

Natural Disasters

A natural disaster is an event that occurs due to natural processes in the Earth's environment and causes catastrophic damage. They can disrupt communities, displace people from their homes and even lead to loss of life.



Earthquakes

An earthquake is an intense shaking of the Earth's surface caused by the movement of tectonic plates beneath the Earth's surface. These plates are constantly shifting and moving. Sometimes when tectonic plates rub against each other they can get stuck. When the pressure builds up, it suddenly releases, causing an earthquake. The size and intensity of earthquakes varies. Some tremors are so small that they might not even be felt.



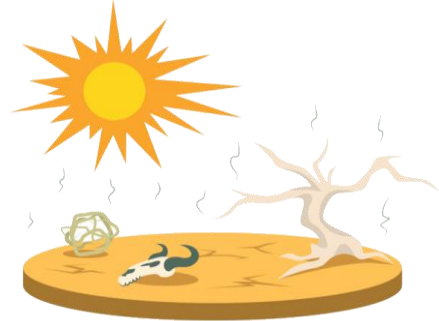
Volcanoes

Volcanoes are natural formations that erupt with tremendous force, releasing molten rock, ash, and gases from deep within the Earth. They are usually located at the boundaries of tectonic plates, where the Earth's crust is shifting and colliding. A volcanic eruption results from a build-up of pressure. While volcanoes help in the formation of new land and release valuable minerals to create fertile soils, they can also pose significant risks to nearby communities.



Floods

During a flood, water overflows onto land that is usually dry. Floods can happen for a number of reasons, such as heavy rainfall, melting snow, or even dam failures. Floodwaters can be swift and powerful, sweeping away anything in their path. Consequently, floods can be dangerous and cause a lot of damage to homes, infrastructure, and the environment. Low-lying areas and riverbanks are most at risk of being submerged by rising water levels.



Droughts

A drought occurs when there is a period of below-average rainfall in an area, leading to water scarcity. A shortage of water can have serious consequences for the environment, agriculture, and communities. Water sources such as rivers, lakes, and reservoirs can dry, making survival difficult for people and animals. Additionally, farmers may struggle to grow crops, and plants and animals may face challenges in finding food and shelter.

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Landslides

Landslides occur when large amounts of rock, soil, and debris slide down a slope, often triggered by heavy rainfall, earthquakes, or human activities like construction. Ground becomes unstable during landslides, causing trees, houses, and other structures to be swept away. Roads and rivers can be blocked by landslides, causing transportation disruptions, and potentially leading to flooding. When a landslide occurs in an area with snow, it is called an avalanche.



Tornadoes

A tornado is a powerful and rapidly rotating column of air that extends down from a thunderstorm and usually reaches to the ground. They are characterised by their funnel-shaped cloud and destructive winds, which can be in the range of 500 kilometres per hour. Tornadoes can form quickly and move swiftly, causing significant damage in their path. In terms of fatalities and injuries, they are nature's most violent storm.



Cyclones, Hurricanes & Typhoons

Cyclones, also known as hurricanes or typhoons depending on the region, are powerful tropical storms which form over warm ocean waters. Wind speeds in extreme cyclones can exceed 300 kilometres per hour. Cyclones can cause widespread destruction, including heavy rainfall, storm surges, and flooding. Cyclones are categorised on a scale of 1 to 5. Category 1 cyclones are the least intense while and Category 5 cyclones are the most severe.



Bushfires

Bushfires, also known as wildfires, are large fires that can spread quickly through forests, grasslands, and shrublands. They most commonly occur in hot, dry environments, especially during periods of drought. Bushfires can have a devastating impact on the environment, destroying habitats and harming wildlife. They can also pose a significant danger to communities, threatening homes and lives.