

TYPHOON BRIAN (27W)

Typhoon Cecil (04W) in May and Typhoon Brian in late September and early October were the only tropical cyclones of the year to develop and spend their entire lifetimes within the confines of the South China Sea.

As Super Typhoon Angela (26W) developed over the Philippine Sea, the monsoon trough became active across the South China Sea from western Luzon to Vietnam. A broad area of moderate convection developed in the trough and was first mentioned on the 280600Z September Significant Tropical Weather Advisory as a fair suspect area about 390 nm (720 km) southeast of Hong Kong. The satellite

signature indicated a well defined upper-level anticyclone, but a weak surface circulation with very little deep convection.

The strong upper-level anticyclone persisted for the next 24 hours and synoptic data indicated that the low-level cyclonic circulation had intensified, prompting the issuance of a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert at 290830Z. The circulation moved slowly westward along the southern side of the mid-tropospheric subtropical ridge. At 300000Z, the ridge weakened and the disturbance became quasi-stationary 195 nm (360 km) southeast of Hong Kong.

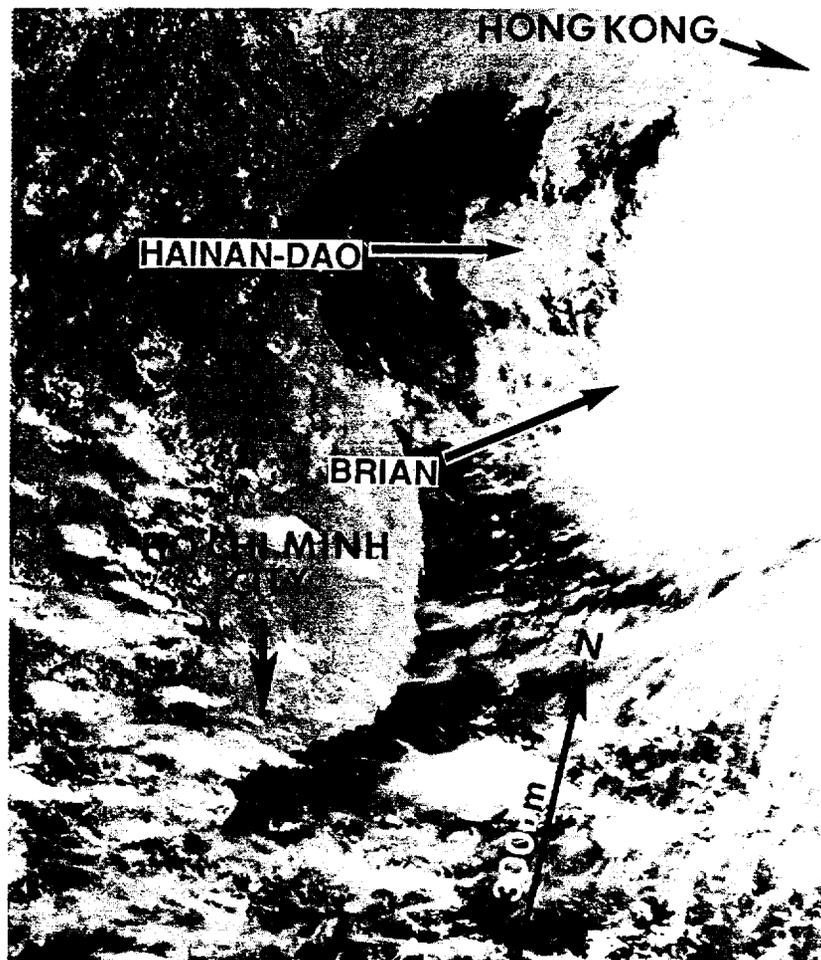


Figure 3-27-1. Tropical Storm Brian tracks toward Hainan (010641Z October NOAA visual imagery).

Over the next six hours, the disturbance drifted northward in an area of weak mid-level steering flow. As JTWC did not expect the depression to intensify during the next 48 hours, a 36-hour Tropical Depression Warning was issued for Tropical Depression 27W at 300600Z. Shortly thereafter, the subtropical ridge strengthened to the north and the depression moved west-southwestward and intensified. Brian (Figure 3-27-1) was upgraded to tropical storm intensity at 301800Z and to typhoon status 24 hours later when it was 240 nm (445 km) southwest of Hong Kong.

On 2 October at 0000Z, Brian (Figure 3-27-2) settled on a westward course and increased its forward speed to 9 kt (17 km/hr). At 021200Z, the typhoon reached a peak

intensity of 80 kt (41 m/sec) approximately 20 nm (35 km) off the southeast coast of Hainan Island. Three hours later the cyclone crossed the extreme southern coast of Hainan and weakened to 75 kt (39 m/sec). News releases from the area reported that at least 31 people perished and 500 were injured. In addition, Brian damaged an estimated 190,000 acres (77,000 hectares) of rice.

After mauling Hainan, the typhoon maintained its westward course and 75-kt (39-m/sec) intensity until it made landfall near Vinh, Vietnam. JTWC issued its last warning on Brian at 031200Z. The convection continued westward into the mountains of Vietnam and dissipated the next day.

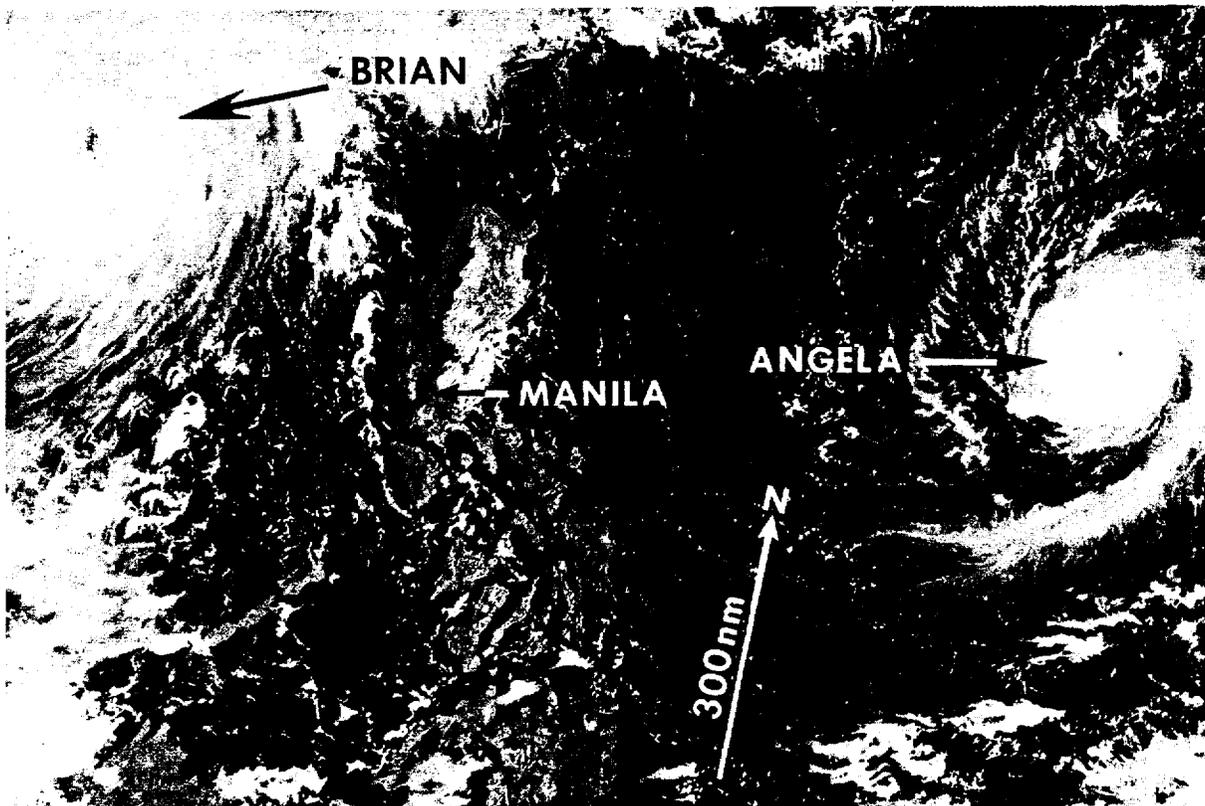


Figure 3-27-2. Typhoons Angela (26W) and Brian. Angela's intensity of 115 kt (59 m/sec) is almost twice that of Brian's (020100Z October DMSP visual imagery).