

= Tropical Storm Linda ( 1997 ) =

Severe Tropical Storm Linda , known in the Philippines as Tropical Depression Openg , was the worst typhoon in southern Vietnam in at least 100 years , killing thousands of people and leaving extensive damage . It formed on October 31 , 1997 in the South China Sea , between Indochina and the Philippines . Strengthening as it moved westward , Linda struck extreme southern Vietnam on November 2 with winds of 65 mph ( 100 km / h ) , dropping heavy rainfall . Once in the Gulf of Thailand it strengthened further to minimal typhoon status , but weakened to tropical storm strength before crossing the Malay Peninsula into the Bay of Bengal , the first storm to do so in five years . It restrengthened in the Indian Ocean to typhoon status , but increasing wind shear and weakened steering currents caused Linda to dissipate on November 9 .

The worst of Linda 's impact was in Vietnam , where 3 @, @ 111 people were killed , and damage totaled \$ 385 million ( USD ) . Heavy rainfall caused flooding , which damaged or destroyed about 200 @, @ 000 houses and left about 383 @, @ 000 people homeless . Widespread crop and transportation damage also occurred , the latter which impeded relief efforts . Several countries around the world sent relief aid , including medical teams , food , and clothing . However , the food supply and health status of the storm victims proved not as bad as originally feared . Linda later struck Thailand , causing flash flooding and at least 164 deaths . The storm also affected Burma ( Myanmar ) , Indonesia , Malaysia , and Cambodia to a lesser degree .

= = Meteorological history = =

The origins of Typhoon Linda were from an area of convection that were first noted east of the Philippines on October 26 . A subtropical ridge persisted to the north , which caused the disturbance to move generally westward . On October 29 , the system crossed the Philippines and entered the South China Sea . It subsequently began to organize , and late on October 31 , the Joint Typhoon Warning Center ( JTWC ) initiated advisories on Tropical Depression 30W . At that time , the system was located off the northwest coast of Borneo . The PAGASA organization named it " Openg " .

Shortly after developing , the depression intensified into a tropical storm , and was named " Linda " by the JTWC . It continued to intensify , reaching winds of 65 mph ( 100 km / h ) as it approached southern Vietnam . At 0900 UTC on November 2 , Linda made landfall in the Vietnamese province of Cà Mau . It maintained its strength over land , and the storm quickly reached typhoon status after entering the Gulf of Thailand ; a typhoon is a tropical cyclone with winds of at least 75 mph ( 120 km / h ) , although Linda did not intensify beyond minimal typhoon status . Turning northwestward , Linda deteriorated to tropical storm strength , and struck Thailand late on November 3 with winds of 65 mph ( 100 km / h ) .

Linda weakened further over the mountainous terrain of the Malay Peninsula , and the storm emerged into the Andaman Sea with winds of 50 mph ( 85 km / h ) . This made Linda the first tropical cyclone since Tropical Storm Forrest in 1992 to cross from the western Pacific Ocean into the Indian Ocean . Additionally , upon reaching the Indian Ocean , the India Meteorological Department ( IMD ) classified the storm as Cyclonic Storm BOB 08 , with winds of 40 mph ( 70 km / h ) . With warm waters , Tropical Storm Linda gradually re @-@ intensified as it slowed down , due to a weakness in the subtropical ridge . On November 6 , it again attained typhoon status while located off the southwest coast of Burma ( Myanmar ) . Initially , it was expected to cross the Bay of Bengal and make landfall near the India / Bangladesh border . The cyclone only maintained peak strength for 18 hours , due to an increase in wind shear from a mid @-@ latitude trough . Linda 's motion became nearly stationary , and it gradually weakened for several days . On November 9 , Linda dissipated about 375 miles ( 600 km ) southwest of Yangon , Burma . That day , the IMD also terminated advisories .

= = Impact and aftermath = =

Prior to the arrival of the storm , officials in Vietnam issued warnings to the residents , although its

approach was faster than expected , and the region rarely experiences tropical cyclones . Tropical Storm Linda dropped heavy rainfall across southern Vietnam , peaking at 9 @. @ 17 inches ( 23 @. @ 3 cm ) in C?n Th? . The storm caused heavy damage in the country , particularly in the southernmost province of Cà Mau where it struck , but also in B?c Liêu , Sóc Tr?ng , and Kiên Giang . The most severely affected regions were poor fishing communities . Overall , the storm damaged 139 @, @ 445 houses and wrecked 76 @, @ 609 more , which left 383 @, @ 045 people homeless . Thousands of schools were damaged , and 130 @, @ 815 dykes were breached . Additionally , the storm destroyed at least 3 @, @ 122 boats . The rainfall also flooded 1 @, @ 750 square miles ( 4 @, @ 500 km<sup>2</sup> ) of rice paddy crop , about half of which in Cà Mau . A preliminary damage total was estimated at 7 @. @ 18 trillion dong ( \$ 385 million USD ) .

Typhoon Linda caused considerable deaths in Vietnam . Many fishermen and sailors were caught at sea in the path of the storm , unable to escape its path . Within three days , the death toll in Vietnam was set at over 150 , with thousands missing , many of them fishermen . By the fourth day after the storm , the toll reached 390 , and on November 14 , eight days after the storm , the death toll reached 464 . Ultimately , the death toll was set at 3 @, @ 111 . Eight days after Linda 's passage , a United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs ( DHA ) report indicated 857 people were injured by the storm . The government quickly established search and rescue teams , particularly for missing fishermen , and a total of 3 @, @ 513 people were rescued after the storm . In the weeks after the storm , hundreds of dead bodies washed ashore in Vietnam and Thailand .

The Vietnamese government identified basic supplies that it needed in response to the storm ; those included various foods , clothing , medicine , shelter supplies , and sanitation equipment . The country made a formal request for international assistance , noting that the storm was the worst in 100 years , and officials had limited resources due to the unexpected destruction . Prior to the request , the government of Switzerland sent about 500 @, @ 000 Swiss francs ( \$ 360 @, @ 000 USD ) for immediate relief assistance . Subsequently , ten other countries sent cash or relief supplies worth \$ 2 @. @ 6 million , including medical shelters from the United States , clothing from the United Kingdom , tents from Russia , and transport goods from Japan . Red Cross workers had to travel by riverboat to bring aid to the most affected communities , due to the poor state of the roads . After two months , the Red Cross distributed 65 @, @ 401 roofing sheets , 390 metric tons of rice , 11 @, @ 990 mosquito nets , 6 @, @ 871 blankets , 3 @, @ 664 medical kits , and abundant clothing supplies to about 150 @, @ 000 affected people ; the supplies were purchased in Ho Chi Minh City . Eventually , the food supply and health status of the storm victims proved not as bad as originally feared . After the assistance was distributed , the Red Cross shifted focus toward reconstruction . Reconstruction was slow , partly due to a slowdown in economic activity from the Vietnamese New Year . Additionally , the two primary factories responsible for making iron and construction frames were only intermittently open , due to machines failing .

Elsewhere , moderate damage was also reported in Thailand , where at least 12 casualties were reported on land , and at least 152 fishermen were killed at sea . Flash flooding occurred in six districts , which damaged about 88 square miles ( 230 km<sup>2</sup> ) of croplands and destroyed 12 houses . Land transportation was affected , with 184 roads and 14 bridges damaged . The government of Thailand sent 20 medical teams to the most affected areas . Following the storm , about 10 @, @ 600 people became sick from flood related diseases . Heavy rains fell in Tanintharyi Division in southeastern Burma ( Myanmar ) , although because the winds were not strong , there was little damage . The typhoon increased smog and haze in Indonesia and Malaysia , which had been occurring for weeks . In Indonesia , the typhoon also removed atmospheric moisture , which lowered the chance for rain in areas affected by wildfires . Cambodia was also affected by the outskirts of the storm .