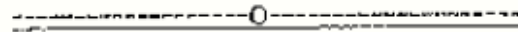


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Before 1945, Meteorologists had only a vague idea of a hurricane's position, from ships or islands that the storms just passed. Narrowing down the location has since become easier with airplanes but it wasn't until man conquered space that hurricanes could be seen in their entirety. Hurricanes are very fascinating to track and view on satellites but beyond the fascination there is some harsh reality to these storms. Hurricanes are among the most powerful and deadliest forces in nature which affect the areas it makes landfall over. Some effects of hurricanes are:

1. Storm surge and Tidal Flooding,
2. High winds and
3. Heavy rain and Inland Flooding.

Satellites can now reveal everything from air pressure to temperature to humidity. As a result, when natural disasters like hurricanes or floods threaten, experts can usually give people early warnings so they have ample time to prepare and/or evacuate.

This is why we chose to do a project on hurricane predictions and how our country can prepare itself for any major hurricanes. For example in 1963, Hurricane Flora caused the greatest damage to Trinidad and Tobago when it slammed into Tobago on September 30th with winds estimated at 195km/hr. Hurricane Flora caused 18 deaths in Tobago and 2 in Trinidad.

In this year alone (2005), there has been a substantial increase in the number, as well as the intensities of hurricanes than for previous years. Up until October, there have been 22 named hurricanes, the most ever recorded since hurricanes

have been tracked. With the most destructive hurricane that has ever been recorded occurring this year, Hurricane Katrina which packed winds of 175 mph and its minimum central pressure dropped as low as 902 millibars-- the fourth lowest on record for an Atlantic hurricane. While the death toll from Katrina is still unknown, the body count so far makes it one of the 10 deadliest U.S. disasters ever.

A look at the work done by Dr. William Gray and his Colorado State University research team is used to arrive at predictions of hurricanes for each year. Dr. Gray has been predicting hurricanes for 22 years and making forecast of the upcoming season's Atlantic basin hurricane activity.

Predictions made by Dr. William Gray and his team for 2005 expect a probability of U.S major hurricanes landfall to be 30 percent above the long-period average, with Atlantic basin Net Tropical Cyclone (NTC) activity in 2004 to be about 115 percent of the long-term average.

It is important to know about hurricanes and their capabilities so better preparations can be made to save property from damage and to save lives. The initial step is to appreciate limits and capabilities of the weakest and the strongest hurricanes which our research has done to a great extent.