

Cyclone in Bangladesh, thousands homeless

by UPI

DHAKA, Bangladesh - Cyclone Sidr slammed Bangladesh with 150 mph, killing several people and leaving thousands homeless, reports said Friday. "Many are feared dead," Selva Sinnadurai with the International Federation of the Red Cross in Bangladesh told CNN. He said damage assessment was being hampered because of downed power and telephone lines. The report said Sidr, spun out of the Bay of Bengal, came ashore Thursday night along the India-Bangladesh coastal border as a Category 4 storm. It began to weaken after landfall -- but not before unleashing torrential rains and floods in low-lying areas. Such areas always have been a perennial problem for Bangladesh, which is ravaged by floods and storms virtually every year. The report said volunteers resorted to beating drums to warn people to evacuate. "About 600,000 people have already evacuated," one volunteer told CNN. She estimated about 2 million people live along the coastal area. Sinnadurai was quoted as saying about 30,000 volunteers along the coast were helping people reach cyclone shelters. Bangladesh's Daily Star reported Khulna and Barisal districts were among the worst affected.

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