Cyclone Akvan crosses coast near Gopalpur; 3 lakh evacuated

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News

Cyclone 'Akvan', which had intensified into a Severe Cyclonic Storm over the west-central Bay of Bengal on 19 November 2026, crossed the north Andhra Pradesh – south Odisha coast near Gopalpur, Odisha (latitude 19.2° N, longitude 84.8° E) between 7.30 and 8.30 am on 20 November 2026, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Wind speeds at landfall were 70–80 km/h, gusting to 90 km/h, and the IMD said it would weaken into a Deep Depression within hours. Odisha moved about 2.98 lakh people from more than 2,000 places to safety, the State's Special Relief Commissioner said, and kept over 9,300 cyclone shelters ready; Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said the aim was 'zero casualties'. Gopalpur recorded 166 mm of rain; East Coast Railway cancelled 41 trains and South Eastern Railway 19. The name 'Akvan' was proposed by Iran; reports say it is the name of a demon in the Persian epic 'Shahnameh'.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Cyclone	Akvan (name proposed by Iran)
Category	Severe Cyclonic Storm (19 Nov); weakened while crossing
Landfall	Near Gopalpur, Ganjam district, Odisha
Time	20 Nov 2026, 7.30–8.30 am

Point	Details
Wind	70–80 km/h, gusting to 90 km/h
Evacuation (Odisha)	About 2.98 lakh people; 9,300+ shelters
Rainfall	Gopalpur 166 mm
Trains cancelled	East Coast Railway 41, South Eastern Railway 19

Background

- IMD classification (maximum sustained wind, km/h): Depression 31–49; Deep Depression 50–61; Cyclonic Storm 62–88; Severe Cyclonic Storm 89–117; Very Severe 118–166; Extremely Severe 167–221; Super Cyclonic Storm 222 and above.
- Naming: north Indian Ocean cyclones take names in order from the list proposed by member countries of the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones; the list is used by the IMD's Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC), New Delhi.
- Odisha model: after the October 1999 Super Cyclone killed about 10,000 people, Odisha became a model for cutting deaths through early warning, cyclone shelters and mass evacuation; Very Severe Cyclone 'Phailin' also crossed the coast near Gopalpur in October 2013.

Tamil Nadu link: IMD's Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, issues cyclone warnings for Tamil Nadu and the other southern States. From the same name list, India's name 'Murasu' (a Tamil drum) was recently given to a Bay of Bengal cyclone.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

Cyclone 'Akvan', which had intensified into a Severe Cyclonic Storm over the west-central Bay of Bengal on 19 November 2026, crossed the north Andhra Pradesh – south Odisha coast near Gopalpur, Odisha (latitude 19.2° N, longitude 84.8° E) between 7.30 and 8.30 am on 20 November 2026, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Cyclone: Akvan (name proposed by Iran); Category: Severe Cyclonic Storm (19 Nov); weakened while crossing; Landfall: Near Gopalpur, Ganjam district, Odisha; Time: 20 Nov 2026, 7.30–8.30 am.

What is the background to this news?

IMD classification (maximum sustained wind, km/h): Depression 31–49; Deep Depression 50–61; Cyclonic Storm 62–88; Severe Cyclonic Storm 89–117; Very Severe 118–166; Extremely Severe 167–221; Super Cyclonic Storm 222 and above.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Gopalpur, near which Cyclone 'Akvan' crossed the coast, is in which district of Odisha?

A) Ganjam

B) Puri

C) Khordha

D) Balasore

Answer: A – Explanation: Ganjam. Cyclone Phailin (2013) also crossed near Gopalpur.

2. Which country proposed the cyclone name 'Akvan'?

A) Iran

B) Oman

C) Bangladesh

D) Sri Lanka

Answer: A – Explanation: Iran – reports link it to a figure in the Persian epic Shahnameh.

3. Under the IMD classification, what is the maximum sustained wind speed (km/h) of a 'Severe Cyclonic Storm'?

A) 62–88

B) 89–117

C) 118–166

D) 167–221

Answer: B – Explanation: 89–117. Cyclonic Storm 62–88; Very Severe 118–166; Extremely Severe 167–221.

4. Which Very Severe Cyclonic Storm crossed the Odisha coast near Gopalpur in October 2013?

A) Phailin

B) Hudhud

C) Fani

D) Amphan

Answer: A – Explanation: Phailin. Hudhud (2014) – Visakhapatnam; Fani (2019) – Puri; Amphan (2020) – West Bengal.

5. Cyclone 'Akvan' was a 'Severe Cyclonic Storm' on 19 November 2026. In the IMD scale, which category comes immediately above it?

A) Very Severe Cyclonic Storm

B) Deep Depression

C) Cyclonic Storm

D) Depression

Answer: A – Explanation: Very Severe Cyclonic Storm – 118–166 km/h.

Sources: News On AIR (19.11.2026); ANI – IMD bulletin (20.11.2026); The Quint / The Hindu (20.11.2026, Odisha evacuation); IMD – mausam.imd.gov.in (cyclone classification). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.