= Typhoon Babe (1977) =

Typhoon Babe , also known as the Okinoerabu Typhoon (?????? , Okinoerabu Taif?) , was regarded as " the worst typhoon to threaten Japan in 18 years . " Developing as a tropical depression on September 2 , Babe initially tracked west @-@ northwestward as it intensified . On September 5 , an abrupt shift in steering currents caused the system to turn north @-@ northwestward . Early on September 6 , the system intensified into a typhoon . Over the following two days , Babe quickly intensified , ultimately attaining its peak intensity early on September 8 with winds of 240 km / h (150 mph) and a barometric pressure of 905 mbar (hPa ; 26 @.@ 72 inHg) . Not long after reaching this strength , another shift in the steering patterns caused the typhoon to execute a prolonged counter @-@ clockwise arc , causing it to track through the Ryukyu Islands southwest of Japan , as it interacted with a low pressure originating from the Korean Peninsula . During this time , the system gradually weakened and eventually it made landfall near Shanghai , China on September 11 as a minimal typhoon before dissipating inland the following day . Coincidentally , Typhoon Babe and Atlantic Hurricane Babe existed at the same time from September 3 ? 9 .

Passing through the Ryukyu Islands as a powerful typhoon , Babe caused considerable damage in the region . More than 1 @,@ 000 homes were destroyed and nearly 7 @,@ 000 more were damaged or flooded . One person was killed on Amami ?shima and 77 others were injured throughout the country . Total losses reached ¥ 6 @.@ 1 billion (US $ 23 million) . Offshore , over 100 vessels were affected by the storm , including a Panamanian freighter where 13 people lost their lives . In China , more than 24 @,@ 000 homes were destroyed and nine people were killed .

= = Meteorological history = =

In late August 1977 , an area of disturbed weather was noted south of Pohnpei . By September 1 , a weak surface low accompanied by organized convection developed within the disturbance . Situated to the south of a Tropical Upper Tropospheric Trough , conditions were favorable for further organization and the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) issued a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert for the system . Tracking steadily west @-@ northwestward in response to a well @-@ developed subtropical ridge extending from the International Dateline to China , the system was soon classified a tropical depression early on September 2 . Hours later , a weather reconnaissance mission into the depression revealed winds of 75 km / h (45 mph) , prompting the JTWC to designate the system as Tropical Storm Babe . 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 Miling .

Initially , forecasters anticipated Babe to maintain its westward course as it strengthened and threaten the Philippines ; however , its forward motion gradually slowed as it neared the region . On September 5 , an upper @-@ level trough formed over northeastern Asia and created a weakness in the subtropical ridge , allowing Babe to turn north @-@ northwestward . Over the following two days , the storm quickly strengthened as divergence increased ahead of the storm , with Babe attaining typhoon status early on September 6 Between 0832 UTC on September 5 and 2204 UTC on September 7 , the storm 's barometric pressure dropped from 988 mbar (hPa ; 29 @.@ 18 inHg) to 907 mbar (hPa ; 26 @.@ 79 inHg) , approximately 1 @.@ 3 mbar (hPa ; 0 @.@ 04 inHg) per hour . Early on September 8 , Babe attained its peak intensity with winds of 240 km / h (150 mph) while situated approximately 465 km (290 mi) southeast of Ishigaki Island . This ranked it as the first and only super typhoon of the 1977 season . At this time , the Japan Meteorological Agency estimated the storm to have had peak ten @-@ minute sustained winds of 205 km / h (125 mph) and a minimum pressure of 905 mbar (hPa ; 26 @.@ 72 inHg) .

Until September 8 , Typhoon Babe was forecast to continue northwestward into Taiwan and later China ; however , another upper @-@ level trough moved into northeastern China and further weakened the ridge . This in turn allowed a new area of low pressure to develop over the Korean Peninsula and cause Babe to curve northeastward . While moving northeastward , Babe gradually

weakened and began to undergo a Fujiwhara @-@ like interaction with the low near Korea as that system moved southwestward . Accelerating along a counter @-@ clockwise arc , Babe moved through the Ryukyu Islands as a weakening typhoon on September 9 before taking a steady westward course into China . As the system passed through the archipelago , a pressure of 907 @.@ 3 mbar (hPa ; 26 @.@ 80 inHg) was measured on Okinoerabujima . Babe eventually made landfall near Shanghai with winds of 120 km / h (75 mph) before rapidly weakening over land . The system was last noted early on September 12 over Anhui Province .

= = Impact = =

Torrential rain fell across much of the Ryukyu Islands , Shikoku , and Kyushu . The highest total were observed in K?chi Prefecture , with Funato in Tsuno , K?chi measuring 705 mm (27 @.@ 8 in) . The small island of Okinoerabujima reportedly experienced winds in excess of 210 km / h (130 mph) for two hours as the typhoon passed by . Nearly two @-@ thirds of the homes across the island were damaged or destroyed by the storm and 73 people were injured . Most of the injuries across the island were caused by collapsing buildings . One person was killed on Amami ?shima and 77 others were injured across the Amami Islands . According to Japanese police , 1 @,@ 146 homes were destroyed , mainly by flooding and landslides , while 1 @,@ 097 more were damaged and another 5 @,@ 826 were flooded . At least 14 @,@ 927 people were left homeless . Losses across the country amounted to ¥ 6 @.@ 1 billion (US $ 23 million) .

About 420 km (260 mi) north @-@ northwest of Okinawa , the Panamanian freighter May Cruiser became stranded and in danger of sinking on September 10 with its crew of 25 . The Japanese Maritime Safety Agency deployed five airplanes and four patrol boats to search for survivors . Additionally , ten Japanese fishing boats in the area assisted in search and rescue . By September 12 , rescuers found nine sailors and thirteen bodies , while three others remained missing . Elsewhere in the East China Sea , approximately 100 Japanese fishing vessels attempting to seek shelter from the storm were damaged .

In China , wind gusts reportedly reached 252 km / h (157 mph) , resulting in extensive damage . Around 24 @,@ 000 homes were destroyed and nine people were killed .