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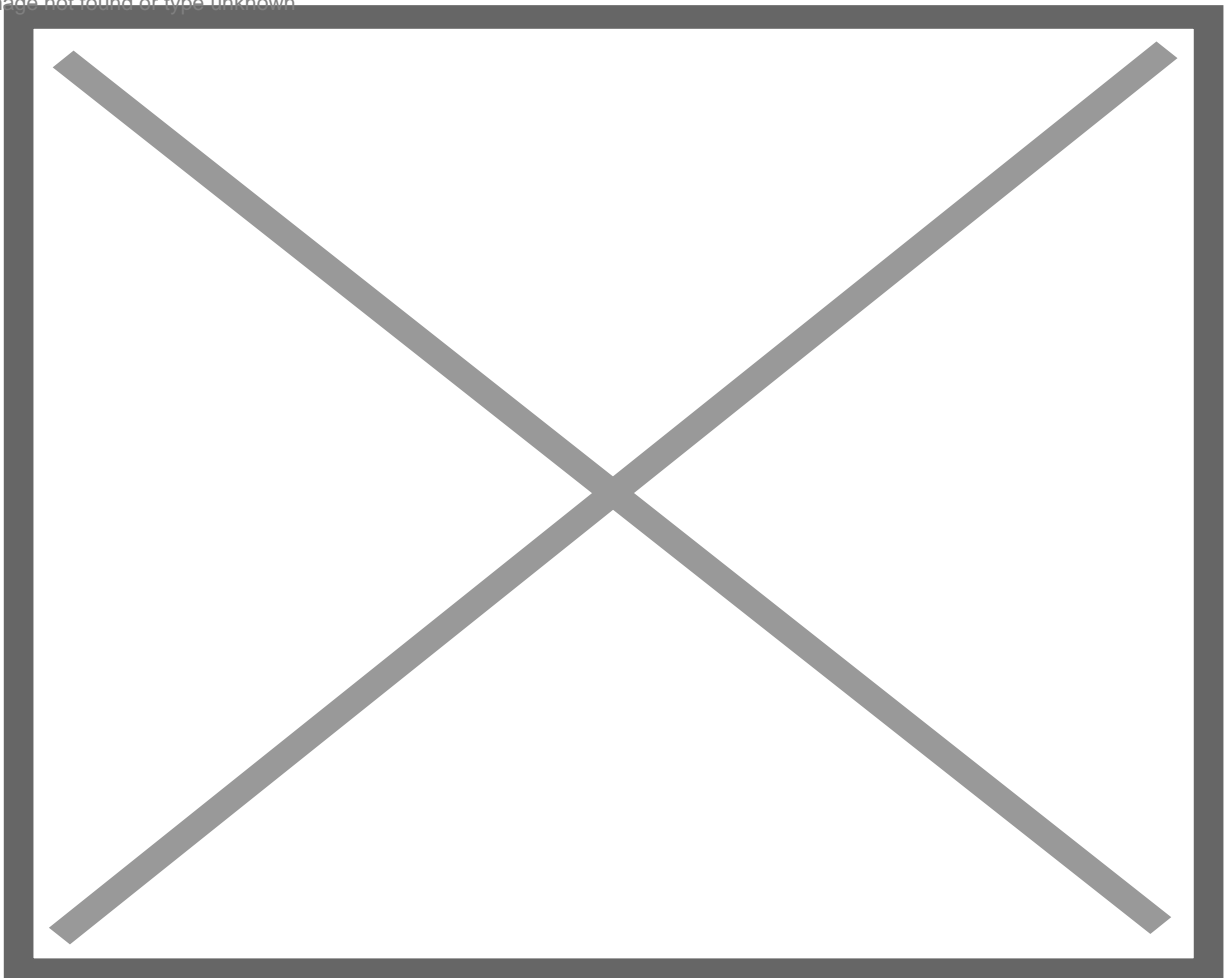
Beryl Intensifies Into Hurricane With Rapid Strengthening Forecast, Storm Poses Major Threat to Windward Islands

With hurricane warnings issued for Barbados and watches for St. Lucia, St. Vincent, the Grenadines, and Grenada, Beryl will pass over 200 miles south of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico between late Monday and early Tuesday

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The National Hurricane Center (NHC) has issued an advisory that Hurricane Beryl has strengthened and is forecasted to intensify rapidly. The hurricane, now packing sustained winds of 75 mph, is expected to bring life-threatening winds and storm surges to the Windward Islands as a major hurricane.

Location and Movement

As of 5:00 PM AST on Saturday, Hurricane Beryl was located near latitude 10.1 North and longitude 49.3 West, approximately 720 miles east-southeast of Barbados. The storm is moving westward at a speed of 22 mph. The NHC predicts a quick westward to west-northwestward motion over the next few days, with Beryl expected to cross the Windward Islands late Sunday night into Monday.

Warnings and Watches

- Hurricane Warning: Barbados
- Hurricane Watch: St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadine Islands, Grenada
- Tropical Storm Watch: Martinique, Dominica, Tobago

A Hurricane Warning means hurricane conditions are expected within the warning area, typically issued 36 hours before the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds. Preparations to protect life and property should be rushed to completion. A Hurricane Watch means these conditions are possible within 48 hours. Tropical Storm Watches indicate that tropical storm conditions are possible within the watch area, generally within 48 hours.

Expected Impact

- Winds: Hurricane conditions are expected in the warning area by Sunday night, with possible hurricane conditions in the watch areas by Sunday night or Monday morning. Devastating wind damage is expected where Beryl's eyewall moves through portions of the Windward Islands.
- Storm Surge: Life-threatening storm surges could raise water levels by 5 to 7 feet above normal tide levels in areas of onshore flow near Beryl's landfall.
- Rainfall: Beryl is expected to produce rainfall totals of 3 to 6 inches across Barbados and the Windward Islands, which may lead to flooding in vulnerable areas. Portions of southeastern Puerto Rico may see 1 to 4 inches of rain Monday night into Tuesday, with southern Hispaniola potentially receiving 2 to 6 inches of rain from Tuesday into Wednesday.
- Surf: Swells generated by Beryl are expected to reach the Windward and southern Leeward Islands by late Sunday, likely causing life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

Beryl will move more than 200 miles south of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands between late Monday night and early Tuesday morning. Marine conditions across the Caribbean Waters and the Mona and Anegada Passage are expected to deteriorate starting late this weekend due to Beryl and an approaching tropical wave expected to develop into a tropical storm.

Residents and interests in the Lesser Antilles, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, are advised to closely monitor the progress of Hurricane Beryl. The NHC will provide updates with the next tropical weather outlook scheduled for 8:00 PM AST.