Typhoon Ragasa

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Geography*

Why in News?

Super Typhoon Ragasa strike Hong Kong with fierce winds and pounding rain, and headed into southern China recently.

- It is the most intense tropical cyclone recorded in 2025. At its peak, Ragasa was moving with the maximum sustained winds of 280 kmph.
- Ragasa has been referred to as a ***super typhoon*** because it is a ***Category 5 tropical cyclone.***
- **Formation -** Ragasa originated from a *tropical depression* and rapidly intensified into a super typhoon.
- **Causes –** It causes death and widespread damage across the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and southern China.
- **In Philippines -** The storm first made landfall in the northern Philippines, causing heavy rain, landslides.
- **In Taiwan -** As the typhoon passed, a **barrier lake burst** its banks in Hualien County, releasing a "tsunami from the mountains".

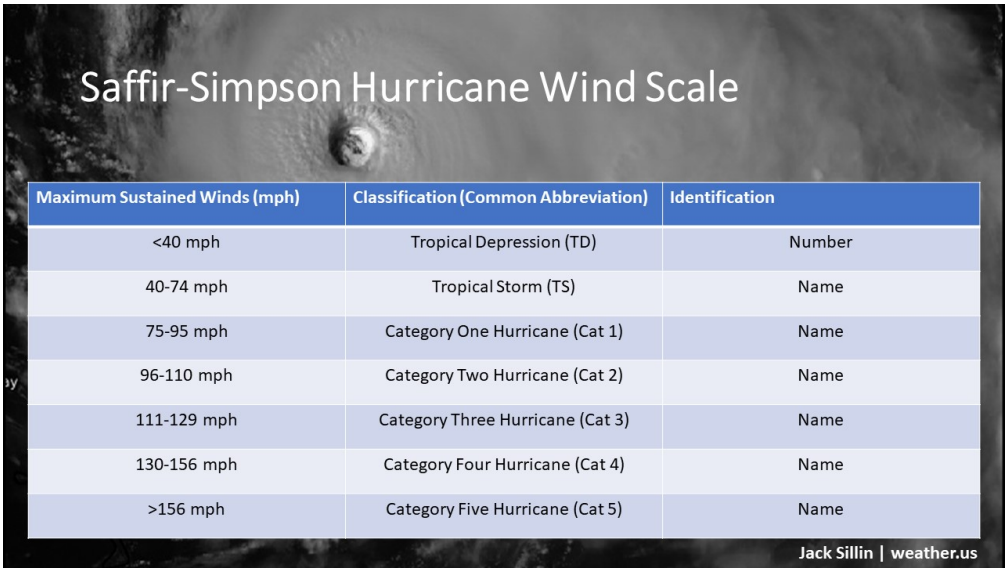
  A barrier lake, or landslide-dammed lake, forms when natural material like rocks, dirt, or debris from landslides block a river or valley.

- **In Hong Kong** - Ragasa skirted Hong Kong, bringing the city to a standstill with powerful winds, heavy rain, and storm surges.
- **In Southern China** - Ragasa made its final landfall in Yangjiang, Guangdong province.

Formation of Tropical cyclones

- Tropical cyclones form over ***warm ocean waters*** near the equator.

- When the warm, moist air from the ocean surface rises upward, a lower air pressure area is formed below.
- Air from surrounding areas with higher air pressure rushes into this low-pressure area, eventually rising, and it becomes warm and moist.
- As warm, moist air rises, it cools down, and the water in the air forms clouds and thunderstorms.
- This whole system of clouds and winds gains strength and momentum using the ocean's heat, and the water that evaporates from its surface.
- **Classification -** The weakest tropical cyclones are called tropical depressions.
- If a depression intensifies such that its maximum sustained winds reach 39 miles per hour [63 kmph], the tropical cyclone becomes a tropical storm.
- Storm systems with wind speeds of 119 kmph and above are classified as hurricanes, typhoons, or tropical cyclones.
- The category of a tropical cyclone is determined by its sustained wind speed, as measured by the ***Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.***
- It is classified into 5 categories - Category 1 to Category 5.



Reference

The Indian Express | Super Typhoon Ragasa

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