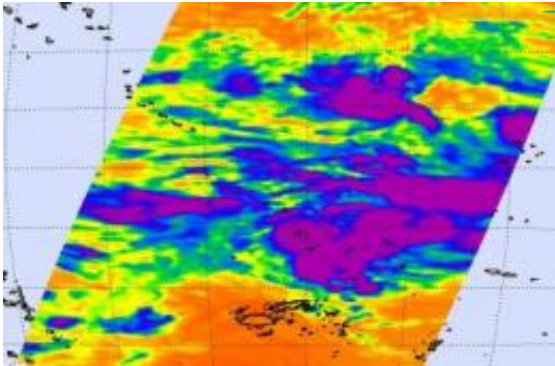


Tropical Storm Tomas approaching Nadi this weekend

March 12 2010



NASA's Aqua satellite's Atmospheric Infrared Sounder Instrument image of Tomas on March 11 at 20:10 UTC (3:10 p.m. ET) showed a developing storm with a large cluster of high, cold (purple), strong thunderstorms around Tomas' center Credit: NASA JPL, Ed Olsen

Tropical Storm Tomas is on a southern track in the South Pacific Ocean, and residents of Nadi, Fiji will be watching it as it approaches the eastern side of the island late this weekend. A tropical cyclone alert is in effect for all of Fiji this weekend.

Nadi is located on the western side of the main island of Viti Levu, Fiji. Fiji Standard Time is 17 hours later than Eastern Standard Time.

NASA's Aqua satellite flew over Tomas from space and captured in [infrared image](#) from the Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS)

instrument. The AIRS image on March 11 at 20:10 UTC (3:10 p.m. ET) showed a developing storm with a large cluster of high, cold (purple), strong thunderstorms around Tomas' center.

Tropical Storm Tomas had [maximum sustained winds](#) near 57 mph (50 knots) and it was located near 11.6 degrees South and 177.6 degrees West. [Tropical storm](#) force winds extend about 150 nautical miles from the center of the storm, making Tomas about 300 miles wide in diameter.

The Fuji meteorological Service noted that Tomas appears to be getting better organized, and bands of thunderstorms are wrapping tightly around the center (usually an indication of strengthening).

At 10 a.m. ET, the center of Tomas was 500 nautical miles northeast of Nadi, Fiji, near 11.6 South and 177.2 West. Forecasters at the Joint Typhoon Warning Center at that time noted that Tomas had strengthened by 23 mph since 10 p.m. on March 11.

Tomas is expected to intensify over the weekend. By Monday or Tuesday, [wind shear](#) is forecast to increase causing Tomas to weaken. This weekend, however, residents of Fiji can expect gusty winds, ocean swells and heavy rainfall.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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