

SIDR Cyclone Bangladesh 2007



UN SIT REP # 3

Dhaka, Bangladesh 19th of November 2007

Situation

A super cyclonic storm (category 4) moved north through the Bay of Bengal and hit southern Bangladesh at 7:30 pm on Thursday with wind speed reaching 220 km/h. It continued northward causing extensive damage, especially to the country's southwestern districts.

Official reports from the 19th November confirm 2408 deaths, but the Red Crescent fears that fatalities may reach over 10,000. Further, reports confirm 1491 injured and 1063 unaccounted for, with 3.1 million people affected in total. The 12 hardest hit districts are Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barguna, Pirojpur, Barisal, Jhalkhati, Bhola, Mandaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur, Khulna and Satkhira. Crops of 761,361 acres have been damaged. 273,000 houses have been completely destroyed, and 615,000 partially. 345,019 trees have been felled. Over 250,000 livestock have been confirmed killed. 75 educational institutions have been totally damaged and another 4,231 partially. Some areas are still inaccessible, but more road and communications lines are opened.

Government of Bangladesh Response

Preparation efforts before the storm are judged to have contributed to a significant reduction in the loss of life and destruction of property. Measures included evacuation of around 3 million people, the use of over 2,000 cyclone shelters, and stockpiling of foods, medicines and other relief equipment. Before the cyclone made landfall, radio and loudspeaker announcements were advising the population to seek refuge in the shelters.

The Chief Adviser has allocated 100 million taka for relief and house construction in 11 districts. Deputy Commissioners are procuring and collecting sufficient amount of dry food to face the current situation. So far, MoFDM has allocated 4,000 metric tons of rice, 7,500 tents, 18,000 blankets and 30 million taka as gratuitous relief grants. A special fund is allocating 350 million taka for house building grants. 13,000 bundles of CI sheets are ready for immediate distribution.

While more roads are opened, the military continued to bring relief items to the affected people by planes, boats and helicopters.

As the cyclone hit Thursday evening, the Government called a meeting of the Disaster and Emergency Response group. A large number of UN agencies, NGOs and some donors participated. A new meeting of the Disaster and Emergency Response group was convened for Sunday. Many donors pledged support to the Bangladesh Government and there was widespread support for having relief efforts coordinated by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. Next meeting will be on Thursday at 12:00 noon.

UN Response

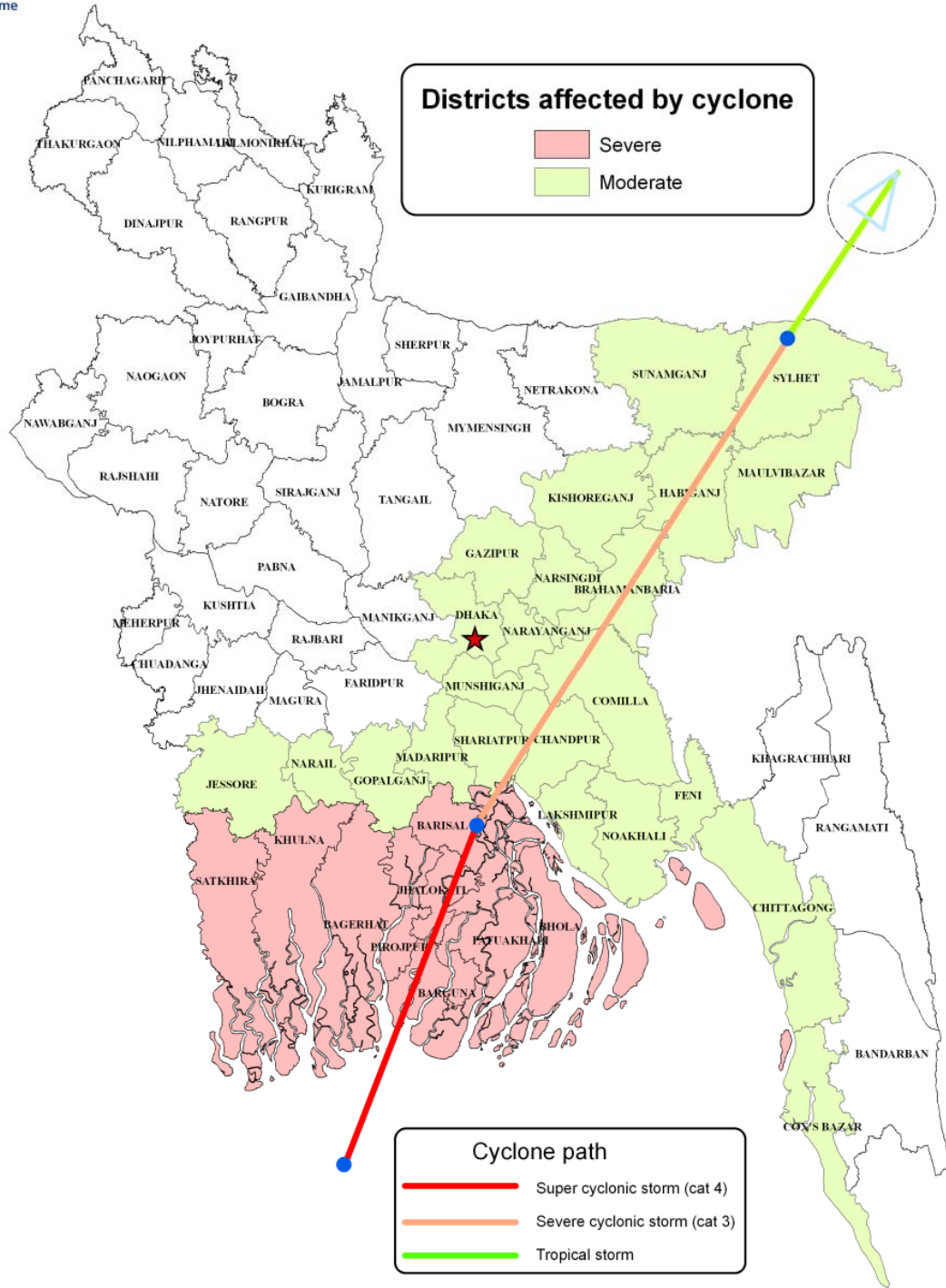
The UN provided support to the Government preparedness efforts by prepositioning relief items together with relief and assessment teams across Southern Bangladesh. A team of 12 experts has left Dhaka to assist with assessment in affected areas not yet covered, expected to report back in Dhaka on Thursday. The UN is distributing 208 tons of high-energy biscuits to help 850,000 cyclone victims. 240,000 packets of water purifying powder are reaching 48,000 families. Shelter materials (thick polyesters) will also be distributed to 18,000 households whose houses have been destroyed. Partners have started distribution of dry food (flattened rice and molasses) to 70,000 affected families from Sunday. The Bangladeshi Air Force have support the distribution of UN relief items. Medical officers have been made available to assist Government response, including 4 for coordinating central response. 50,000 USD has been made available for water and supplies and transportation. More relief will be made available following initial determination of needs.

The UN Disaster Management Team met on Friday to coordinate response and assessment, and to take early stock of the situation. The UN agencies are submitting the project proposal for immediate life saving actions to the Central Emergency Response Fund. Proposals include food aid, water and sanitation, nutrition health and agriculture. UN Heads of Agencies have visited the worst affected districts Monday to gain first hand knowledge of the suffering of the cyclone victims. They met assessment and relief teams and confirmed that UN relief is reaching the farthest corners of the affected area. UN relief was second in reaching the affected populations.

Conclusion

UN assessment data is coming in, and within days more precise data on damages and needs will be available. Initial results points to great needs, and quick action is required as the small reserves many had are depleted. At the moment it seems that food, clean water supply, diarrhea treatment and shelter assistance are the most urgently needed items. The longer term perspective calls for rehabilitation of livelihood, infrastructure, health and educational services and increased shelter capacity.

Cyclone SIDR:2007



The names, boundaries and information on the map does not imply official UN endorsement

Source: Cyclone data, position etc: Tropical Storm Risk Tracker
web address: <http://tsr.mssl.ucl.ac.uk/>
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