

Names of Tropical Cyclones

1. Historical Background

The practice of naming storms (tropical cyclones) began years ago in order to help in the quick identification of storms in warning messages because names are presumed to be far easier to remember than the numbers and technical terms. Many agree that appending names to storms makes it easier for the media to report on tropical cyclones, heightens interest in warnings and increases community preparedness.

Experience shows that the use of short, distinctive names in written as well as spoken communications is quicker.

In the beginning, storms were named arbitrarily. Then the mid-1900's saw the start of the practice of using feminine names for storms. In the pursuit of a more organized and efficient naming system, meteorologists later decided to identify storms using names from a list arranged alphabetically. Thus, a storm with a name which begins with A, like Anne, would be the first storm to occur in the year. Before the end of 1900's, forecasters started using male names for those forming in the Southern Hemisphere. Since 1953, Atlantic tropical storms have been named from lists originated by the National Hurricane Center. They are now maintained and updated by an international committee of the World Meteorological Organization.

It is important to note that tropical cyclones /hurricanes are named neither after any particular person, nor with any preference in alphabetical sequence. The tropical cyclone/hurricane names selected are those that are familiar to the people in each region. Obviously, the main purpose of naming a tropical cyclone/hurricane is basically for people easily to understand and remember the tropical cyclone/hurricane in a region, thus to facilitate tropical cyclone/hurricane disaster risk awareness, preparedness, management and reduction.

2. Importance for naming tropical cyclones:

- It would help identify each individual tropical cyclone.
- It helps the public to become fully aware of its development.
- Local and international media become focused to the tropical cyclone.
- It does not confuse the public when there is more than one tropical cyclone in the same area.
- The name of the tropical cyclone is well remembered by million of people as it is unforgettable event shoes name will long be remembered.
- Warnings reach a much wider audience very rapidly.

3. Procedure for Naming of Tropical Cyclone

There is a strict procedure to determine a list of tropical cyclone names in an ocean basin(s) by the Tropical Cyclone Regional Body responsible for that basin(s) at its annual/biennial meeting. There are five tropical cyclones regional bodies, i.e. ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee, WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones, RA I Tropical Cyclone Committee, RA IV Hurricane Committee, and

RA V Tropical Cyclone Committee. The areas of responsibility of different RSMCs are shown in Fig. 1. The Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC) – Tropical cyclones is responsible for monitoring and prediction of tropical cyclones over their respective regions. They are also responsible to name the cyclones.

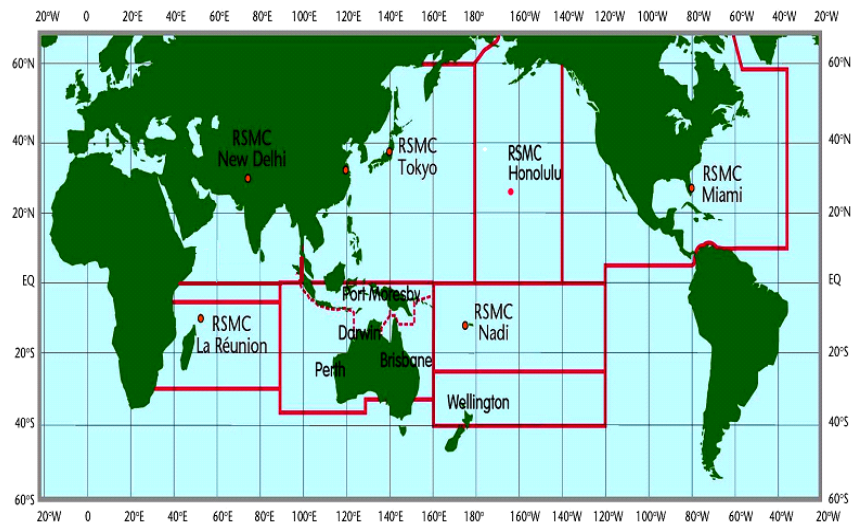


Fig.1 Areas of responsibility of different RSMCs

In general, tropical cyclones are named according to the rules at a regional level. For instance, Hurricane Committee determines a pre-designated list of Hurricane names. As an example for north Atlantic Ocean six lists are used in rotation. Thus, the 2008 list will be used again in 2014. For the eastern north Pacific Ocean the lists are also re-cycled every six years (the 2008 list will be used again in 2014). For central north Pacific Ocean the names are used one after the other. When the bottom of one list is reached, the next name is the top of the next list. For the details of the names of the tropical cyclones over different Ocean basins, kindly visit WMO website (www.wmo.int/pages/prog/www/tcp/Storm-naming.html)

4. Naming of tropical cyclones over north Indian Ocean.

The WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones at its twenty-seventh Session held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman agreed in principal to assign names to the tropical cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea. After long deliberations among the member countries, the naming of the tropical cyclones over north Indian Ocean commenced from September 2004.

- The Panel member's name are listed alphabetically country wise.
- The name will be used sequentially column wise.
- The first name will start from the first row of column one and continue sequentially to the last row in column eight. Example, this will be as Onil, Hibar, Pyar, Baaz Amphan
- The names which have been already used from the list are highlighted.

The RSMC tropical cyclones New Delhi gives a tropical cyclone an identification name from the above name list. The identification system covers

both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. These lists are used sequentially, and they are not rotated every few years as are the Atlantic and Eastern Pacific lists.

If public wants to suggest the name of a cyclone to be included in the list, the proposed name must meet some fundamental criteria. The name should be short and readily understood when broadcast. Further the names must not be culturally sensitive and not convey some unintended and potentially inflammatory meaning. A storm causes so much death and destruction that its name is considered for retirement and hence is not used repeatedly. The suggested name pertaining to India may be communicated to Director General of Meteorology, India Meteorological Department, Mausam Bhawan, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110003 for consideration.

Naming of Tropical Cyclones over north Indian Ocean

| Panel Member | Column one | | Column two | | Column three | | Column four | |
|--------------|-------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------|--------------|----------|
| | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' |
| Bangladesh | Onil | Onil | Ogni | Og-ni | Nisha | Ni-sha | Giri | Gi-ri |
| India | Agni | Ag'ni | Akash | Aakaa'sh | Bijli | Bij'li | Jal | Jal |
| Maldives | Hibaru | -- | Gonu | -- | Aila | -- | Keila | -- |
| Myanmar | Pyarr | Pyarr | Yemyin | Ye-myin | Phyan | Phyan | Thane | Thane |
| Oman | Baaz | Ba-az | Sidr | Sidr' | Ward | War'd | Murjan | Mur'jaan |
| Pakistan | Fanoos | Fanoos | Nargis | Nar gis | Laila | Lai la | Nilam | Ni lam |
| Sri Lanka | Mala | -- | Rashmi | Rash'mi | Bandu | -- | Mahasen | -- |
| Thailand | Mukda | Muuk-dar | Khai Muk | Ki-muuk | Phet | Pet | Phailin | Pi-lin |
| Panel Member | Column five | | Column six | | Column seven | | Column eight | |
| | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' | Names | Pron' |
| Bangladesh | Helen | Helen | Chapala | Cho-po-la | Ockhi | Ok-khi | Fani | Foni |
| India | Lehar | Le'har | Megh | Me'gh | Sagar | Saa'gar | Vayu | Vaa'yu |
| Maldives | Madi | -- | Roanu | -- | Mekunu | -- | Hikaa | -- |
| Myanmar | Nanauk | Na-nauk | Kyant | Kyant | Daye | Da-ye | Kyarr | Kyarr |
| Oman | Hudhud | Hud'hud | Nada | N'nada | Luban | L'luban | Maha | M'maha |
| Pakistan | Nilofar | Ni lofar | Vardah | Var dah | Titli | Titli | Bulbul | Bul bul |
| Sri Lanka | Priya | -- | Asiri | Aa'siri | Gigum | Gi'gum | Soba | -- |
| Thailand | Komen | Goh-men | Mora | Moh-rar | Phethai | Pay-ti | Amphan | Um-pun |