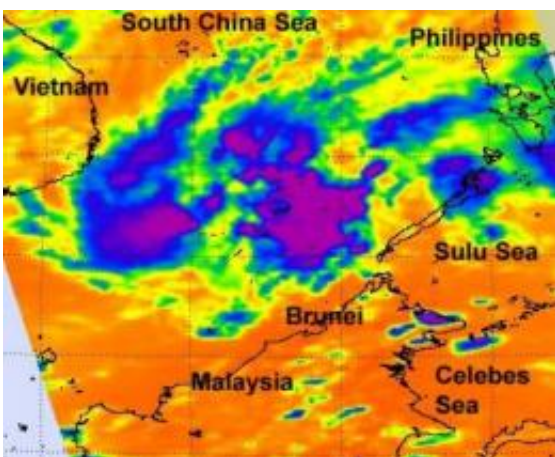


NASA satellite sees thunderstorms banding around developing system 96W

March 27 2012



When NASA's Aqua satellite passed over System 96W on March 27 it captured this infrared image of the low pressure area. Aqua captured an infrared image of the storm's cloud top temperatures using the Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS) instrument. AIRS data showed that the strongest thunderstorms (purple) have cloud top temperatures colder than 230 degrees Kelvin (-45.6 F/-43.1C), indicating they're high in the troposphere and strong storms. Those storms were in bands east and west of the center. Credit: NASA/JPL, Ed Olsen

A low pressure system that has been lingering in the western North Pacific Ocean for several days appears to be coming together today in infrared imagery from NASA's Aqua satellite.

NASA's Aqua satellite passed over the low pressure area called "System 96W" on March 27 at 0547 UTC (1:47 a.m. EDT) and the Atmospheric

Infrared Sounder (AIRS) instrument captured an infrared and visible look at the storm.

On March 27, 2012 at 0600 UTC (2 a.m. EDT), System 96W was located in the western North Pacific Ocean about 205 miles north-northwest of Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, near 7.9 North and 113.4 East. Brunei is located north of the island of Borneo in southeastern Asia. It has a shoreline on the South China Sea, and surrounded by the state of Sarawak, Malaysia.

System 96W's [maximum sustained winds](#) are currently estimated as high as only 15 knots (17.2 mph/27.7 kph) with stronger gusts in the northwestern quadrant.

The NASA AIRS [infrared imagery](#) showed that the center of circulation is consolidating, and there are bands of thunderstorms wrapping along the eastern and western halves of the storm. The AIRS infrared data shows two large areas of convection (rising air that forms thunderstorms that make up the tropical cyclone) east and west of the center. Some of those storms have cloud top temperatures colder than 230 degrees Kelvin (-45.6 F/-43.1C), indicating they're high in the troposphere and strong storms. Storms with cloud heights that cold usually have heavy rainfall.

Forecasters at the Joint [Typhoon Warning Center](#) have upped the chance to "medium" for System 96W to strengthen into a tropical depression, based on wind shear remaining week, warm [sea surface temperatures](#).

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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