

## TROPICAL CYCLONE 04B

Tropical Cyclone 04B was the second of two significant tropical cyclones to develop in the Bay of Bengal during November. This cyclone (Figure 3-04B-1) was one of the most intense to strike Bangladesh and eastern India in this century.

The formation of Tropical Cyclone 04B was preceded by a sustained surge of the northeast winter monsoon and low-level convergence across the Malay Peninsula. Beginning 19 November, prolonged, heavy rains occurred in northern Malaysia and southern Thailand. Flash flooding and mud-

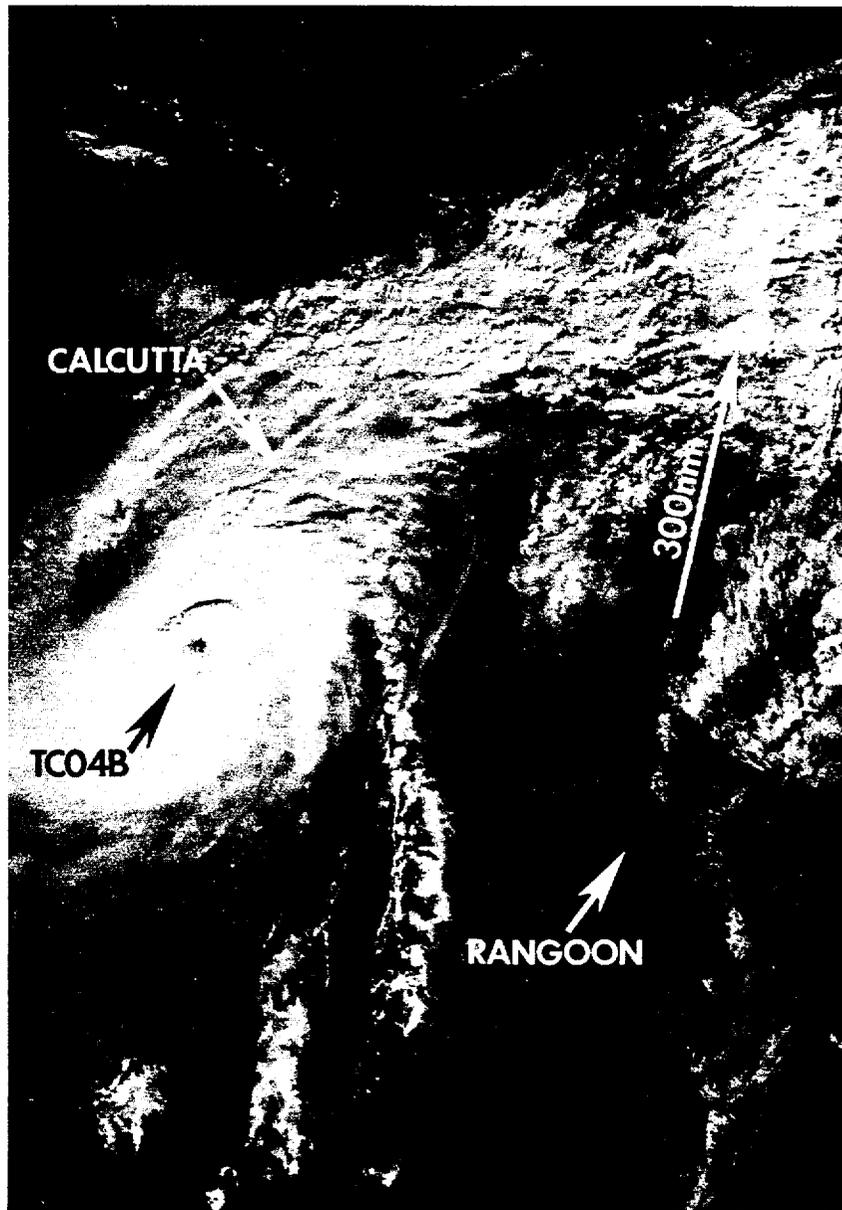


Figure 3-04B-1. Tropical Cyclone 04B approaching the coast with maximum sustained winds of over 100 kt (51 m/sec) (290251Z November DMSP visual imagery).

slides from deforested hillsides swept across low-lying villages, killing at least 1000 people and rendering another 100,000 homeless. At 211800Z, Tropical Cyclone 04B consolidated in the Straits of Malacca and was first mentioned on the Significant Tropical Weather Advisory. The central convection, organization and satellite intensity estimates quickly increased and a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert was issued at 231830Z. The system tracked northwestward while remaining south of the subtropical ridge. The central convection continued to increase and organize, and the first warning followed at 240600Z.

Shortly after attaining typhoon intensity, at 260000Z, the system began tracking around

the western periphery of the mid-level subtropical ridge. The ridge was broad, which allowed the tropical cyclone to move northward for three days prior to making landfall over the delta of the Ganges River. During this period Tropical Cyclone 04B gradually intensified, reaching a peak of 110 kt (57 m/sec) at the coast. As the cyclone swept inland, it ravaged the southern Bangladesh and northeastern India coastal zones, leaving at least 2000 people dead, 6000 missing and almost three million homeless. Up to seventy percent of the crops ready for harvest were destroyed. Bangladesh, which was attempting to recover from earlier flooding during the summer, in which 1500 lives were lost and countless were left homeless, was particularly hard hit.