyclonic Storm with H.R	Cyclonic Storm with H.R	Cyclonic Storm with H.R	Cyclonic Storm with H.R	Cyclonic Storm with L.R	Cyclonic Storm		
2	Date & time of Occurrence	24-25.05.09	24-25.05.10	24-25.05.11	24-25.05.12	25.05.21	25.05.22	25.05.27	
3	No. of Blocks affected	10							10
4	No. of Municipality / ward affected	3							3
5	No. of villages affected	198	903			224			1,325
6	Population affected	150,752	311,466		47,770	100,928	6,600		617,516
7	No. of human lives lost		11	5	7	3		1	27
8	No. of houses Damaged	F	42 35	17,547		2,463	5,779	45	30,069
		P	92 30	35,619		7,131	12,016	918	64,914

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Orissa

The administrations of six coastal districts of Orissa have taken the following steps in preparedness of Cyclone Aila:

- ✚ Control rooms are functioning and in contact with cyclone shelters
- ✚ Godowns are filled with relief materials
- ✚ The state government has warned NGOs, Shelter Secretaries, Volunteers to be alert for the cyclone
- ✚ Alert has been given to ODRAF (Orissa Disaster Rapid Assistance Force) teams
- ✚ In Kendrapada district in coastal Orissa, due to heavy rain in four villages (Kanhupur, Balishuvani, Suniti, Gagua), 400 people stayed in a school building on 24 and 25 May. On 26 May, they started to go back to their homes. The district administration is distributing relief for three days. People living in huts have lost their homes. The district administration is engaged in a damage assessment.

West Bengal

- ✚ The Chief Minister of West Bengal held a high-level preparedness meeting on 25 and reviewed the situation with a group of ministers and senior officials. The CM announced that the Army had been asked to conduct rescue operations in the most difficult areas of the Sundarbans. High level state officials are in the field reviewing the situation.
- ✚ The State & District EOC (Emergency Operations Centre) is running 24/7. Additionally, Kolkata Police and the KMC (Kolkata Municipal Corporation) have opened control rooms to monitor and tackle the situation.
- ✚ The police in Kolkata has kept boats ready for emergency evacuation of people from low-lying areas, while the Rapid Action Force and the Quick Response Team are also on alert. Civil Defence forces are already in the field.



- ✚ The disaster relief wing of the Indian Army has been put on alert and Border Security Forces and police have begun rescue operations in the Sunderbans region.
- ✚ Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India, announced ex gratia relief of Rs 200,000 (US\$ 4,000) for each of those killed in the cyclone in and other areas of east India.
- ✚ The State Government has allotted tarpaulin amounting to 20,000 for South 24 Parganas and 10,000 each for North 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur districts.
- ✚ The State Government has allotted Rs 100,000 for South 24 Parganas district for relief contingency and Rs 500,000 each for North 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur districts.
- ✚ In East Medinipur district, 33 rescue centres have been opened by the district administration in 2 sub-divisions (3 in Egra and 30 in Contai). They are being used by people whose homes have been destroyed by the winds (rather than by flooding). In Contai 2 blocks, 2,540 families are in a rescue shelter. In Nij Kasba Gaon panchayat 900 families are in rescue shelters.
- ✚ Government's Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has made arrangements to provide safe drinking water to the affected families through mobile purification units. As of 25 May, PHED has distributed some 50,000 water pouches in South 24 Parganas. Disinfection teams have been mobilised to treat the contaminated water sources.
- ✚ Government's Department of Health Services has constituted one control room at state headquarters and three medical officers are coordinating the preventing aspects of any outbreaks in the affected areas.

Relief efforts in West Bengal as of 26 May 2009:

SN	Item	North 24 Pgs	South 24 Pgs	Kolkata	Howrah	Hooghly	Bardhaman	Purba Medinipur	Total
1	No. of Relief Camps	28	81						109
2	No. of Medical Camps		30						30
3	No. of people in Relief Camps & shelters		37,900						37,900

UN & NGO RESPONSE

UNDP: Volunteers under the Disaster Risk Management Programme are deployed by the Government in the field in West Bengal to collect information and monitor the situation.

UNICEF:

- ✚ UNICEF is in close contact with senior officials of Disaster Management Department, Government of West Bengal and National Disaster Relief Force, as well as with Indian Red Cross Society, West Bengal State Inter-agency group (IAG) partners, Ram Krishna Mission Lokshiksha Parishad (RKMLP), Narendarpur and 12 cluster organisations who are currently assessing the situation that will enable planning for appropriate response and preparedness.
- ✚ RKMLP, UNICEF's NGO partner, has been advised to use the pre-positioned emergency supplies that includes 2,000 water jerrycans, 800,000 halogen tablets, 3,134 family hygiene kits, 90,000 ORS packets, etc.
- ✚ All UNICEF staff members have been checked through warden system.
- ✚ A multi-sectoral rapid assessment will be launched by UNICEF and partners in the most affected areas upon completion of the preliminary assessment through secondary sources, and when the physical conditions allow the travel.

IAG (Inter-Agency Group): The IAG Orissa and IAG West Bengal, as well as the humanitarian agencies are keeping a close watch on the track and impact of Cyclone Aila. The IAG West Bengal called for an emergency meeting for unified response on 26 May at 1630 hours in Kolkata.



Save the Children: Save the Children has begun dialogue with Sphere-Unified Response Strategy and Inter-Agency Group to monitor and evolve Joint Rapid Assessment from 26 May if teams will be able to move into the affected areas.

MEDIA REPORTS

Cyclone Aila kills 31 in Bengal, Army helps with rescue : It was a devastation not seen in recent memory. What started as a small trough of depression in the Bay of Bengal on 23 May, moved rapidly towards coastal West Bengal, gathered guile and made landfall near the Sagar Islands at around 2 pm on Monday, 25 May. Christened Aila, the cyclone blew over large parts of South 24 -Parganas, kissed Kolkata at over 120 km per hour and moved away towards Howrah and Hooghly. At least 31 people have fallen victim to the fury of Aila, most of them from South 24 Parganas. In Kolkata, seven people died as vehicles were crushed under uprooted trees. Deaths were also reported from Howrah, Hooghly, North 24-Parganas and Bankura. The Met department in Alipore, which has been monitoring the cyclone, said Aila was moving towards Burdwan but thankfully losing its power. Though the worst is over, heavy rains and winds will continue to lash Kolkata and its neighbouring areas for the next 24 hours. At least 200,000 people have been rendered homeless in South 24 Parganas and the army has been called out to reach inaccessible areas. By Monday afternoon, over 50,000 people were rescued. Kolkata Municipal Corporation officials said at least 6,000 trees were uprooted across the city. Dum Dum Airport shut all services after noon and over 44 flights were either diverted or cancelled. (Hindustan Times)

Centre rushes relief force to Bengal, Orissa: As a cyclone hit the coastal areas of West Bengal and Orissa, the Centre on Monday, 25 May said it had fully mobilised the disaster relief mechanism and sent around 1,000 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force to deal with the crisis. They also said that 76 boats and rescue material are ready. Union home minister P Chidambaram who also discussed the rescue matters with FM Pranab Mukherjee and defence minister A K Antony, said around 200 personnel of the riverine units of B SF, based in Sundarbans, have been rushed for rescue operations. (The Times of India)

SOURCES & CONTACT DETAILS

Sources:

- Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)
- Regional Meteorological Centre, Kolkata
- UNDP Orissa office
- UNICEF Briefing Note No.1
- Sphere India SITREP 1& 2 on Cylone Aila
- Save the Children Emergency Situation Report No. 1
- Tropical Storm Risk

For Further Information contact :

Mr. G. Padmanabhan
Emergency Analyst, UNDP
Email: g.padmanabhan@undp.org
Mobile: +91 98104 02937

Ms. Shairi Mathur
UN Disaster Management Team Associate
Email: shairi.mathur@undp.org
Mobile : +91 98107 23192
<http://www.un.org.in/UNDMT/home.htm>