

Cloudburst

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Cloudburst Latest News

Recently, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) rejected reports that Assam and Nagaland had experienced cloudbursts over the preceding few days and that they were responsible for the Upper Assam floods.

About Cloudburst

- A cloudburst is an extreme weather phenomenon **characterized by an intense and sudden downpour of rain.**
- It **can also occur in plains**, the phenomenon is most common in hilly regions.
- According to the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, a cloudburst occurs when a small area, around 20-30 sq. km, receives 10 cm or more of rain in an hour.
- **Impact:** Short **spells of very heavy rainfall** over a small geographical area can cause widespread destruction.

How does a Cloudburst Form?

- It typically **begins with convection**, when warm, moist air rises rapidly into the atmosphere.
- In mountainous areas, this is **called orographic lifting**, where monsoon winds are forced upwards by steep slopes.
- As the air rises, it **cools and condenses into towering cumulonimbus clouds**, which can be up to 15 km tall.
- Water droplets begin **to form inside these clouds** and, as they get heavier, they would normally fall as rain.
- However, if the **currents of warm air moving upwards are very strong**, they can keep the raindrops suspended in the air for longer.
- Eventually, the weight of the water droplets becomes too great for gravity and the updrafts to hold, or the updrafts weaken, sending the water plummeting down like an ocean descending on the ground.

Source: TH

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