

TROPICAL STORM LEVI (05W)

Tropical Storm Levi (05W), one of three tropical cyclones to develop in May, formed in the monsoon trough in the center of the South China Sea, between central Vietnam and Luzon. A low-level circulation center (LLCC) was first analyzed at 0000Z on 23 May. It was mentioned on the Significant Tropical Weather Advisory (ABPW) 6 hours later. The system assumed the form of a monsoon depression, having deep convection on the eastern and

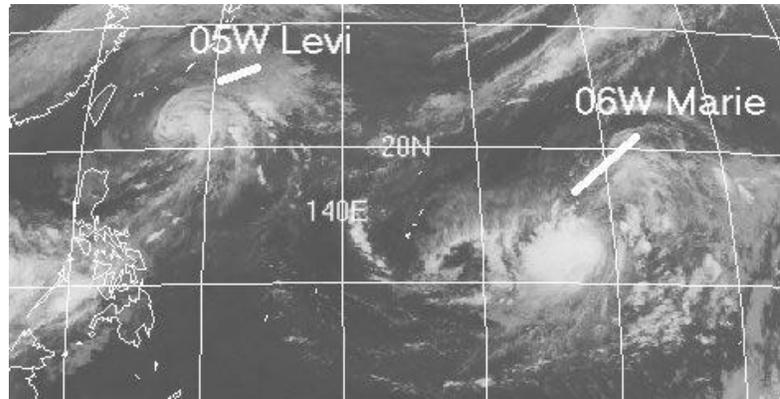


Figure 3-05-1. 281233Z May 1997 infrared imagery of Tropical Storm Levi (05W) as it moves on a northward track at its 45-kt (23-m/s) maximum intensity.

southern peripheries, with little consolidation near the center. On 24 May, convection began to organize near the LLCC, and a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert (TCFA) was issued at 0600Z on the 25th. Twelve hours later, the first warning was released on Tropical Depression (TD) 05W. The depression moved eastward and crossed central Luzon on 26 May, producing copious amounts of rainfall which caused severe flooding. This forced the closure of government offices, schools, and the Philippine stock market in Manila. The main generator at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila was totally submerged by floodwater, shutting down the airport for several hours. A total of 33 people lost their lives in the Philippines, primarily from flooding and mudslides.

After emerging into the Philippine Sea late on 26 May, TD 05W began to move to the northeast and was soon upgraded to Tropical Storm Levi (05W). On 28 May, the tropical storm reached its maximum intensity of 45 kt (23 m/sec). At this point, the system began to move on a northward track, steered by the monsoonal mid-tropospheric flow which connected the southwest monsoon with the Mei-yu front south of the Ryukyu Islands. Levi maintained its 45-kt (23 m/sec) winds during recurvature until 29 May at 1800Z when upper level westerly shear began to weaken the cyclone. The final warning on Tropical Storm Levi (05W), valid at 0600Z on the 30th, was issued as the system raced off to the northeast.

