

Hurricane Dorian gaining strength and on way to U.S. mainland



Miami, August 29 (RHC)-- Hurricane Dorian is getting stronger as it heads directly for the U.S. mainland early Thursday, churning over open waters. "Strengthening is forecast during the next few days, and Dorian is expected to become a major hurricane on Friday," the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said.

Dorian became a Category 1 hurricane just before making landfall on the U.S. Virgin Islands Wednesday, causing power outages and minor flooding. Luckily, Puerto Rico avoided a direct hit from the powerful storm.

The hurricane was on a path likely take it to Florida's Atlantic coast, though an arrival farther north wasn't out of the question. Forecasters said that it could make landfall on the U.S. mainland as a Category 3 storm late Sunday or Monday morning.

On its current track, Dorian "should move over the Atlantic well east of the southeastern and central Bahamas today and on Friday, and approach the northwestern Bahamas on Saturday," the hurricane center said.

As of 5 a.m. EDT Thursday, Dorian's center was some 150 miles north-northwest of San Juan, Puerto Rico as it headed northwest at 13 mph. Dorian's sustained winds- increased to 85 mph, with higher gusts.

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