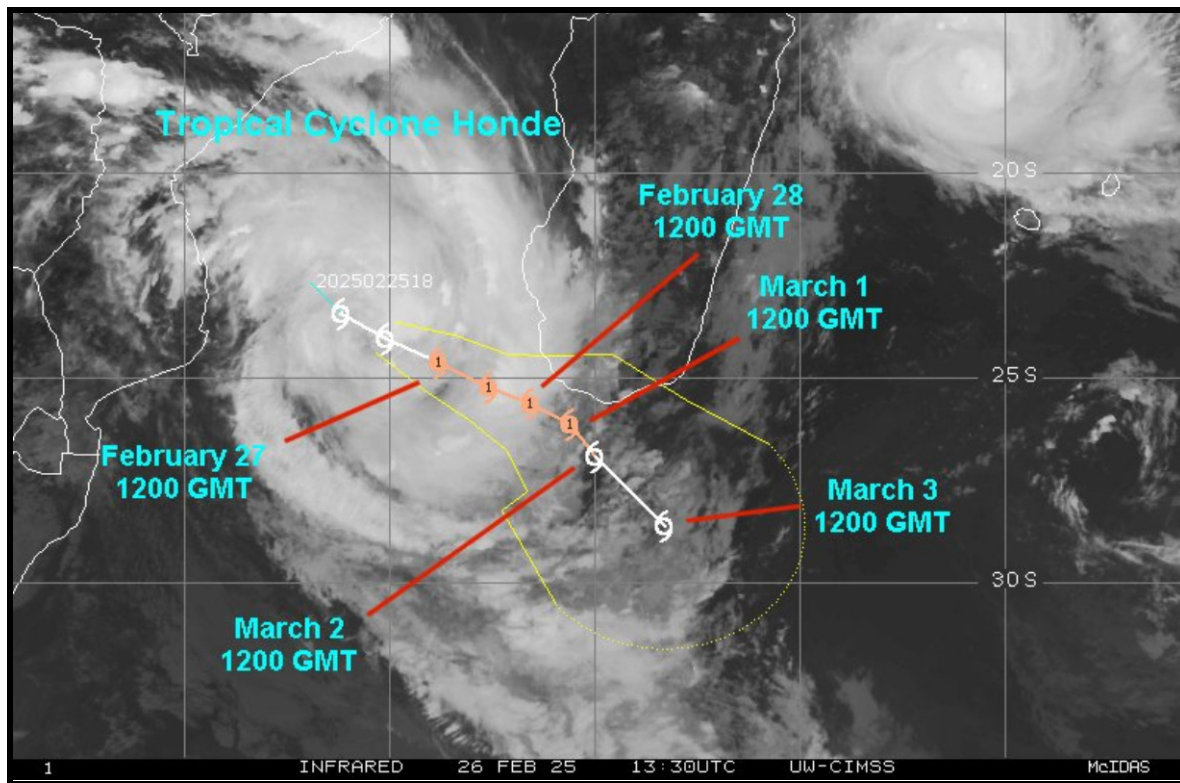


Tropical Cyclone Honde Impact On Madagascar To Be Minimal

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 26 (World Weather Inc.) – Tropical Cyclone Honde was located over the Mozambique Channel between Mozambique and Madagascar earlier this morning. The disturbance will slowly track toward southeastern Madagascar today and Thursday before settling off the coast Friday and this weekend. *Flooding and damaging winds are expected for southwestern Madagascar with some localized flooding also possible in west-central and northwestern Madagascar. The southwest corner of the island is not a major crop producer and overall damage should be minimal. Localized flooding may otherwise damage a minor amount of crops produced this time of year in west-central and northwestern Madagascar.*

As of 0900 GMT, Tropical Cyclone Honde was located near 23.6 south latitude and 39.1 east longitude or approximately 122 miles southwest of Europa Island. Movement was south-southeasterly at 7 mph during the previous six hours. Maximum sustained surface wind speeds were at 58 mph, gusting upwards of 75 mph. Tropical storm force wind speeds (39 to 73 mph) were occurring up to 196 miles away from the center of the disturbance.



Tropical Cyclone Honde will track southeasterly toward southern Madagascar today and Thursday. The disturbance will meander around the southwest corner of Madagascar Friday and this weekend, but is not expected to move inland over the island. Some computer forecast models have suggested a shift to the west-southwest over the Mozambique Channel is then possible during the first half of next week, but World Weather, Inc. believes after some erratic movement the storm will turn to the southeast away from land.

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Precipitation associated with Tropical Cyclone Honde will gradually spread across western Madagascar today and Thursday. The heaviest rain will be restricted to southwestern Madagascar Friday and this weekend, though some showers will persist in portions of west-central and northwestern Madagascar. Rainfall will then decrease early next week as Honde shifts away from the island. Southwestern Madagascar will receive anywhere from 8.00 to 15.00 inches and local amounts of 20.00 inches or more by next Wednesday morning. West-central and northwestern Madagascar will receive 1.50 to 5.00 inches of rain with local amounts of 7.00 inches or more during this time.

In addition to torrential rain, southwestern Madagascar will likely experience tropical storm force wind speeds at times, generally Friday and Saturday. Severe flooding will be likely due to the waves of torrential rain. *The combination of rain and strong winds will likely promote some locally significant damage across the region. Southwestern Madagascar is not a major crop producer and overall losses for the country should be minimal. However, crops produced in the region may be negatively impacted.*

Localized flooding will also be possible in west-central and northwestern Madagascar during the next several days. These areas produce some grains, oilseeds, and several fruits and vegetables. Minor damage will be possible, though losses should be minimal. In addition to the potential for crop and structural damage, ocean travel in the Mozambique Channel will likely be limited during the next several days.

Tropical Cyclone Honde has been advertised to potentially shift to the west-southwest across the Mozambique Channel during the first part of next week by some computer forecast models; *however, this is not very likely. The system may move erratically for a few days before eventually moving more steadily to the southeast away from Africa and Madagascar.*

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