

Words of the editor-in-chief:

## Hurricane “Milton” visited us

Maxime Coles MD

Hurricane “Milton” left us behind with a picture of devastation. It was for a short visit but it hit us at night, through mid-Florida, when most of us were sleeping. Many were waiting for the impact anxiously, on the west coast of the state of Florida; precisely over the towns of Tampa and Sarasota, FL. Just for an evening, “Milton” imposed its devastation bringing its winds of 120 miles/h (200 km/h) , to impact Tampa Bay, with a vengeance that only the gods of the Olympus knew why this section of the land was punished so terribly. “Milton” is already far away, caressing the waters of the Atlantic Ocean like in a symbiosis that only Mother Nature can orchestrate. It is considered now a Category 5.

The visit was expected and proper evacuations were done preemptively, following the definite plans scheduled by the local authorities because they studied the pathway of the hurricane. As expected, “Milton” rushed over the cities of Tampa, later St Petersburg and Sarasota FL with intense winds, in an unusual rage, throwing his waters. It was of a short duration and the nightmare was over in little time. However, “Milton” is now weakened but still dangerous and fortunately, dying far away in a tango over the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. It will never come back to haunt us anymore, after cutting a destructive path across the lands of Florida, a devastation that will affect so many for longtime.

Our rivers are out of bound, they re-gorge of waters, bringing flooding (waters) to our streets and homes in a unique picture of desolation for the Floridians. There is no more wind but many broken trees and branches, electrical lines down are knocking power to millions. The state of Florida was prepared to receive the “Category three” hurricane.

What remains of “Milton” after its slamming on the west coast of Florida state during the evening of Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> of October, 2024, is desolation and destruction of building, houses, fences, cars... more, around twenty human being perished. Heavy destructive rains have ceased but the flash flooding may persist in the cities, perhaps becoming more catastrophic around the major rivers causing damages to roads and bridges, turning trucks and cars in ditches..

We will survive. Nobody knew much when “Milton” was facing the city of Tampa, that multiple tornados were doing their ravages in Fort Piece, Port St Lucie and West Palm Beach FL. So far, we can state that we were after all, lucky to have only a count of twenty dead and a devastation that will take us time to comprehend. Millions will be without any electricity to complete the situation in the state of Florida. The attack was so intense that the roof of the Tropicana field, the stadium of the Tampa Bay baseball team in St Petersburg, was shredded by the hurricane. A fallen crane collapsed on another building, home of the Tampa Bay Times, Newspaper.

“Milton” may be gone but we will have to worry about further flooding because of the amount of rain fall it brought during his passage as well as the draining waters following “Helene” which add to the menace for further inundations and damages. Around 100,000 residents were able to reach the shelters because of the aggressive evacuation plans in the state of Florida supervised by the governor himself. It surely helped saving lives. Houses in the flood areas have been damaged although some walls are still holding on, under the load of seawater and sand. It is time to help the one in need who may have lost it all. The island of Sanibel is officially designed as a place for Recovery and the public is invited to return.

Definitely, “Milton” will be remembered as one of the strongest hurricane with winds of more than one hundred miles/hour. Many will face a long road to recovery.

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