

[HOME](#)[LATEST UPDATES](#)[COUNTRIES & EMERGENCIES](#)[APPEALS & FUNDING](#)[POLICY & ISSUES](#)[PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES](#)[MAPS](#)[AFRICA »](#)[AMERICAS »](#)[ASIA](#)[Tropical Cyclone Aila - May 2009](#)[Latest Updates](#)[Updates By Sector](#)[Key Documents](#)[Appeals & Funding](#)[Maps](#)[Who is Reporting](#)[Vacancies](#)[Training](#)[see all Countries & Emergencies in Asia](#)[EUROPE »](#)[OCEANIA »](#)





## Bangladesh cyclone victims face humanitarian crisis: charities

Source: [Agence France-Presse \(AFP\)](#)

Date: 30 May 2009

by *Shafiq Alam*

**DHAKA, May 30, 2009 (AFP)** - More than one million people in Bangladesh are facing a "humanitarian crisis" after a cyclone slammed into the south of the country and neighbouring India earlier in the week, aid agencies said Saturday.

At least 237 people were killed after Cyclone Aila on Monday hit the low-lying coast north of the Bay of Bengal, where a military and civilian relief operation is under way.

US charity Care said the authorities were racing against time to respond to a humanitarian crisis in the cyclone-hit Bangladeshi districts of Koyra and Satkhira where lack of clean drinking water is emerging as the biggest problem.

"Although it was not a high-category cyclone, it's created a grave humanitarian crisis because of water logging and inundation," Care spokesman Suman Ahsanul Islam told AFP.

"All sources of drinking water have been destroyed. People are having to live without proper food and water. Authorities and charities must respond immediately to avert a catastrophic situation," he said.

Officials said salt water which has flooded districts could not be treated with purification tablets.

British charity Oxfam said people in the worst-hit districts were being forced to migrate elsewhere because of salt-water flooding.

"It's an emerging humanitarian crisis. And it's getting worse every day," said Oxfam's Bangladesh operations chief Heather Blackwell, adding more than one million people had been affected.

"Water hasn't receded from major parts of the districts even five days after the cyclone," she said.

Most of the embankments and levees that shielded people from tidal water had been washed away, leading to daily flooding of the districts.

Blackwell, who had just returned from the cyclone-hit districts, said most of the cyclone victims had taken shelter in schools and mosques as their mud houses were destroyed.

"An acute crisis of clean drinking water has resulted in a big increase in cases of diarrhoea and water-borne diseases and the concern of a full-scale epidemic is growing," she said.

The army had brought in fresh water supplies but not enough for the cyclone victims.



[See all maps for this Emergency](#)

**By Emergency:**  
[Tropical Cyclone Aila - May 2009](#)

**By Country:**  
[Bangladesh](#)

**By Source:**  
[Agence France-Presse \(AFP\)](#)

**By Type:**  
[News](#)

**FIND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

"We've just received a barge full of water from a nearby seaport. But it's inadequate for the more than 200,000 affected people," said Kazi Atiur Rahman, head of the worst-affected Dakope district.

Rahman said at least 2,000 people were sick with diarrhoea in Dakope alone.

Some 167 people died in Bangladesh, where hundreds of thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed, while 70 people were killed in India as a result of the cyclone.

Some 20 of those killed in India's West Bengal state died a day after the storm in mudslides caused by rainfall.

The low-lying region frequently experiences tropical storms and cyclones during the monsoon season. In 2007, more than 3,500 people were killed, most of them in Bangladesh, when Cyclone Sidr lashed the same districts.

sa/pmc/mtp

**Copyright (c) 2009 Agence France Presse**

Received by NewsEdge Insight: 05/30/2009 07:30:59 ©AFP: The information provided in this product is for personal use only. None of it may be reproduced in any form whatsoever without the express permission of Agence France-Presse.

---

With the exception of public UN sources, reproduction or redistribution of the above text, in whole, part or in any form, requires the prior consent of the original source. The opinions expressed in the documents carried by this site are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by UN OCHA or ReliefWeb.

 Print  E-mail  Save  Share

[Home](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#) | [About ReliefWeb](#) | [Contact](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Donor Support](#) | [Comments](#)

© 2009 ReliefWeb