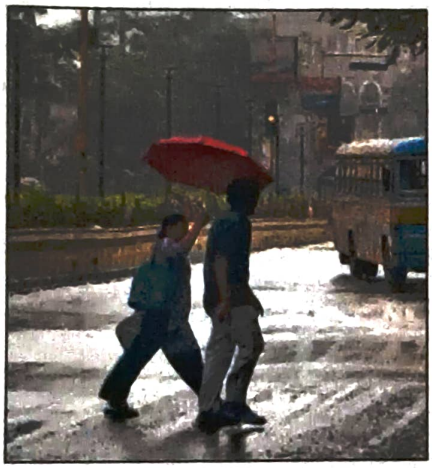
'Very severe cyclone' brews, city rain likely

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Calcutta: A depression over the Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify into a very severe cyclonic storm by October 28 and cross the Andhra Pradesh coast between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam that morning, with maximum wind speeds of 115-125kmph and gusts reaching 140kmph, the Met office said on Saturday.



Pedestrians amid rain on CR Avenue earlier this month. (Bishwarup Dutta)

The system, which had intensified from a well-marked low-pressure area into a depression by 5.30pm on Saturday, was centred over the east-central and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal, about 820km east-southeast of Visakhapatnam.

According to the latest Met bulletin, the depression is likely to move nearly southwards on Sunday, intensify into a deep depression and gradually recurve west-northwestwards over the east-central and adjoining southeast Bay.

It is expected to intensify further into a cyclonic storm by Monday morning and into a severe cyclonic storm around Tuesday morning. The system is then likely to move northwest and strengthen into a very severe cyclonic storm before reaching the west-central Bay of Bengal, near the Andhra Pradesh coast, around Wednesday morning.

The Met office has issued a pre-cyclone watch for the Andhra Pradesh and adjoining south Odisha coasts, placing them under a yellow alert.

Once the system intensifies into a cyclone, it will be named Arnab, as designated by Bangladesh.

While Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are likely to bear the brunt of the system, coastal areas and several districts of south Bengal are also likely to receive rain.

"The system is expected to become a cyclone by Monday. It will still have two days before it nears the coast, so there is a possibility of further intensification before landfall," a Met official in Calcutta had said earlier on Saturday.

South Bengal is likely to receive a spell of rain between October 28 and 30. South 24-Parganas, East Midnapore, West Midnapore, Jhargram, Bankura and Purulia are likely to receive heavy rain, with winds reaching speeds of up to 50kmph.

The remaining districts of south Bengal, including Calcutta, are likely to receive light to moderate rain, with winds reaching speeds of up to 40kmph.