

Strong typhoon Lionrock heads for Japan's northeast

August 30 2016



Authorities warn of heavy rain and high waves along the Pacific coast devastated by the 2011 monster tsunami as Typhoon Lionrock heads for northeast Japan

A strong typhoon was on course on Tuesday for a direct hit on northeastern Japan, with authorities warning of heavy rain and high waves along the Pacific coast.

Typhoon Lionrock was 110 kilometres (68 miles) east of the city of Iwaki, as of 2 pm (0500 GMT), the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

Iwaki lies some 200 kilometres northeast of Tokyo.

Packing wind gusts up to 180 kilometres per hour, the storm was moving north-northwest at 35 kilometres per hour and expected to make landfall in the northeast later in the day.

That would make it the first [typhoon](#) to directly land in the region from the Pacific Ocean since the country's present weather observation system was introduced in 1951, they said.

Typhoons usually approach Japan from the south and southwest before moving northward across the archipelago.

Authorities have issued warnings for torrential rain, high waves, strong winds and flooding for the northeastern region, which remains vulnerable after destruction brought about by a March 2011 tsunami generated by a massive magnitude 9.0 offshore earthquake.

It is also expected to hit the region at high tide, deepening concerns for flooding along the coast from Tuesday afternoon through Wednesday morning.

Japan typhoon

Forecast track of Typhoon Lionrock



Source : JMA

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Japan typhoon

Local authorities were using heavy machinery to pile huge sandbags along the coast in a bid to hold back raging waves, as they issued evacuation advisories and opened up some public buildings for use as shelters.

Schools were closed across the affected area, broadcasters reported.

At the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, workers were trying to secure construction cranes and equipment ahead of expected violent winds, operator Tokyo Electric Power Co said. Some sensitive decommissioning work has been suspended, they added.

Authorities also warned of landslides and high water due to expected heavy rain of up to eight centimetres per hour.

The typhoon has already affected manufacturing and travel, with Toyota suspending production at two of its plants in the region, the company said.

Also, some 110 domestic flights have been cancelled, public broadcaster NHK said.



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Some Shinkansen super fast bullet trains have also been suspended in the northern part of the country.

Lionrock, which formed more than 10 days ago, has become the longest-lasting typhoon of those that have developed north of the 30th parallel north, breaking a 46-year-old record, according to the private Weathernews agency.

The previous record-holding typhoon in that category was in 1970, which survived for nine days and six hours, Weathernews said on its website.

Lionrock is expected to cut across Japan's main island of Honshu and head out to sea towards Russia and China, according to the weather agency.

The typhoon comes on the heels of two others that hit Japan in the past nine days, resulting in two deaths, the cancellation of hundreds of domestic flights and disruptions to train services.

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