

Typhoon Talas to hit south China

Typhoon Talas, the fourth typhoon of the year, took shape Saturday afternoon and is moving towards China's southernmost island province of Hainan, local weather forecasts said.

The tropical storm, whose eye was located in the South China Sea some 205 km southeast of Lingshui Li Autonomous County as of 8 p.m. Saturday, packed maximum winds between 62 and 74 km per hour, the Hainan weather bureau said.

The Guangdong Province weather bureau forecast that the typhoon will make landfall between the cities of Qionghai and Sanya at dawn or later Sunday morning. It may also skip Hainan and head towards the Beibu Bay.

Strong winds and heavy rain are expected in Hainan beginning Saturday night. Tides will surge up to four meters high.

Ships in the middle and northern parts of the South China Sea and those off the coast of Hainan were advised to take immediate precaution.

Alerts for typhoon and geological disasters have been issued.

Along the coast of Guangdong, 22,901 fishing boats were moored while 39,425 people working at sea farms went on shore as of 4 p.m. Saturday.

Passenger ships across the Qiongzhou Strait, between Hainan and Guangdong, were also halted.