



The First Cyclone of the Year is a Major Threat to the Coast: Preparations Need to be Strengthened to Deal With Cyclones of Different Characteristics Like Remal

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Leaving behind the devastations, the cries and desolations for the victims - Cyclone Remal has passed. Even more struggles to survive have been added to the ongoing challenging life on the coast. A more difficult struggle has to be started to provide housing for the homeless, provide food for the hungry, and provide resources for the deprived.

The men who lost their fish farms due to the collapse of embankments during the cyclone are facing a new crisis. The high water level of the river during Remal's protracted rampage left significant damage, and increased wind speed ravaged nature. These issues makes it even more difficult for those who live by the sea to fulfill their needs. They have to struggle passionately to regain their lost property.

Because of climate change, coastal people are facing more hazards than before. Frequent cyclones and other natural calamities have become common for the coastal people. But how much can the people living along the coast manage these calamities? They lose everything in the frequent natural hazards, living expenses rise, and they fall into a debt trap. Many disaster-affected families are unable to overcome their debt throughout their life. Catastrophes block off all avenues for subsistence; individuals lose their jobs. Moving permanently to the city often becomes the last resort for many families. Tragedies upend the way of life along the coast. Many people's means of livelihood are impeded by Cyclone Remal. For many, the battle for a restart began immediately following Remal's decease.

Field Report: Deluti

In the wake of Cyclone Remal, the coastal areas that Cyclone Remal impacted were investigated. One of the hardest-hit places in Bangladesh by Cyclone Remal was Deluti Union in Paikgachha Upazila of the Khulna District. The storm affected around fifteen thousand individuals in ten villages inside the union. The tremendous tidal wave entered Deluti Union when the brittle embankment at Telikhali, which was located along the banks of the Manga River at the border of Dakop and Paikgachha Upazilas, crumbled. This resulted in a catastrophe.



Figure 01: A House Destroyed by Cyclone Remal

Mosharraf Morol (56), from Fulbari Bazar, claimed that they still hadn't lighted the stove. They occasionally get by on dry food and receive food from relatives' houses. Such has been the week. Akirun Nessa, the spouse of Mosharraf Hossain, stood by him during the conversation. Her cheeks were wet with tears. She had a plastic bag in her hand. The union council was going to provide Akirun with relief rice. But with their stove and house in such disarray, she was concerned about how she would cook the rice. Many others, including Mostafa Sheikh, Rina Bibi, and Abdul Majid, were busy putting their names in the notebook as the gathering grew while we were speaking. They thought it was crucial to write their names in the notebook to get help.

Cyclone Remal had Different Characteristics



Figure 02: Children are Also at Risk in Remal's Destroyed House

Cyclone Remal differed substantially from other cyclones in terms of behavior. Remal did not lose its strength even after striking the land.

1. It took a long time to cross Bangladesh.
2. It did not strike in the same location as predicted on the weather map.
3. It created high tidal waves along the entire coastal area.

Cyclone Remal can be distinguished from other storms by these features. Not even meteorological specialists and old coastal residents had witnessed a cyclone taking so long to pass. The entire coast and the nation sustained significant devastation as it raged for a long time. So far, ten fatalities and approximately two hundred thousand demolished houses are listed in official reports. More damage than expected has been caused by the tidal surge along the shore. This time, the damage is very subtle. We don't see much of it, but there has been immense internal damage. It is true that Bangladesh is currently a global leader in cyclone preparedness. Looking back, we can observe significant advancement in cyclone management. The number of people killed by the cyclones in 1970, 1988, and 1991 has been considerably decreased. However, we still have a lot of work to do to reduce the damage caused by cyclones.

Increasing Focus on Cyclone Preparedness

We have robust "Standing Orders on Disaster" (SOD), which outlines the duties and responsibilities of everyone during natural disasters. There are committees from the national to the local level. The SOD specifies who will be on these committees and what each person's role will be. However, proper implementation must be ensured through increased monitoring.

Red Crescent's Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) and other non-governmental volunteer organizations sent teams during the recent storm Remal. One day before the Remal cyclone, volunteers transmitting alerts regarding emergencies were seen. But there was a conspicuous absence of cooperation. Before a cyclone, volunteers from various groups should get together for coordination meetings to divide up the work. More than just making announcements should be the responsibility of volunteers.

On the other hand, it has been seen that whole coastal regions experience complete blackouts without power well in advance of the cyclone warning. The internet and electricity are linked, and when one or the other is down, the situation worsens multiple times for the residents in the impacted areas. In order to keep in touch during cyclones, alternative strategies must be taken from concerned authority.

Undoubtedly, the number of cyclone shelters has increased over time. However, people hesitate to go to the cyclone shelters. Residents of Burigoalini Union, during the Remal, blamed

the shelters' conditions, claiming that there is little room for stay and scarcity of food is acute, and problems become considerably more acute for women. Furthermore, there are still not enough storm shelters in many remote coastal areas.



Figure 03: Fragile Embankments are Risky Homes

After a tropical storm, providing aid to those areas is a gigantic task. Accurate lists are necessary in order to deliver relief to the real victims. But partisanship and partiality plague these rankings frequently. Helping individuals in their difficulties can be achieved by properly reaching everyone. For people to restore their lives after receiving emergency relief, rehabilitation help is required. However, concerns about aid not reaching the appropriate people also exist here. Since no one appears to be there to support them after emergency relief finishes, the real fight for people harmed by the cyclone begins. Long-term strategies should be implemented to help those impacted, allowing them to heal and start over.

Climate Change Must be Taken into Account

Sea levels are rising silently due to climate change. Therefore, climate change must be considered when preparing for cyclones. Adaptation is now at the centre of global climate discussions. Coastal embankments are considered a fruitful approach to alleviate the effects of tropical cyclones.

There are multiple fragile embankments that have existed for a very long time. Every cyclone has demonstrated to us - the weak embankments are known to collapse under tidal pressure. We don't know, though, if the Water Development Board is informed of this. We observe that locals use volunteer work to restore embankments in a number of locations around the southwest coast. In that area, this scenario is still evident following Cyclone Remal. Strong and long-lasting embankments have long been desired by residents in cyclone-prone locations.

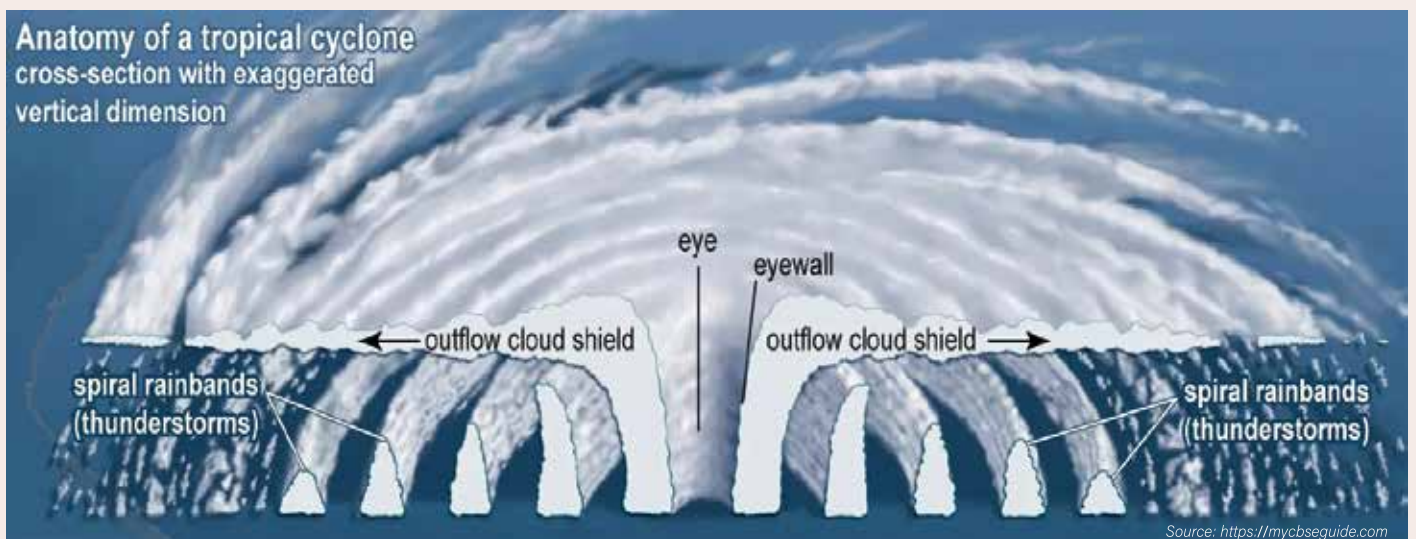


Figure 04: The People of the Coast are Afraid of the Signal of the Cyclone

With support from the World Bank, some embankments were constructed in the Shorankhola neighborhood of Bagerhat in 2007 following Cyclone Sidr. But those embankments have failed multiple times in different locations. Cracks were observed in the block-dropped region of Sharankhola Sadar following Cyclone Remal. Similar breaches were found in Khulna's Dakop embankments following Cyclone Aila. Building embankments necessitates a greater focus on cyclone readiness.



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