

China issues blue alert for Typhoon Merbok

China's national observatory on Sunday issued a blue alert for typhoon Merbok, which is expected to hit the southern Guangdong Province on Monday.

At 5 p.m. Sunday, the eye of Merbok, this year's second typhoon, was above the South China Sea some 600 km to the east of Shanwei City, packing winds of up to 18 meters per second, the National Meteorological Center (NMC) said in a statement.

The NMC forecast that Merbok would move northwestward at a speed of 20 km per hour toward Guangdong and make landfall on the coast between Shenzhen and Shantou in late afternoon through the night Monday.

But the center expected the typhoon to weaken and disappear quickly after its landfall.

From Sunday evening to Monday evening, parts of South China Sea and the eastern coast of Guangdong will experience strong winds, while storms with up to 60 mm of precipitation are expected to affect parts of southeast Guangdong.

The NMC suggested local governments take precautions against possible geological disasters, and ships in affected areas should go back to ports.

China has a four-tier color-coded system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.