



The death toll is mounting in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan tore across the country on Friday. Among the worst hit areas are eastern Leyte island and the city of Tacloban where the devastation resembles the aftermath of a tsunami.

PHOTO: AP

10,000 killed in super typhoon

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their minds from hunger or from losing their families," high school teacher Andrew Pomed, 36, told AFP, as he warned of the increasing desperation of survivors.

"People are becoming violent. They are looting business establishments, the malls, just to find food, rice and milk... I am afraid that in one week, people will be killing from hunger."

Authorities were struggling to even understand the sheer magnitude of the disaster, let alone react to it, with the regional police chief for Leyte saying 10,000 people were believed to have died in that province alone.

"We had a meeting last night with the governor and, based on the government's estimates, initially there are 10,000 casualties (dead)," Chief Superintendent Elmer Soria told reporters in Tacloban.

"About 70 to 80 percent of the houses and structures along the typhoon's path were destroyed."

On the neighbouring island of Samar, a local disaster chief said 300 people were killed in the small town of Basey.

He added another 2,000 were missing there and elsewhere on Samar, which was one of the

first areas to be hit when Haiyan swept in from the Pacific Ocean with maximum sustained winds of 315 kilometres an hour.

Dozens more people were confirmed killed in other flattened towns and cities across a 600-kilometre stretch of islands through the central Philippines.

Meanwhile, More than 600,000 people were evacuated as super typhoon Haiyan bore down on Vietnam, authorities said yesterday.

Residents of the Vietnamese capital Hanoi were braced for heavy rains and flooding, while tens of thousands of people in coastal areas were ordered to take shelter ahead of Haiyan's expected landfall tomorrow morning.

"We have evacuated more than 174,000 households, which is equivalent to more than 600,000 people," an official report by Vietnam's flood and storm control department said.

The storm is now expected to strike tomorrow morning after changing course, prompting further mass evacuations of some 52,000 people in northern provinces by the coast, the VNExpress news site reported.

China also announced its highest alert for Typhoon Haiyan as six crew members of a cargo

boat were reported missing yesterday.

The China Meteorological Administration hoisted the "red" signal, the highest in its four-tier warning system, as the typhoon brushed the southern island province of Hainan.

Six people were lost at sea after the mooring rope of their vessel was cut in the storm, causing the ship to drift, the official Xinhua news agency said.

The Philippines endures a seemingly never-ending pattern of deadly typhoons, earthquakes, volcano eruptions and other natural disasters.

This is because it is located along a typhoon belt and the so-called Ring of Fire, a vast Pacific Ocean region where many of Earth's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.

However, if the feared death toll of above 10,000 is correct, Haiyan would be the deadliest natural disaster ever recorded in the Philippines.

The previous deadliest disaster in the Philippines occurred in 1976, when a tsunami triggered by a magnitude 7.9 earthquake devastated the Moro Gulf on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao, killing between 5,000 and 8,000 people.

I want peace, not power

Says PM aggrieved by hartal violence

BSS, Dhaka

Expressing serious anguish and sorrow over the destructive politics of the opposition, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she wants peace, not power.

"I cannot tolerate people's sufferings. I want peace and development for the people, not the prime ministership," she said while addressing a function marking the national conference of khatibs and imams at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Hasina said BNP and Jamaat cadres were now burning people to death in the name of hartal, and such oppression could not be tolerated.

"Believe me, I feel so much pain when I see the way people are being burnt by BNP-Jamaat cadres," she said, referring to the death of 14-year-old Monir Hossain, who was killed in recent hartal violence.

At the function, the premier mentioned that she had requested Begum Zia over phone on October 26 to call off the hartal. But the opposition leader turned down her [Hasina] proposal.

Pointing to the war crimes trial issue, she alleged that the BNP-Jamaat-Hefajat have become desperate to thwart the trial and the course of justice.

"The trial should go on for the welfare of human beings as those war criminals committed genocide and arson, molesting our mothers and sisters," she told her audience.

Terming Islam a religion of peace, Hasina said there was no place for terrorism and militancy in it.

She called upon religious scholars to beware of those who were out to malign Islam through their ill motives.

Hasina said there were two types of education in the country's madrasa sector -- one is A'lia and the other is Qawmi.

Students who pass from A'lia madrasa get the scope of government jobs as the A'lia education programme has been recognised by the government.

But Qawmi students are deprived of government jobs as there is no recognition of their certificates by the government.

"That is why we have taken initiatives for bringing the Qawmi madrasa education programme under government recognition," she said.

Hasina noted that there was no place for falsehood in Islam. "But, a vested quarter is resorting to propaganda against the Awami League. They burn the holy Quran, vandalise mosques and kill people in the name of religion."

5 war heroes killed on Yusuf's order

Freedom fighter testifies at tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A freedom fighter yesterday testified that Razakars had killed at least five freedom fighters in Sarankhola upazila of Bagerhat during the 1971 Liberation War on the orders of Jamaat-e-Islami leader AKM Yusuf.

Razakar Bahini, an auxiliary force of the Pakistan army, was formed under the leadership of Yusuf, the then chief of Khulna Jamaat-e-Islami, and the force established two camps at Sarankhola, said Yusuf Ali Sikder, fourth prosecution witness in the war crimes case against AKM Yusuf.

On the night of June 6, 1971, freedom fighters attempted to attack one of the Razakar camps at Rayenda Bazar but Razakars got the information beforehand, said Sikder, who had been a group com-

mander of freedom fighters.

Some Razakar men began firing at freedom fighters when they reached Rayenda. Sikder said he had heard that AKM Yusuf along with other Razakars had reached there at that time.

At one stage, the freedom fighters retreated as they were running out of arms and ammunition and went into hiding, said the 76-year-old witness.

Later, they learnt from others that co-fighters Captain Anwar, Asmat Ali Munshia and Ismail were held hostage inside a girl's school, Sikder said. The hostages were tortured and then killed around 11:30am the following day as per "Moulana Saheb's" [AKM Yusuf] instructions.

After Razakars left the spot, Sikder along

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Hartal pushes 9 more burnt in hartal arson

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prices over the next two days. "They know that I will have to buy even if they charge higher prices on excuse of hartal," said the angry buyer.

His conjecture, however, was not too far off. The prices of beans will increase today, for sure, as no truck will arrive, Rezaul Karim, a wholesaler at Shymbazar, told The Daily Star.

Accordingly, he stockpiled 450 kilograms of the vegetable, which sold at Tk 60 a kilogram yesterday in contrast to Tk 40-50 the previous day. He hopes the price will exceed Tk 60 today.

Hoarding in expectation of a windfall, however, has some risks, too, according to Helaluddin Ripon, a vegetables retailer at Karwan Bazar.

"Customer turnout has dropped to half of what we had on Saturday -- it appears that people are worried about hartal violence. It is bad news for us as it means we might have to incur losses due to deterioration of the vegetables."

Meanwhile, prices of onion, which remained stable last week, have crept up at the wholesale level. Locally-grown onion was found selling at Tk 97-98 a kilogram from Tk 95-96 on Saturday and imported onions Tk 90 a kg from Tk 86 a couple of days ago.

The staple rice, which increased in value last week for supply disruption, however, remained unchanged.

Zaid Bakht, research director of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, warned that prolonged disruption in supply chain of essentials would fuel inflation.

Food inflation, though, has started to materialise already, as October figures show. It stood at 8.38 percent in contrast to 7.93 percent recorded in September, according to data from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Particularly affected were the urban areas, the worst casualty of the disruption in supply chain, where food inflation crept up 0.53 percentage points to 9.64 percent in October. In rural areas, it climbed 0.43 percentage points to 7.86 percent, compared to September.

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Pro-hartal supporters set fire to a parked bus in Mirpur in the capital around dawn yesterday. Ronny, who worked as the bus helper, was inside during the attack. With flames all around him, the teenager somehow managed to break a window with his foot and get out.

Shimul was trapped in a human haulier, which the hartal-makers set fire to around 10:00pm on Sat Mashjid Road in the capital. Not caring about injuries to himself, pedestrian Mishor Khan got the child out of the burning vehicle.

Shimul had 15 percent of his body blistered and was taken to DMCH. The boy was apparently alone in the human haulier and he could not say more than his name and age before he passed out at DMCH.

Harunur Rashid, 32, a rental car driver, was trying to get back to Mymensingh town after dropping off his client out of town on the eve of the hartal on Saturday.

Around 8:30pm, pro-hartal supporters hurled brick chunks and eventually a Molotov cocktail at his microbus near the town.

Montu, Kamal, Muktar, Harun, Shimul and Ronny were in critical condition with burn injuries at DMCH.

In Chittagong, University of Science and Technology Chittagong employee Nirmal Das was killed when the auto-rickshaw he was travelling on flipped over as it was trying to get away from angry pickets at Madunaghat area of Hathazari around 8:20am yesterday, our correspondent reported.

A total of 120 hours of strikes in the last two weeks had left at least 18 people killed and scores more injured in hartal violence. In line with previous shutdowns, the hartal yesterday was marked by clashes across the country.

Yesterday, activists of the BNP-led 18-party opposition alliance clashed with ruling Awami League men and law enforcers in several districts. The opposition men also resorted to arson and vandalism, leaving many injured, reported our

district correspondents.

In Dhaka, hartal supporters set fire to a ward unit office of the Awami League in Demra and torched six vehicles in Dhanmondi, Mirpur and Laxmi Bazar, and Kaliakoir and Ashulia at the edge of Dhaka.

They set off homemade bombs in front of New Market and Pallabi police stations, and in Nayapaltan, Mohakhali, Badda and Hatirjheel areas.

Pickets yesterday also hurled a crude bomb at the Uttara home of Workers Party Bangladesh President Rashed Khan Menon, MP.

A cameraperson of Channel 24 was injured when pickets exploded a crude bomb at Kalyanpur in the morning.

Criminals also hurled two bombs at the office of daily Karatoa on Chokjadu Road in Bogra around 6:30pm, but no one was hurt.

Meanwhile, police recovered about 200 homemade bombs and bomb-making materials and arrested four alleged Jamaat-Shibir activists at a house in Kathalagan area late last night.

They also seized books on jihad found in the house known as a mess for bachelors, said Assistant Sub-Inspector Shahidul Islam of Kalabagan Police Station.

Rail communications between Dhaka and the north and south had been suspended for five and a half hours after criminals cut off 18 inches of a rail line near Ishwardi station early yesterday.

Trains running between Dhaka and Rangpur, Rajshahi, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Bogra, Naogaon, Joypurhat, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Khulna, Chuadanga, Kushtia and Jessore were affected.

At least 50 BNP activists and two policemen were injured during clashes on TA Road and in Shimraikandi area of Brahmanbaria yesterday.

Witnesses said when police arrested BNP district General Secretary Jahurul Haque Khokan at Shimraikandi, hundreds of opposition activists gathered there and exploded several crude bombs.

They vandalised shops and motorbikes and threw brick chunks at police, who retaliated with



Burnt and blackened 13-year-old Ronny at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Pickets torched the bus he was in at Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

300 rubber bullets and teargas shells, police said.

At least 19 people were hurt at Baghmara-Shishua bridge area of Sarishabari in Jamalpur yesterday during a clash. Eight activists of BNP and Awami League and a child sustained bullet injuries.

The clash started when local Awami League men tried to stop opposition men from picketing around noon.

In Kishoreganj, a clash between Awami League and BNP activists left at least 50 people, including seven policemen, injured at Pulerghat Bazar. The clash erupted when the ruling party men tried to stop opposition activists from bringing out a procession.

Clashes also left 12 injured in Natore, 10 each in Feni and Noakhali. There were also reports of explosions, vandalism, road blockades, arson and arrests in Chandpur, Satkhira, Bogra, Jhenidah, Gazipur, Madaripur, Narayanganj, Dinajpur, Faridpur, Barisal, Bhola and Sylhet.

Police in Chittagong said BNP activist

Mohammed Sahabuddin, 40, lost his hand from the wrist down when a bomb he was making went off in Rangunia upazila. He was arrested around 1:30pm, three hours after the bomb had exploded.

Three long hartals in three weeks in a row were taking its toll on the communication sector, industries, education and the economy.

Long-distance buses stayed put and a handful of city buses were seen on the streets, with people struggling to get into them whenever they stopped.

Kitchen market traders with small investments seemed to be the hardest hit with poor supply and high prices.

The 19 lakh Junior School Certificate and Junior Dakhil Certificate examinees were again going through uncertainty. Two of their tests had already been deferred because of last week's hartal and this shutdown forced the government to reschedule five more exams.

Zyma Islam, Shaheen Mollah, Wasim Bin Habib, Tamanna Khan and our district correspondents contributed to this report.

Qaisar charged with war crimes

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November 15, 1971.

In a single incident of mass killing, at least 108 people, mostly Hindus, were killed in 22 villages under Nasirnagar upazila in Brahmanbaria on November 15. Qaisar was "involved" in those killings, prosecutor Tureen Afroz told The Daily Star, quoting the formal charges.

The prosecution, including Zead Al Malum and Tureen Afroz, yesterday submitted the formal charges to the tribunal's registrar office and the International Crimes Tribunal-2 fixed today for passing an order.

Seventy-three-year-old Qaisar, a former state minister in military dictator HM Ershad's cabinet, was arrested in the capital on May 21 following a warrant of arrest issued by the tribunal.

The war crimes suspect was granted bail on August 5 on health grounds.

After probing the allegations against Qaisar for 16 months, the war crimes investigation

agency on September 22 said it had found "horrifying evidence" of his involvement in crimes against humanity.

Malum told reporters the prosecution had submitted 2,447 pages of documents with the formal charges and a list of 70 witnesses, including Social Welfare Minister Enamul Haque Mostafa Shahid, to prove the charges.

Qaisar, the alleged founder and leader of the "Qaisar Force", which was an associate organisation of the Pakistani army at Habiganj and Brahmanbaria during the war, was "involved" in murders, extermination, enslavement, deportation, imprisonment, abduction, confinement, torture, rape and other inhumane activities, said Malum.

The charges brought against Qaisar are: 1. Killing of Shahjahan chairman, injuring Nayeb Ali, attack, arson and loot in Kazibari under Bijoyagar in Brahmanbaria on April 27.2. Loot and arson in Madhabpur Bazar and Katiara under Madhabpur in Habiganj

on April 27.3. Killing of four people and loot and arson at Krishnanagar village under Madhabpur, Habiganj on April 27.4. Killing of 15 people, including Abdus Sattar at Madhabpur Bazar, Purba Madhabpur and Sadatbari village in Madhabpur, Habiganj on April 28.5. Confinement, torture and killing of seven people, including Abdul Aziz, near Shayestaganj Godown and Bridge in Shayestaganj, Habiganj, on April 29.6. Confinement, torture and killing of two persons, including Dr Saleh Uddin Ahmed of Nizampur and Kirtanpur in Habiganj Sadar on April 29.7. Arson and loot at 40/50 houses at Habiganj Sadar on April 30.8. Rape of a Santal woman at Chandpur Tea Garden on May 11.9. Killing of eight people, including Abdul Aziz, at Lohadaha in Madhabpur, Habiganj on May 15.10. Killing of Shah Firoz of Mokambari village in Habiganj Sadar and abduction, confinement and torture of Sabu Mia on June 13.11. Abduction, confinement, torture of Golam

Rasul and his family members at Hariapur in Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria in the last part of June.12. Attack, loot and arson at the house of Dayal Gobinda of Gutma village in Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria on June 23.13. Attack, loot and arson at the house of Sayedul Haque at Purbavag village in Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria on June 23.14. Rape of a woman and torture of two men of Madhabpur, Habiganj in mid-August.15. Confinement, torture and killing of four people at Narapati village, Chunarughat, Habiganj on August 18.16. Confinement, torture and killing of four people of Mouzpur in Madhabpur, Habiganj on September 29.17. Abduction, confinement, torture and killing of Nazim Uddin of Sahapur village in Madhabpur, Habiganj in mid-October, and 18. Killing of at least 108 people, mostly Hindus, in 22 villages in Nasirnagar upazila in Brahmanbaria on November 15.

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The father of three was rushed to a local hospital, but was transferred to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) right away.

The on-duty doctors at the facility said he had been brought dead around 8:20am, Jahirul Islam, sub-inspector of CMCH police outpost, told The Daily Star.

Yesterday was the first day of the 84-hour-long hartal enforced by the BNP-led opposition alliance. "My husband is the only wage-earner. Who will look after my children now?" said Nirmal's wife Bimola Das, choking with emotion. She demanded exemplary punishment to those responsible for his death.

The USTC staff rushed to the facility as soon as they heard about the death of Nirmal, who was an assistant at the operating theatre of the medical section.

"We have to do our duties to serve people every day, even on hartal days," said Mohammad Yunus, in-charge of the operating theatre. "Is it our fault?"

Nirmal's last trip