

The electric eye of Cyclone Bansi

January 28 2015



Tropical Cyclone Bansi was seen from the International Space Station. Credit: NASA's Earth Observatory/NASA JSC/ISS

Though this image may look like they come from a science fiction movie, it is in fact a photograph of tropical cyclone Bansi as seen at night by astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS). The image was taken when the ISS was east of Madagascar.

Bansi formed in the southwestern Indian Ocean on January 11, 2015. By the time the photo was taken on the following day, Bansi had achieved

tropical cyclone strength, with sustained maximum winds over 185 kilometers (115 miles) per hour. The cyclone would reach category 4 strength before becoming a weak extra-tropical system on January 19.

The dim swirl of the cloud bands covers the ocean surface in this night image. The eye of the [cyclone](#) is brilliantly lit by lightning in or near the eye wall. The low-light settings of the camera used to take the image accentuate the contrast. The camera also accentuates the yellow-green airglow above the Earth's limb, an atmospheric phenomenon frequently seen by astronauts. Stars appear above the airglow layer, and the solar panels of a docked Russian spacecraft jut into the image (upper left).

Astronaut photographs ISS042-E-135015 and ISS042-E-135030 were acquired on January 12, 2015, with a Nikon D4 digital camera using a 28 millimeter lens, and are provided by the ISS Crew Earth Observations Facility and the Earth Science and Remote Sensing Unit, Johnson Space Center. The image was taken by the Expedition 42 crew. They have been cropped and enhanced to improve contrast, and lens artifacts have been removed. The International Space Station Program supports the laboratory as part of the ISS National Lab to help astronauts take pictures of Earth that will be of the greatest value to scientists and the public, and to make those images freely available on the Internet. Additional images taken by [astronauts](#) and cosmonauts can be viewed at the NASA/JSC Gateway to Astronaut Photography of Earth. Caption by William L. Stefanov, NASA-JSC.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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