= Typhoon Nora (1973) =

Typhoon Nora was the third @-@ most intense tropical cyclone on record . Originating from an area of low pressure over the western Pacific , Nora was first identified as a tropical depression on October 2 , 1973 . Tracking generally westward , the system gradually intensified , attaining typhoon status the following evening . After turning northwestward , the typhoon underwent a period of rapid intensification , during which its central pressure decreased by 77 mb (hPa ; 2 @.@ 27 inHg) in 24 hours . At the end of this phase , Nora peaked with winds of 295 km / h (185 mph) and a pressure of 877 mb (hPa ; 25 @.@ 91 inHg) , making it the most @-@ intense tropical cyclone on record (alongside Typhoon Ida in 1958) at the time ; however , this pressure has since been surpassed by two other typhoons and one hurricane . The typhoon subsequently weakened and turned northwestward as it approached the Philippines . After brushing Luzon on October 7 , the system passed south of Taiwan and ultimately made landfall in China on October 10 . Once onshore , Nora quickly weakened and dissipated the following day .

The Philippines and Taiwan sustained the most extensive losses from Typhoon Nora , with 36 people losing their lives collectively . In the former , more than 1 million residents were left homeless as high winds and flooding wrecked homes . Damage in the country reached $ 2 million (1973 USD) . In Taiwan , more than 1 @,@ 000 homes were destroyed and 8 @,@ 000 people were left homeless . The typhoon was also responsible for several maritime incidents that killed at least four people .

= = Meteorological history = =

On September 30 , a weak surface low developed within the monsoon trough about 195 km (120 mi) south of Yap . Drifting northwestward , the system gradually organized into a tropical depression by October 2 . Later that day , aircraft reconnaissance revealed the system to have intensified into a tropical storm , at which time it was assigned the name Nora . The system 's movement soon became slow and erratic , with Nora executing a counter @-@ clockwise loop on October 3 . After completing the loop , it attained typhoon status and acquired a temporary northward trajectory . Due to the cyclone 's proximity to the Philippines , the Philippine Atmospheric , Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration also monitored the storm and assigned it with the local name Luming . Late on October 4 , Nora began to undergo a period of rapid intensification . Several aircraft reconnaissance missions were flown by the U.S. Air Force 54th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron into the storm between October 5 and 6 , documenting the typhoon 's dramatic strengthening .

By the evening of October 5 , Nora had attained winds in excess of 260 km / h (160 mph) , ranking it as a Category 5 @-@ equivalent super typhoon on the Saffir ? Simpson hurricane scale . A recon mission into the storm at this time revealed concentric eyewalls , measured at 14 km (9 mi) and 32 km (20 mi) . Initially , the aircraft was unable to penetrate into the core of the eye due to severe turbulence ; however , they were successful after a second attempt . Once inside the eye , they discovered an almost cloud @-@ free center with " an amphitheater or bowl @-@ like appearance . " Stratocumulus clouds were suppressed to an unusually low altitude of 1 @.@ 2 km (0 @.@ 75 mi) . The core of Nora was exceptionally warm , with temperatures reaching a near @-@ record 30 ° C (86 ° F) at the 700 mb level . At 0020 UTC on October 6 , a dropsonde released by the reconnaissance team recorded a surface pressure of 877 mb (hPa ; 25 @.@ 91 inHg) just inside the eyewall of the typhoon . At this time , maximum winds were estimated to have peaked at 295 km / h (185 mph) . This intensity ranked Nora as the most @-@ intense tropical cyclone on record in the world , alongside Typhoon Ida in 1958 . However , in post @-@ storm analysis , it was noted that since the dropsonde did not record a pressure at the storm 's center , Nora was likely slightly stronger than indicated . Since then , Nora 's intensity has been surpassed by three other storms : Typhoon June in 1975 , Typhoon Tip in 1979 , and Hurricane Patricia in 2015 .

Despite the storm 's extreme intensity , it quickly began to weaken as it approached the Philippines on October 6 . Within ten hours , the pressure rose to 894 mb (hPa ; 26 @.@ 40 inHg) and later

dropped below Category 5 status . That morning , Nora turned more northwesterly in response to a weakening in a subtropical ridge and an approaching shortwave trough over China . Steady weakening continued over the following days , with the storm brushing the northeastern tip of Luzon , Philippines , with winds of 175 ? 185 km / h (110 ? 115 mph) on October 7 . Nora 's intensity leveled out around 130 km / h (80 mph) on October 8 as it tracked between the Philippines and Taiwan . After passing within 95 km (60 mi) of Taiwan , Nora turned more northerly before making landfall near Xiamen , Fujian as a minimal typhoon early on October 10 . Once onshore , the storm rapidly degenerated into an area of low pressure before dissipating the following day .

= = Preparations and impact = =

Prior to the typhoon 's arrival in the Philippines , all domestic flights in and out of Manila were cancelled ; however , international travel was unaffected . The United States Air Force also moved its planes from Clark Air Base to other bases in Asia . Additionally , all schools in Manila were closed . Brushing the coast of Luzon in the Philippines as a Category 3 @-@ equivalent typhoon , Nora caused considerable damage in the region . Gale @-@ force winds were measured across much of western Luzon , with a peak reading of 126 km / h (78 mph) at Manila port . These winds caused scattered power and communication losses throughout the Peninsula . The city of Baguio (population 100 @,@ 000) lost power for approximately six hours . Crop losses were extensive , with the storm striking close to harvest time . Heavy rains from the storm , peaking at 338 mm (13 @.@ 3 in) in Baguio , triggered significant flooding and caused a breach in the Arnedo Dike in Apalit , Pampanga . Eight towns along a 45 km (30 mi) stretch downstream were flooded ; however , roads remained passable . Flooding in Manila also prompted the evacuation of 400 residents . In Caloocan , a child died after being electrocuted by downed wires . Across the Philippines , 24 people were killed and over 1 million were left homeless . Damage to crops and property reached $ 2 million (1973 USD) . Nora was the first of three typhoons to impact the Philippines in the span of a week , with Patsy and Ruth striking the country on October 12 and 15 respectively .

While passing south of Taiwan , rough seas spawned by the typhoon were responsible for several maritime incidents over the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea . The Philippine Freighter Asian Mariner , though all 38 crewmen were rescued . The Greek freighter Baltic Klif capsized about 150 km (90 mi) southwest of the Penghu Islands , with three crewmen confirmed dead and several others missing and presumed dead . Additionally , the Taiwanese fishing vessel Jai Tai NR3 became stranded amid 9 @.@ 1 m (30 ft) seas , with its bow split open . One of the crew perished ; however , the frigate USS Worden was able to rescue seven fishermen despite the dangerous seas . As the storm neared landfall in China , two ships became stranded over the South China Sea and sent out distress signals .

Passing within 95 km (60 mi) of Taiwan , the storm brought gale @-@ force winds and torrential rain to the island . A peak gust of 126 km / h (78 mph) was measured in Tungchi , Penghu Islands . The most significant impacts came from the rains , which amounted to 523 mm (20 @.@ 6 in) in Sinkong over a 20 ? hour span . Widespread flooding and many landslides destroyed at least 1 @,@ 000 homes , and washed out bridges , roads , and railroads . Twelve people lost their lives and twenty @-@ eight others were reported missing . Additionally , 8 @,@ 000 people were left homeless . In Hong Kong , the typhoon produced gusty winds , peaking at 95 km / h (60 mph) , though no rainfall was recorded . Although Nora struck China as a typhoon , there were no reports of damage received .