= Typhoon Isa =

Typhoon Isa was the first of eleven super @-@ typhoons to occur during the 1997 Pacific typhoon season . The second tropical cyclone of the season , Isa developed from a disturbance in the monsoon trough near the Caroline Islands on April 12 . It moved erratically at first , though after attaining tropical storm status it curved westward due to the subtropical ridge to its north . Isa very gradually intensified , and on April 20 the typhoon reached peak 1 @-@ min winds of 270 km / h (165 mph) , as reported by the Joint Typhoon Warning Center ; Japan Meteorological Agency reported maximum 10 @-@ min winds of 155 km / h (100 mph) . After turning northward , it accelerated to the northeast , and merged with a larger extratropical cyclone on April 24 .

Early in its duration , Isa caused light rainfall and moderate winds on Pohnpei . Later , a stationary rainband from the typhoon dropped heavy precipitation on Guam during its dry season . Damage in the Guam National Weather Service area of responsibility totaled $ 1 million (1997 USD , $ 1 @.@ 3 million 2006 USD) , the majority of it from crop damage . No deaths were reported .

= = Meteorological history = =

In early April , the monsoon trough established itself across Micronesia near the equator . An area of convection within the trough developed in the Caroline Islands on April 9 , and resembled the characteristics of a monsoon depression . Shortly thereafter , a large , yet weak low @-@ level circulation formed within the system . The system drifted erratically for several days as it slowly organized ; the system underwent several cycles of developing and losing convection . On April 11 , the system maintained a persistent area of well @-@ organized deep convection , and subsequent to an increase in upper @-@ level outflow , the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) classified the system as Tropical Depression 02W at 1800 UTC on April 11 . Strong influence from the monsoonal westerlies left the depression drifting and slowly executing a loop to the northwest . Based on sufficient satellite classifications , JTWC upgraded the depression to Tropical Storm Isa early on April 12 while it was located 105 km (65 mi) of Pohnpei . The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) simultaneously classified the system as a tropical depression , and upgraded it to a tropical storm early on April 13 .

With the subtropical ridge to its north , Isa tracked to the north and gradually curved to the west . It slowly intensified , due to it being a large tropical cyclone , and late on April 13 JTWC upgraded the storm to typhoon status ; at the same time , JMA continued to assess Isa as a minimal tropical storm , and did not upgrade it to a typhoon until April 16 . Isa maintained a nearly due @-@ westward movement , although tropical cyclone prediction models anticipated a quick turn to the north . The JTWC recognized the northward model bias , which was described as under @-@ analyzing the strength of the subtropical ridge . By April 16 , the typhoon attained the equivalence of a Category 3 tropical cyclone on the Saffir @-@ Simpson Hurricane Scale , and despite a potential threat to Guam the typhoon remained 260 km (160 mi) south of the island . It gradually curved to the north , and on April 20 JTWC classified Super Typhoon Isa as reaching peak 1 @-@ min winds of 270 km / h (165 mph) . At this point , Isa became an annular typhoon , with a large eye and a lack of spiralform rainbands , while moving nearly due northward , through a weakness in the subtropical ridge . Simultaneously , JMA assessed the typhoon as attaining peak 10 @-@ min winds of 155 km / h (100 mph) .

Shortly after peaking in intensity , Isa began to weaken , and by April 21 it dropped below " super typhoon " status . It accelerated to the northeast under the flow of the mid @-@ latitudes , and the typhoon weakened more rapidly ; JMA downgraded Isa to a tropical storm on April 22 , which was followed suit by the JTWC the next day as upper @-@ level wind shear increased . At 0600 UTC on April 23 , the JTWC issued the last advisory on the system , and the next day JMA classified Isa dissipated as it became absorbed by a cloud band from a large extratropical cyclone to the east of Japan .

= = Impact = =

Isa first affected Pohnpei as a tropical storm on April 12 . While passing near the island , the storm produced moderate winds across the island , peaking at 95 km / h (60 mph) . The winds downed several trees and tree limbs which destroyed 40 % of the island 's power lines . A few buildings reported roof damage . About 15 % of the crops on Pohnpei were damaged , including losses to the banana and breadfruit crops . After the passage of the typhoon , President of the Federated States of Micronesia Jacob Nena declared Pohnpei as a major disaster area due to the damage from Typhoon Isa and subsequent flooding ; on April 20 heavy rainfall caused widespread mudslides and 19 fatalities on the island , though they were not related to Isa .

In Guam , the threat of Typhoon Isa postponed a flight from Guam to Honolulu , Hawaii for 48 hours . The flight was the last in Operation Pacific Haven , which was a multimillion @-@ dollar humanitarian effort to transport more than 6 @,@ 600 Kurds in a political asylum to the mainland of the United States . The threat of the typhoon also canceled the first round of the Omega Tour golf event , which was the second professional golf tournament in the island 's history . Though Typhoon Isa passed well to the south of Guam , one of its outer rainbands stalled across the island , which dropped heavy rainfall of 15 ? 25 cm (6 ? 10 in) across the island . The rainfall was welcome as it occurred during the dry season , and largely contributed to rainfall at the Guam International Airport being 45 % above normal from the period between January through April . The rainband also produced wind gusts that reached 86 km / h (53 mph) at the island 's Naval Air Station ; the winds resulted in sporadic power outages across the island . The typhoon caused some light damage to buildings , particularly on the south side of the island . The combination of winds and sea salt caused damage to the island 's tomato , okra , cucumber , and soy bean crops .

Typhoon Isa later dropped light rainfall on the island of Rota . Across its path , damage from the storm totaled over $ 1 million (1997 USD , $ 1 @.@ 3 million 2006 USD) . No deaths or injuries were reported .