

# Typhoons hammer eastern provinces

By JIN ZHU in Beijing and SUN LI in Fuzhou

More than 2 million residents in East China's coastal regions were affected by two typhoons on Friday, and one person died in Shandong province, even as the tempests weakened to tropical storms after making landfall.

As of 10 am on Friday, Saola and Damrey had forced the evacuation of about 124,000 residents in Jiangsu province, 180,000 in Shandong province, 237,000 in Zhejiang province, and 173,000 in Fujian province, according to the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

The two typhoons landed less than 10 hours apart on Thursday evening and Friday morning, according to the National Meteorological Center.

The storms brought torrential rain to Jiangsu and the southern coastal areas of Shandong early on Friday morning after Damrey landed in Jiangsu at about 9:30 pm on Thursday, the center said.

Similar weather hit Fujian and its neighboring provinces on Friday morning after Saola made landfall in Fuding city at 6:50 am, it said.

This was only the second time that China has braced for dual typhoons since 1949. Zhang Chang'an, deputy director of the typhoon and marine meteorology center of the China Meteorological Administration, said on Thursday that in 2006, Typhoon Bopha and Typhoon Saomai caused severe losses.

Witnesses to the storm described their terror.

"It's too scary! I never thought my house would col-

lapse before my eyes," said Shen Kaixuan, from Jufeng township of Rizhao, 347 kilometers away from Jinan, the capital of Shandong province.

The 21-year-old student told China Daily on Friday that he went to bed as usual on Thursday night because the rain was not very heavy.

Since Wednesday, five people in Taiwan have died, two remain missing and more than 16 have suffered injuries because of Typhoon Saola, according to the island's emergency operation center.

The Chinese mainland-based Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits sent a letter of condolence to the Taiwan-based Straits Exchange Foundation on Friday over the devastation wrought by the typhoon.

The letter said the ARATS was "deeply concerned" about the death and injuries as well as property losses caused by the floods and mudslides on the island, and it asked SEF to convey its "sincere sympathy" to relevant authorities and affected people, Xinhua News Agency reported.

Premier Wen Jiabao called for intensifying flood-control efforts and ensuring the safety of the public amid recent severe flooding in several areas.

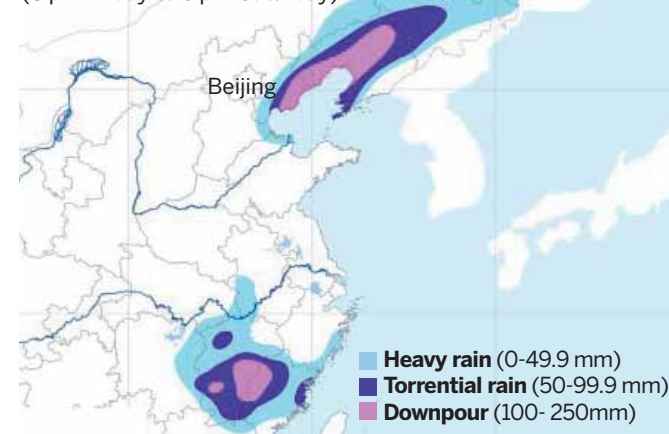
Wen made the remarks during a two-day tour of Henan and Hubei provinces, where he inspected local flood-control facilities and water-control projects, including Three Gorges Dam, Xinhua News Agency reported on Thursday.

He urged local authorities to ensure safety and conduct evacuations in a timely manner,



A woman picks up her belongings from the debris of a makeshift house destroyed in a typhoon in Ganyu, Jiangsu province, on Friday. Typhoon Damrey made landfall in the province late on Thursday night, bringing heavy rains and gales, and causing damages.

## RAINFALL FORECAST FOR 24 HOURS CAUSED BY TYPHOON DAMREY AND TYPHOON SAOLA (8 pm Friday to 6 pm Saturday)



adding that observatories and hydrologic monitoring stations should enhance monitoring and guard against possible disasters.

Local authorities need to improve the construction of infrastructure such as flood-control facilities and sewage networks, which he said have been overlooked in many cities.

He ordered local officials to draw up emergency response plans to minimize losses in the event of severe flooding.

The National Meteorological Center alerted local authorities to gear up their preparations for natural disasters such as floods, mudslides and landslides since

heavy rainfall will lash more than 10 provinces and municipalities in coming days.

Chen Weifeng, mayor of Qinyu in Fujian province, said that although the typhoon has made landfall, the town will still be geared up to tackle the downpour and prevent marine staff and fishermen from going back to sea to ensure safety.

The command center of Fuzhou airport said 28 flights have been canceled because of strong winds.

Tourism in Fujian also took a toll, as individual tourists and tour groups have dropped because of Saola, said a manag-

er surnamed Chen with Fujian Comfort Travel Co.

Trips to some coastal scenic spots have been canceled, Chen said.

But Gulangyu, a popular tourist destination in Xiamen, remained open on Friday afternoon as the city was barely affected, said an official with Gulangyu Management Committee.

The combined impact of Saola and Damrey will continue to dump rain on Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hebei, Liaoning, and Tianjin in the next two days, with the highest rainfall reaching 300 mm in parts of coastal regions in Fujian and Zhejiang, according to the China Meteorological Administration on Friday.

In Tianjin, a city that has rarely seen flooding in the past decade, self-protection became a hot topic among local residents since it was hit by the heavy rainfalls in July that flooded many downtown streets, vehicles and even houses.

"I am ready to go home when the weather changes. When the heavy rain comes, I would rather stay at home for safety than drive outside to make money," Wang Yongqiang, a 43-year-old

taxi driver, said on Friday.

Meanwhile, the death toll from Beijing's devastating downpour on July 21 rose to 78 after another body was discovered, government authorities said on Friday.

The body of a 65-year-old man from neighboring Hebei province was retrieved from a pond near Dongguan village of Fangshan district, according to a statement issued by the Beijing municipal government on its official Sina Weibo micro blog, citing the city's floods control and drought relief office.

The statement also said one of the 11 unidentified bodies previously discovered had been identified.

Nearly two weeks ago, the Chinese capital received its heaviest rain in six decades. Average precipitation hit 170 mm, while a township in the suburban district of Fangshan recorded 460 mm of rainfall.

Wang Qian in Jinan contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at jinzhu@chinadaily.com.cn and sunli@chinadaily.com.cn

# Beijing sees slow growth in tourism

By ZHENG XIN zhenzxin@chinadaily.com.cn

Despite the increasing number of tourists from abroad that Beijing received in the first half of the year, the growth is slowing down.

The capital welcomed more than 2.5 million tourists from overseas — including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan — in the first half of the year, an increase of 4.2 percent year-on-year.

However, the growth has slowed since the second quarter of the year and is expected to continue slowing down, according to the Beijing Tourism Development Committee.

"The capital will come up with more measures and policies to attract inbound tourists," Lu Yong, director of the committee, said at a meeting in Beijing on Friday.

Places of historical interest and scenic beauty have long been attractive for overseas tourists, according to the committee.

An official with the marketing office of the Badaling section of the Great Wall said that Badaling received about 320,000 overseas tourists in the first six months, up 6.7 percent over the same period of last year.

Most of the inbound tourists are from Asia, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Asian tourists make up 48.5 percent of all the people, a 1.9 percent year-on-year increase. Next are European tourists, accounting for 25.1 percent with a year-on-year increase of 8.4 percent, and American tourists, who account for 20.5 percent of the total, according to the committee.

However, even though inbound tourism has seen a year-on-year growth of 9.1 percent in the first quarter, the growth for the second quarter slowed to 1 percent, partly due to the slow recovery of the global economy and the budget deficit, debt and unemployment problems that are hitting many developed countries, the committee said in

a report on Friday.

On the other hand, outbound tourism, thanks to the appreciation of the yuan and the promotion of foreign destinations, has outperformed its inbound counterpart, with more than 1.2 million outbound tourists in the first half of the year, a year-on-year increase of 69.2 percent, according to the committee.

The committee said that the deceleration of inbound tourism might continue until the second half of the year.

To further boost the capital's inbound tourism, the city is likely to introduce a 72-hour window to explore the city without a visa, and other policies, according to the committee.

Kajiya Yoichi, an accountant now living in his native Japan, has always wanted to come back to China, where he spent years studying in Tsinghua University, to explore the ancient city again with his family.

However, the visa is a barrier for him.

"If the 72-hour-window is implemented, I bet many potential foreign tourists like me would love to give the city a tour," said the man in his 30s. "Three days would be enough for foreigners to explore the city." A coordination group has been set up to facilitate the implementation of the policy, said the committee.

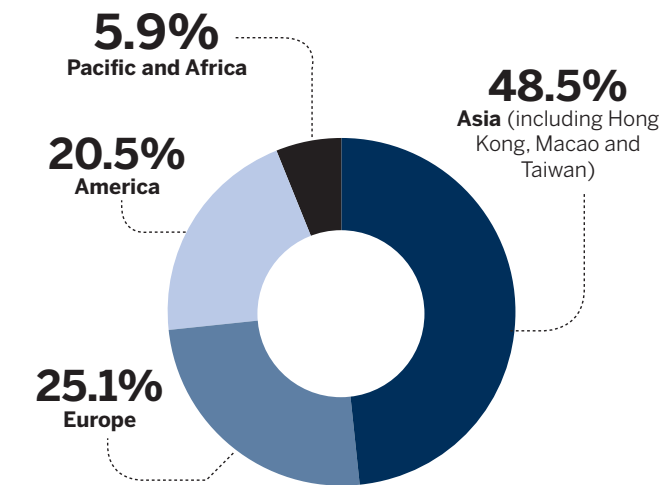
"The policy, once implemented, is expected to attract more tourists from abroad," said Lin Song, an officer at the public security bureau's exit-entry administration.

However, details of the upcoming policy were not yet revealed.

"It has been proved that the visa waiver for transit passengers could greatly benefit local inbound tourism, as many cities worldwide have implemented similar policies," said Jiang Yiyi, director of the China Tourism Academy's international tourism development institute. "A tight visa will only drive away

## OVERSEAS TOURISTS TO BEIJING IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR

The city has received more than 2.5 million tourists from overseas, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, a year-on-year increase of 4.2 percent.



Source: Beijing Tourism Development Committee

CHINA DAILY

potential foreign visitors."

The committee will also carry out more market promotion abroad to attract inbound tourists and make the capital known worldwide, especially in the emerging markets of Africa and

the Middle East.

It was revealed that South Korea's Jeju Island has signed a memorandum in May with the Beijing Badaling section of the Great Wall to boost tourism development.

# 9 killed on Hebei railway bridge

By CHEN XIN chenxin1@chinadaily.com.cn

A freight train hit and killed nine people at the Funing section of the Datong-Qinhuangdao Railway in North China's Hebei province on Friday morning, the Ministry of Railways said.

The accident happened at 5:28 am, and four other people were injured, a ministry statement said.

The injured have been sent to hospitals for emergency treatment and their lives were out of danger as of 4 pm, according to a statement from the Qinhuangdao municipal government.

The ministry said torrential rain destroyed paths near their homes, so people from three villages had to walk close to the railway tracks. When they reached the Miwuhe railway bridge, they were hit by a freight train.

"The connection between the villages and the outside world had been cut off, so the villagers could only walk along the narrow paths on the two sides of the railway bridge and that led to the tragedy," an unnamed local villager was quoted as saying by Xinhua News Agency.

"Some villagers were killed by the train and some were knocked down from the 10-meter high bridge," the villager said.

Further investigations are under way.

The Datong-Qinhuangdao Railway is the main channel transporting coal from the resource-rich Shanxi and Shaanxi provinces and the Inner Mongolia autonomous region to the port city of Qinhuangdao.

An insider with the railway industry was quoted by people.com.cn, the website of the People's Daily, as saying that due to the heavy load of trains, the railway industry has been concerned with problems connected with locomotive brakes.

Meanwhile, debris caused by the continuous torrential rain blocked the Beijing-Harbin Railway's Qinhuangdao section on Thursday and led to the delay of 11 trains bound for Beijing. The railway line resumed operations on Friday but trains could only run at a limited speed when going through the disaster-hit section.

Rains have made the water level of many reservoirs in Qinhuangdao surpass the warning levels. Nearly 700 residents in five villages at the lower reaches of the Yanghe Reservoir were evacuated on Thursday.

Also, due to fears of the potential impact brought by typhoons, the Nanchang Railway Bureau said on Friday that they have halted ticket sales for 44 bullet trains linking Fuzhou, Xiamen, Longyan and Fuding.

Sun Li in Fuzhou contributed to this story.

# Airport: Machines are not always reliable means of checking

FROM PAGE 2

"Ordinary travelers won't look around first and pay special attention to the checking procedure. There will always be signs and hints that can be observed," she said.

But more often, the airport security workers' job is to explain to passengers why they

cannot take liquids and lighters on board.

Since 2008, liquids in containers of 100 milliliters or larger, as well as lighters and matches, were forbidden in passengers' carry-on luggage.

"But some passengers still found the rules hard to accept," Lin said.

Lin said that a man who

insisted taking toiletries on board once splashed shampoo all over her hair and clothes. In a separate incident, a woman passenger opened one of her six fish cans and splashed the soup onto Lin.

"The job's most challenging part is to stay calm and find solutions for passengers," said Lin, who is a star employee at

the airport.

She helped the two passengers check in the toiletries and fish cans, and later received apologies from both.

As for passengers who have a flight to catch and have no time to check in their expensive skincare products or lighters, the airport security department now offers a service to keep

goods for passengers for up to 30 days.

"Each day, we get about 70 bottles of expensive skincare products and toiletries, and at least 30 expensive lighters that passengers can't take in carry-on luggage but are not willing to toss away," she said.

At Terminal 2, there is a room full of expensive skincare prod-

ucts and lighters collected from security departments that are stored in 26 cabinets, each 1.8 meters high.

"The cabinets are all full, and we have to put new incoming things on the floor and on the top of cabinets," said Gao Lihuan, an airport employee in charge of the deposited articles.

Gao said some passengers

will not come back to pick up their things, and articles that go unclaimed for 30 days will be donated to the Hope Charity Sales Center under the China Youth Development Foundation.

According to the foundation's website, the revenue from charity sales will be donated to public welfare projects.