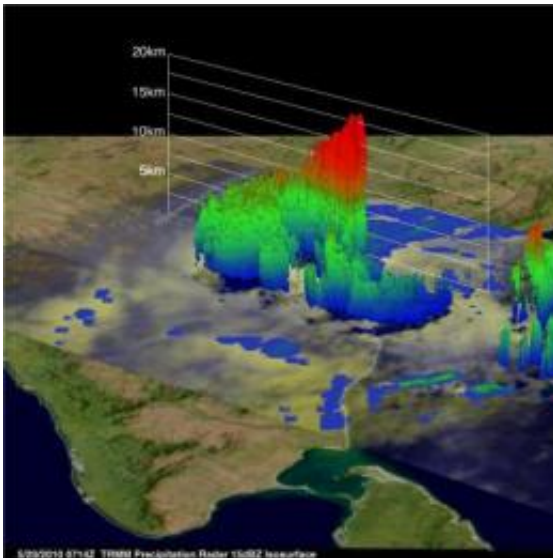


NASA sees one of Cyclone Laila's thunderstorms almost 11 miles high

May 21 2010



This 3-D image of Cyclone Laila was made using data from TRMM's Precipitation Radar. It shows that the powerful thunderstorms northwest of tropical cyclone Laila shot up to heights above 17.5 kilometers (~57,415 feet/10.8 miles). Credit: NASA/SSAI, Hal Pierce

A NASA 3-D look inside Cyclone Laila as it made landfall yesterday revealed a towering thunderstorm reaching almost 11 miles high! NASA's Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM) satellite has been capturing images of Cyclone Laila since it was born in the Northern Indian Ocean as tropical depression 1A earlier this week.

Scientists at NASA can use TRMM data to provide meteorologists a 3-D

look at the storm's cloud heights and rainfall, which are extremely helpful in forecasting.

"One of the interesting capabilities of the TRMM satellite is its ability to see through clouds with its [Precipitation Radar](#) (PR) and reveal the 3-D structure within storms such as Cyclone Laila," said Hal Pierce, on the TRMM mission team in the Mesoscale Atmospheric Processes Branch at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

Pierce created a 3-D image of Laila. He used data captured on May 20 when TRMM also got a "top down" view of the storm's rainfall, and created a 3-D image that shows thunderstorm tops reaching to almost 17.5 kilometers (10.8 miles) high in the eastern side of the storm!

Laila brought nine-foot high waves and very heavy rains before it made landfall near the town of Bapatla which lies on the southeast coast of India. The Associated Press reports that 23 deaths have been attributed to the storm. Meanwhile, state officials reported widespread damage, downed trees, power outages, and flooding.

On May 21 at 1200 UTC (8 a.m. EDT), Laila had weakened into a depression as a result of tracking over the rugged terrain of southeastern India. At 8 a.m. EDT Laila's [maximum sustained winds](#) had waned to near 38 mph. It was located about 115 nautical miles west-southwest of Visakhapatnam, India and headed in that direction. It was moving north-northeast near 6 mph (5 knots). Widespread heavy rain and gusty winds can be expected from Andhra Pradesh today, and to areas northeast through the weekend as Laila tracks in that direction. For the most recent updates on Laila, go to the India Meteorological Department web site at: www.imd.gov.in/.

Laila is now a depression and is forecast to track in a northeasterly direction over the weekend, bringing moderate to heavy rains to the

northeastern coast of India, as it heads to Bangladesh. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center expects Laila's remnants to emerge over the northern Bay of Bengal, intensify slightly and then dissipate before reaching southeastern Bangladesh. Forecasters will be keeping a close eye on the storm over the weekend.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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