

## Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. **stormy** (adjective) – turbulent, volatile, intense/tumultuous.
2. **forecast** (noun) – prediction, indication, projection, prognosis, speculation, calculation (of future events or trends).
3. **resilience** (noun) – strength; the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.
4. **building** (noun) – the establishment of something.
5. **hold the key** (phrase) – to have control over something.
6. **weary** (verb) – tire, exhaust, fatigue, overtire, overtax, drain.
7. **onslaught** (noun) – attack, assault, onrush, aggression.
8. **coronavirus** (CoV) (noun) – a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, the infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. (Courtesy: [WHO](#))
9. **contend with** (phrasal verb) – deal with, cope with, face, grapple with (a difficult or unpleasant situation).
10. **furious** (adjective) – enraged, raging, infuriated, incensed.
11. **tropical cyclone** (noun) – a very powerful low-pressure weather system that results in strong winds (over 120 km/h) and heavy rainfall (up to 250 mm in one day). Tropical cyclones have different names depending on where they occur in the world. In the US and the Caribbean they are known as hurricanes, in South Asia – cyclones, in East Asia – typhoons and in Australia they are known as willy-willies. They all develop in the same way and have the same characteristics. (Courtesy: [BBC](#))
12. **leave a trail** (phrase) – leave a mark, leave traces of something; leave behind something.
13. **landfall** (noun) – the point at which a hurricane/cyclone or similar storm reaches land after a sea voyage.
14. **Cyclone Tauktae** (noun) – the first cyclonic storm that has hit India in 2021, has intensified into an extremely severe cyclonic storm and it has finally made landfall in the western state of Gujarat on May 17, 2021. It was the fifth-strongest storm observed in the Arabian Sea since 1998. (The name “Tauktae” has been suggested by Myanmar. The name

comes from the Burmese language and it means a 'gecko' or a very hitch-pitched lizard).

15. **swell** (verb) – grow larger, grow greater, amplify, intensify, heighten.
16. **storm** (noun) – low-pressure weather system; cyclone.
17. **dump** (verb) – pour or lash down heavily.
18. **overland** (adverb) – by land.
19. **jeopardy** (noun) – peril, danger, risk/difficulty.
20. **variant** (noun) – different or form or version or mutant of something (virus).
21. **unrelenting** (adjective) – relentless, merciless, unsparing, unforgiving.
22. **déjà vu** (noun) – The expression is derived from the French, meaning “already seen”; this expression can make you feel like you’ve known someone before (or) been somewhere before (or) experienced something before.
23. **go through** (phrasal verb) – undergo, experience, face, suffer, endure, withstand.
24. **Cyclone Nisarga** (noun) – Cyclone Nisarga was the severe cyclonic storm that had formed on the Arabian Sea last year (2020), and it had made landfall at Alibaug in Maharashtra’s Raigad district.
25. **barrel** (verb) – to move/travel very quickly (or) in an uncontrolled manner.
26. **landward** (adjective) – on to the land, toward the land.
27. **pound** (verb) – strike, hit, batter, attack heavily.
28. **ashore** (adverb) – on to the land.
29. **spare** (verb) – leave undamaged/unhurt.
30. **strain** (verb) – damage, impair; push to the limit, overburden.
31. **considerably** (adverb) – greatly, very much, a lot.
32. **mitigate** (verb) – reduce, diminish, lessen.
33. **cadre** (noun) – a small group of people (trained for a specific task).
34. **rescue** (noun) – saving (from danger or difficulty).
35. **herald** (noun) – sign, indicator, indication, precursor.
36. **confluence** (noun) – convergence, meeting, junction, joining.
37. **expertise** (noun) – knowledge, command, mastery, prowess, skilfulness.
38. **forecast** (verb) – predict, foresee, estimate, foretell, project.
39. **mitigation** (noun) – alleviation, reduction; lessening.
40. **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** (noun) – an agency under the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India which is responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology. It has the responsibility for forecasting, naming and

distributing warnings for tropical cyclones in the Northern Indian Ocean region, including the Malacca Straits, the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

41. impact-based cyclone warning system (noun) – This new system will give specific warnings. It will help in minimising economic losses and damage to property due to the cyclones that hit Indian coasts every year. Under the system, location or district-specific tailored warnings, which factor in the local population, infrastructure, settlements, land use and other elements, will be prepared and disseminated.
42. design (verb) – create, plan, formulate, devise.
43. infrastructure (noun) – the basic physical or organisational structure or framework.
44. settlement (noun) – an uninhabited place where people established a community/colony.
45. for instance (phrase) – as an example.
46. plot (verb) – mark, map, indicate.
47. vulnerability (noun) – weakness, defencelessness, unprotectedness, susceptibility.
48. promising (adjective) – favourable, hopeful, optimistic, positive.
49. precise (adjective) – exact, accurate, specific.
50. overemphasise (verb) – overstress, exaggerate, overdo, overplay, overdramatize.
51. aggravate (verb) – increase, intensify, worsen, exacerbate, compound.
52. sea/ocean surface temperature (SST) (noun) – the water temperature close to the ocean's surface.
53. neighbourhood (noun) – (surrounding) area, region.
54. dwelling (place/area) (noun) – residence, place of residence, place of habitation, house, accommodation.
55. warrant (verb) – call for, necessitate, justify.
56. sturdy (adjective) – strong, well built, durable.
57. shelter (noun) – a place of safety, place of shelter, accommodation; safe house; home, housing.
58. calamity (noun) – disaster, catastrophe, crisis, tragedy.
59. rise (up) to the challenge (phrase) – tackle a difficult situation successfully.

## Stormy start: On handling severe cyclones

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### Accurate forecasts and resilience-building hold the key to handling severe cyclones

Millions of people wearied by the onslaught of the coronavirus have had to contend with a furious tropical cyclone that has left a trail of death and destruction before making landfall in Gujarat. Cyclone Tauktae swelled into an extremely severe cyclonic storm, dumping enormous volumes of water all along the west coast, and caused loss of life in Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat, before weakening overland. To thousands who had to be evacuated to safe locations, this year's pre-monsoon season presented a double jeopardy, caught as they were between a fast-spreading virus variant and an unrelenting storm. Many coastal residents would have felt a sense of *déjà vu*, having gone through a similar experience last year, when the severe cyclonic storm, Nisarga, barrelled landwards from the Arabian Sea, pounding Alibaug in Maharashtra as it came ashore. The cyclones in both years spared densely populated Mumbai. The twin crises have, however, strained the capacities of multiple States, especially the coastal ones, although the impact of the storm was considerably mitigated by disaster response forces. Once again, the value of creating a trained cadre, supported by the defence forces in rescue and relief work, is seen. The heralding of the 2021 monsoon season by a cyclone comes as another reminder that the subcontinent is at the confluence of more frequent, extreme weather events originating in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea every year.

How well India is prepared to handle cyclones depends on developing greater expertise in forecasting and disaster mitigation, and crafting policies to increase resilience among communities. Last year, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) launched an impact-based cyclone warning system from the October-December season designed to reduce

economic losses by focusing on districts and specific locations, and incorporating such factors as population, infrastructure, land use and settlements. The IMD also claimed that its accuracy of forecasts, for instance, in plotting landfall location, is now better. Together with ground mapping of vulnerabilities, this is a promising approach to avoid loss of life and destruction of property. The importance of precise early warnings cannot be overemphasised, considering that the Arabian Sea has emerged as a major source of severe cyclones, and their intensity is aggravated by long-term rise in sea surface temperatures linked to pollution over South Asia and its neighbourhood. Climate-proofing lives and dwellings is a high priority now, a task that warrants a multi-sectoral approach: to build sturdy homes of suitable design, create adequate storm shelters, provide accurate early warnings, and ensure financial protection against calamities through insurance for property and assets. Governments must rise up to the challenge.

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