

1 dead, more than 300 injured as Typhoon Koinu sweeps parts of Taiwan

October 5 2023, by Simina Mistreanu



A woman walks in the rain as Typhoon Koinu approaches to Taiwan in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying

Typhoon Koinu swept southern Taiwan on Thursday, killing one person and injuring more than 300 as it brought pounding rain and record-

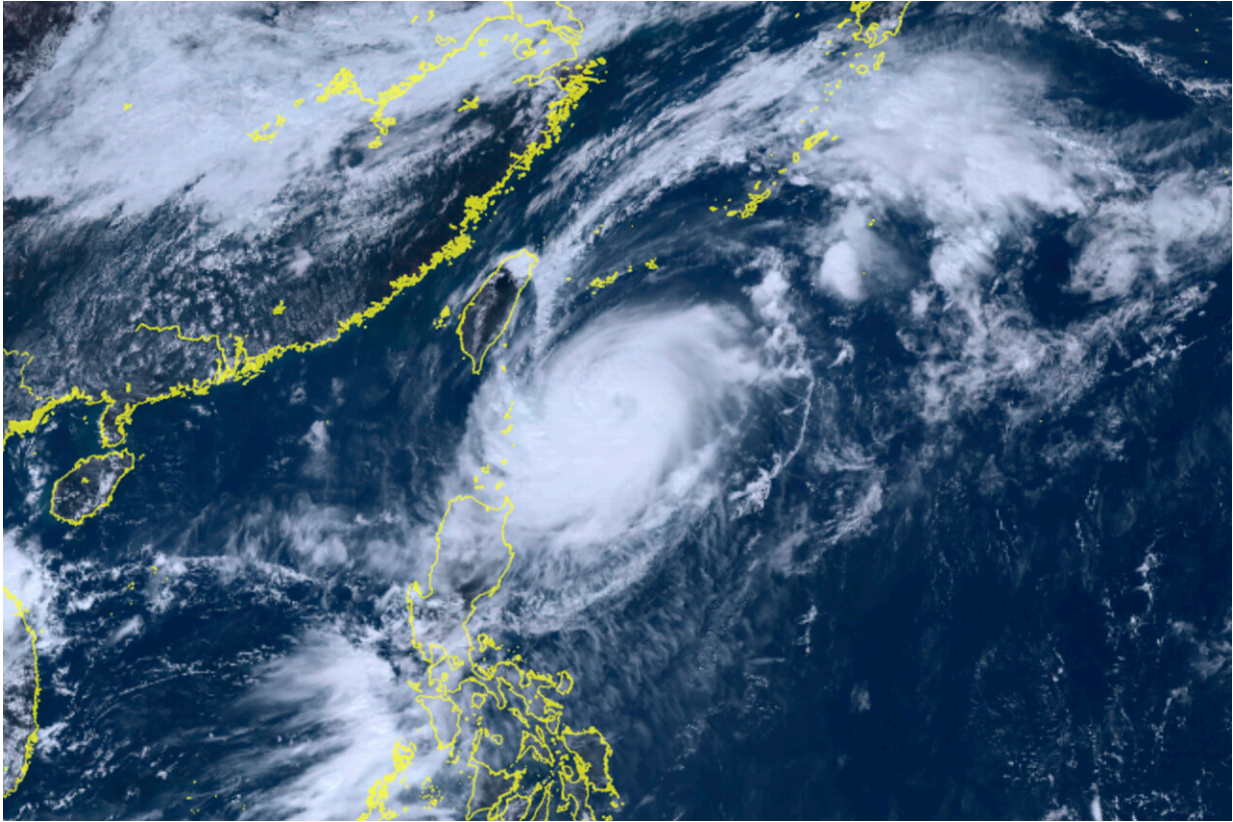
breaking winds to the island, leading to school and office closures.

One person was killed by flying glass in the central city of Taichung and at least 304 were injured around the island, Taiwan's fire department said. Gusts of wind downed trees and caused damage to some buildings.

Koinu, which means "puppy" in Japanese, made landfall early Thursday in Cape Eluanbi, the southernmost tip of Taiwan, and is expected to weaken as it moves west toward the Guangdong and Fujian provinces of southern China.

The typhoon brought the fastest wind ever recorded in Taiwan as it approached on Wednesday night. A weather monitoring station on the outlying Orchid Island, southeast of the main island, measured a gust of 342.7 kph (212.9 mph) at 9:53 p.m., as well as sustained winds that reached 198.7 kph (123.5 mph) at 9:40 p.m. Both values set all-time highs since Taiwan began keeping records of wind speeds in 1897, said Huang Chia-mei, head of the Central Weather Administration's Taitung Weather Station, according to the official Central News Agency.

The device measuring the wind speeds broke shortly afterward, Huang said.



This satellite image taken by Himawari-8, a Japanese weather satellite, and provided by National Institute of Information and Communications Technology, shows Typhoon Koinu, center, approaching Taiwan Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2023. (Courtesy of National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) via AP)

Images shared on social media from Orchid Island showed buildings with broken windows and boats sunk in a harbor.

On Thursday evening, Koinu's maximum sustained winds measured 137 kph (85 mph) with gusts of 173 kph (107 mph).

The heaviest rain fell in the east-coast counties of Taitung and Hualien, and in the mountainous Pingtung county in the south.

Cities across the island canceled work and classes, including the major southern port city of Kaohsiung. The capital, Taipei, in the north, was operating as normal.

Most domestic flights and dozens of international flights were canceled, according to the transportation ministry, while ferries to outlying islands were also suspended.

Despite weakening, typhoon Koinu is expected to douse coastal areas of southern China over the weekend. The city of Guangzhou canceled some flights and trains starting Friday, while its maritime authorities issued a Level 4 alert—the least severe in a four-tier system, calling for caution.



People walk in the rain as Typhoon Koinu approaches to Taiwan in Taipei,

Taiwan, Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying



A woman walks in the rain as Typhoon Koinu approaches to Taiwan in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying



People walk in the rain as Typhoon Koinu approaches to Taiwan in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Chiang Ying-ying



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In Fujian province, bordering the Taiwan Strait, authorities suspended 137 passenger ferry trips.

Taiwan sits in an active region for tropical cyclones, but Koinu is only the second typhoon to make landfall in four years. Typhoon Haikui hit the island in early September, injuring dozens.

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