

Weather

HOT WEATHER SEASON (MARCH—MAY 1961)

Chief features—(i) Development of two severe cyclonic storms in the Bay of Bengal and a third severe cyclonic storm in the Arabian Sea during May; (ii) Early onset of the monsoon over the south Peninsula; and (iii) Heat wave in Bihar State in the month of May.

Four western disturbances moved across the northern parts of the country during the month of March. They were generally of feeble intensity and did not cause much rainfall except in Assam and neighbourhood where the inflow of moist air from the Bay of Bengal got accentuated during the passage of these disturbances resulting in fairly wide-spread or local thundershowers on twelve days during the month. Haflong recorded particularly heavy rain on a number of days, 17 cm on 2 March, 19 cm on 3rd, 7 cm on 19th, 9 cm on 20th and 7 cm on 21st. Silchar reported 15 cm on 20th. Severe squalls in Dibrugarh and Silchar were reported to have caused 14 deaths.

Weather over the Peninsula remained mainly dry during the first fortnight of March, while scattered thundershowers occurred later, particularly towards the close of the month.

Day temperatures were above normal in south Rajasthan, Gujarat State, north Maharashtra State, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar State from 10 to 20 March.

Four western disturbances affected the weather in north India during the month of April. They were generally of moderate intensity. In association with these, good

rainfall occurred over Jammu and Kashmir Srinagar reported 5 cm of rain on 11 April.

In association with marked incursion of moist air from the Bay of Bengal into the Peninsula during the first week of April, there was considerable thunderstorm activity specially over the south Peninsula. Tuticorin reported 13 cm of rain on 2nd.

Day temperatures were above normal in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and east Madhya Pradesh from 13 to 24 April and in West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from 13 to 30 April. They were appreciably above normal in east Uttar Pradesh, east Madhya Pradesh, Bihar Plateau and adjoining West Bengal from 22nd to 24th.

In association with an easterly wave, a depression developed in the Andaman Sea on 5 May. It moved in a northwesterly direction, intensified into a severe cyclonic storm and struck East Pakistan coast on the morning of 9 May. Another depression developed over the north Andaman Sea on 27 May. This also concentrated into a severe cyclonic storm and struck East Pakistan near Chittagong on the morning of 30 May. Brief accounts of these two cyclonic storms have already appeared in this Journal (Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 502-03).

Another easterly wave entered the Andaman Sea on 12 May, crossed the south Peninsula by 16th and gave rise to a trough of low pressure in southeast Arabian Sea off the Malabar coast on 17th. Under the influence of this trough, there was considerable thunderstorm activity in the south Peninsula from

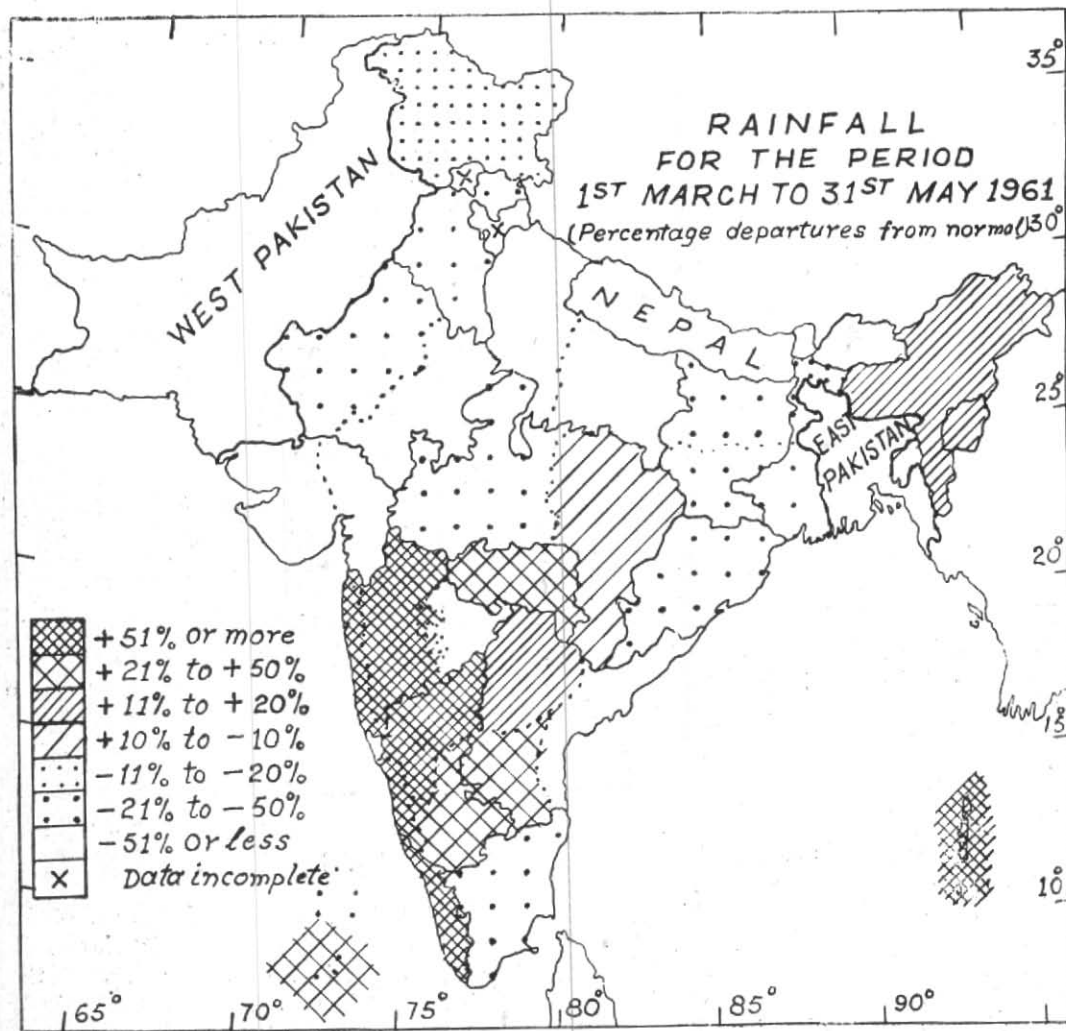


Fig. 1

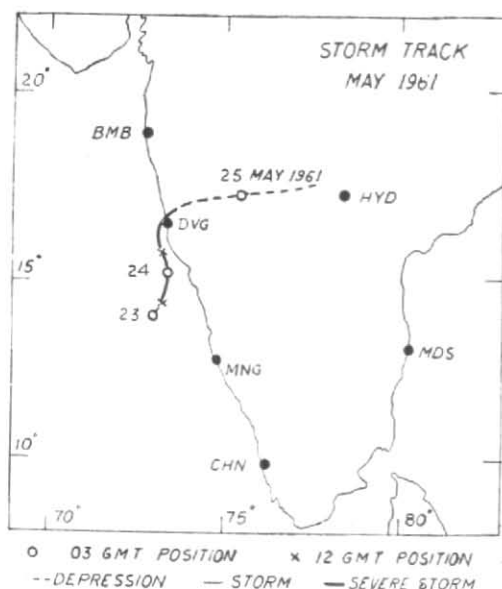


Fig. 2

14th to 17th when fairly widespread or local thundershowers occurred in south Madras and interior Mysore State. Anantapur recorded 8 cm of rain and Bangalore 7 cm on 14th. This trough shifted northwards along the west coast and concentrated into a depression which intensified into a cyclonic storm centred about 150 km westsouthwest of Honavar on the morning of 23rd. Moving in a northerly direction, it intensified further into a severe cyclonic storm of small extent by that evening and crossed coast near Devgad on the night of 24 to 25 May. Thereafter, the storm weakened and lay as a deep depression centred about 50 km north of Bijapur on 25th morning. Continuing to move in an easterly direction, the depression

weakened and became unimportant by 28th. The track of the storm is shown in Fig. 2. Under its influence, the Arabian Sea branch of the monsoon advanced into extreme south Kerala on 18th and rapidly extended northwards upto Lat. 16°N, by 22 May, about ten to fourteen days earlier than the normal date. A few noteworthy amounts of rainfall were—Karwar 17 cm on 21st; Vengurla 30 cm, Karwar 21 cm, Honavar 17 cm and Fort Cochin 15 cm on 22nd; Devgad 18 cm and Kolhapur 16 cm on 25th. As a result of the gales accompanying the severe cyclonic storm, about five lakh fruit trees were reported to have been razed to the ground in the four talukas of Sawantwadi, Vengurla, Malwan and Kudal. About 1700 houses were reported to have been completely destroyed and 25,000 houses partially damaged.

Five western disturbances moved across north India during the month of May. Of these, the second and third caused good thunderstorm activity in northwest India during the second week and in Assam during the second and third weeks of the month.

Day temperatures were generally above normal in Bihar State and neighbourhood from 11 May to 3 June, being markedly so at a few places from 19 to 21 May and again from 26 to 28 May. A brief account of this heat wave appeared in the earlier issue of this Journal (Vol. 12 No. 3, p. 503).

Rainfall for the season in terms of its departure from the normal is shown in Fig. 1. It was in excess over most of the Peninsula. This was due to comparatively early onset of the monsoon this year.