

## **How are Cyclones named?**

**10<sup>th</sup> October, 2018**



Cyclonic storm ‘TITLI’ has hit the Bay of Bengal and another cyclonic storm ‘LUBAN’ has hit the Arabian sea.

### **How are cyclones named?**

In September 2004, an international panel on tropical cyclones decided that countries from the region would each put in names, which would be assigned to storms in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea.

- Eight countries — India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Sri Lanka and Thailand – participated and came up with a list of 64 names.
- In the event of a storm, the Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre, New Delhi, selects a name from the list.

### **Why it is necessary to name cyclones?**

The late origin of this naming system — unlike storms in the Atlantic, which have been getting named since 1953 — was ostensibly to protect sensitivities in the ethnically diverse region.

The purpose of the move was also to make it easier for “people easily to understand and remember the tropical cyclone/hurricane in a region, thus to facilitate disaster risk awareness, preparedness, management and reduction.

### **Guidelines for naming cyclones:**

Citizens can submit names to the Director General of Meteorology, IMD, for consideration, but the weather agency has strict rules for the selection process.

- A name, for instance, ‘should be short and readily understood when broadcast’.
- The names must also be neutral, ‘not culturally sensitive and not convey some unintended and potentially inflammatory meaning’.
- Furthermore, on the account of the ‘death and destruction’ a storm in the Indian Ocean causes, their names are retired after use, unlike those in the Atlantic and Eastern Pacific lists, which are reused every few years.

### **Cyclone categories:**

- Category 1: Wind and gales of 90-125 kph, negligible house damage, some damage to trees and crops.
- Category 2: Destructive winds of 125-164 kph. Minor house damage, significant damage to trees, crops and caravans, risk of power failure.
- Category 3: Very destructive winds of 165-224 kph. Some roof and structural damage, some caravans destroyed, power failure likely.
- Category 4: Very destructive winds of 225-279 kph. Significant roofing loss and structural damage, caravans destroyed, blown away, widespread power failures.
- Category 5: Very destructive winds gusts of more than 280 kph. Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.

### **Names reused every six years:**

Atlantic and Pacific storm names are reused every six years, but are retired “if a storm is so deadly or costly that the future use of the name would be insensitive or confusing,” according to forecasters at the US National Hurricane Center in Miami.

**Cyclone season:**

The country's cyclone season runs from April to December, with severe storms often causing dozens of deaths, evacuations of tens of thousands of people from low-lying villages and wide damage to crops and property.

**What's the difference between hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons?**

- Hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons are all tropical storms. They are all the same thing but are given different names depending on where they appear. When they reach populated areas they usually bring very strong wind and rain which can cause a lot of damage.
- Hurricanes are tropical storms that form over the North Atlantic Ocean and Northeast Pacific. Cyclones are formed over the South Pacific and Indian Ocean. Typhoons are formed over the Northwest Pacific Ocean

**To be looked in UPSC Paper 1 Topic:** Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.