

TROPICAL STORM HOPE (17)

Tropical Storm Hope developed from a monsoon depression which formed on 3 September along the northern edge of a strong southwest monsoon flow (25 to 30 kt (13 to 15 m/sec)) that was present over the southern portion of the South China Sea. During the formative stages of this rapidly deepening monsoon depression, shipboard synoptic observations provided essential data which enabled the JTWC to closely monitor the system's development.

At 040345Z, a Tropical Cyclone Formation Alert was issued for an area west of central Luzon when shipboard observations revealed surface pressures had dropped to at least 1002 mb near the depression's center. The 041200Z synoptic data, indicating improved organization in the low-level wind flow, prompted the first warning which was issued at 041500Z. In support of the first two warnings, satellite fix positions - based on a poorly-defined cloud signature - and surface observations did not correlate very well on the system's center. Thus, when a resources permitting aircraft reconnaissance mission at 042357Z located Hope well southwest of the previous warning position, with

maximum winds of 45 kt (23 m/sec) and a 994 mb central sea level pressure, the tropical cyclone was relocated and upgraded to tropical storm status on the 050000Z warning.

During the first 30 hours in warning status, Hope intensified to a peak of 60 kt (31 m/sec) which was maintained until landfall. On 6 September, Hope slammed into the coast of Vietnam, 25 nm (46 km) south of Da Nang, and subsequently dissipated over the mountainous terrain of Vietnam and Laos. Accompanying Hope's demise over Southeast Asia, widespread flooding was reported in Vietnam and northeastern Thailand, resulting in several thousand people fleeing their homes and extensive damage to the season's rice crop.

From the first warning, JTWC forecasts continued to anticipate that Hope would slow its forward movement, or move towards the west-northwest and slow. Hope, however, accelerated towards the west-southwest, paralleling the subtropical ridge axis to the north, and the expected forecast movement was never realized.

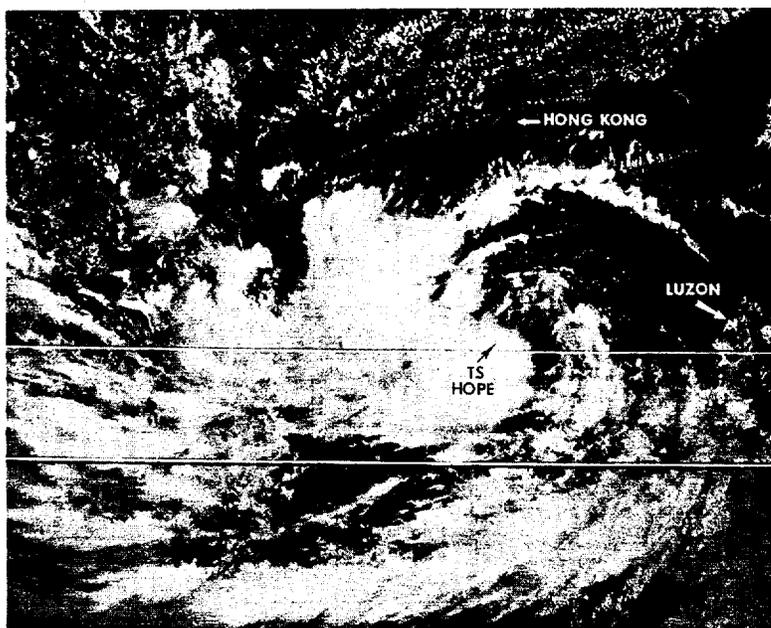


Figure 3-17-1. Tropical Storm Hope near 50 kt (26 m/sec) intensity in the central South China Sea. 050700Z September (NOAA 7 visual imagery).