

Cyclone death toll 3,000 in Bangladesh

by UPI

DHAKA, Bangladesh -- Officials in Bangladesh Monday upped the death toll from Cyclone Sidr to 3,000, making it the worst storm to hit the area in two decades. Word came as rescue workers and the military struggled to retrieve more bodies in coastal areas ravaged by the storm, which struck late last week, Press Trust of India reported. The Red Crescent estimated the death toll could go as high as 10,000. The international community so far has pledged more than \$25 million in aid though the government has yet to make an appeal. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the USS Essex and the USS Kearsarge, loaded with supplies and helicopters, are heading for the area in case the Dhaka government asks for help. UNICEF representative Louis-George Arsenault toured a village along the Bay of Bengal, and told Voice of America it looked "a bit apocalyptic" in that the wind stripped everything. "The crops are gone, trees are gone. And people are just trying to survive ... pulling things together. They have no more clothes. They have just one piece of cloth they are wearing around their waist," Arsenault said. The European Union, Britain, France, Germany and the United States have all pledged money and supplies.

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