

Philippines Clinic Overrun With Patients

BY KRISTEN GELINEAU AND JIM GOMEZ
Associated Press

TACLOBAN, Philippines — A run-down, single-story building with filthy floors at Tacloban's ruined airport has become the area's main medical center for victims of last week's powerful typhoon. It has little medicine, virtually no facilities and very few doctors.

What it is not short of are patients. Hundreds of injured people, pregnant women, children and the elderly have poured into the squat, white building behind the control tower since Typhoon Haiyan ravaged the eastern Philippines on Friday, killing thousands. Doctors who have been dealing with cuts, fractures and pregnancy complications said Wednesday they soon expect to be treating more serious problems such as pneumonia, dehydration, diarrhea and infections.

The medical woes add to the daunting tasks for authorities, including dealing with looters and clearing the bottlenecks holding up thousands of tons of aid material from coming in.

"The priority has got to be, let's get the food in, let's get the water in. We got a lot more come in today. But even that won't be enough. We really need to scale up operation in an ongoing basis," U.N. humanitarian chief Valerie Amos told reporters after touring Tacloban, the capital of Leyte province. Her office has released \$25 million in emergency relief fund, accounting for a chunk of the millions of dollars pledged by countries around the world.

The World Food Program distributed rice and other items to nearly 50,000 people in the Tacloban area Wednesday, U.N. spokesman Martin Nesirky said.

While the cogs of what promises to be a massive international aid effort are beginning to turn, they are not quick enough for the 600,000 people displaced, many of them homeless, hungry and thirsty.

With the Tacloban airport battered and roads made impassable by debris, very little aid has arrived in the city. Most of it is stuck in Manila and the nearby airport of Cebu, a 45-minute flight away.

Many among the desperate residents have resorted to raiding for food. Mobs overran a rice warehouse on Leyte, collapsing a wall that killed eight people. Thousands of sacks of the grain were carted off. Also Wednesday, security forces exchanged gunfire with an armed gang.

Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez urged residents to flee the city because local authorities were having trouble providing food and water and maintaining order, The New York Times reported. He said the city desperately needed trucks to distribute relief shipments accumulating at the airport as well as equipment to pull decaying corpses from the rubble.

Despite those incidents, police said the situation was improving. "We have restored order," said Carmelo Espina Valmorla, director of the Philippine National Police special action force. "There has been looting for the last three days, but the situation has stabilized."

With the local police force unable to



LUI SIU WAI/XINHUA/ZUMA PRESS/MCT
The bodies of victims are placed at the roadside in a neighborhood in Tacloban city, Leyte province, central Philippines in search of help. Survivors of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines are increasingly desperate for food, water and medical supplies, officials in affected areas say. The official death toll stands at more than 2,000, though some reports say it could be as high as 10,000. The UN says more than 11 million people may have been affected and some 673,000 displaced.

operate — most were victims — the government rushed thousands of soldiers and 600 policemen from other parts of the country. The security forces, including army engineers, are helping clear roads and remove the dead, many of them on roadsides. A 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew was in place.

"There's a lot of dead bodies outside. There's no water, no food," said Dr. Victoriano Sambale, one of the dozen medical staff tending to thousands of people at the airport clinic. Until Wednesday, there was no anesthetic, so open wounds had to be stitched without it.

"Patients had to endure the pain," Sambale said. Suddenly he is summoned — another pregnant woman had shown up.

Clutching her swollen belly, 26-year-old Reve Rose was writhing in agony while rolling on her side on a wooden bench as her nervous husband looked on. Her first child was not due until around Christmas but she feared she is in labor already. Sambale felt her belly and tried to calm her down, certain it was just a panic attack.

"I am nervous, sad," she said. "The house is lost. Everything is gone." The air inside the clinic was fetid. Babies screamed and despondent elderly patients sat in chairs, eating dry crackers. One woman nursed her newborn, signing a lullaby. Intravenous drip bags hung from nails driven into the walls and doorjamb.

Thelma Superable, 74, was vomited and needed emergency dialysis. She, her 51-year-old son, Danny Superable, and his young son have made their way to the clinic from their home, 37 kilometers (20 miles) away, by walking and hitching rides. By the time they reached the clinic, they were down to one bottle — with an inch of water left in it. "I am trembling because I am hungry," Danny Superable said. "It's survival of the fittest."

Since the storm, people have broken into homes, malls and garages, where

they have stripped the shelves of food, water and other goods. Authorities have struggled to stop the looting. There have been unconfirmed reports of armed gangs of robbers operating in a systematic manner.

The death toll rose to 2,344, according to a national tally kept by the disaster agency. That figure is expected to rise, perhaps significantly, when accurate information is collected from the whole disaster zone, which spreads over a wide swath of the eastern and central Philippines but appears to be concentrated on two main islands — Leyte and Samar.

The congressman for Eastern Samar province, a coastal region that bore the full force of the storm, said 211 people had been killed there and 45 were missing.

"The situation there was horrible," Ben Evardone told a local TV station. "Some communities disappeared, entire villages were wiped out. They were shouting 'food, food, food!' when they saw me."

The government says planes, ships and trucks were all on their way, loaded with generators, water purifying kits and emergency lights — vital equipment to sustain a major relief mission. Airports were reopening in the region, and the U.S. military said it was installing equipment to allow the damaged Tacloban airport to operate 24-7.

A Norwegian ship carrying supplies left from Manila, while an Australian air force transport plane carrying a medical team took off from Canberra. British and U.S. navy vessels are also en route.

U.S. Brig Gen. Paul Kennedy promised a response akin to the widely praised U.S. military one after the 2004 Asian tsunami, when fleets of helicopters dropped water and food to hundreds of isolated communities.

"You are not just going to see Marines and a few planes and some helicopters," Kennedy said. "You will see the entire Pacific Command respond to this crisis."

Next-Gen Biofuels Promise Is Unfulfilled

NEW YORK (AP) — The first trickle of fuels made from agricultural waste is finally winding its way into the nation's energy supply, after years of broken promises and hype promoting a next-generation fuel source cleaner than oil.

But as refineries churn out this so-called cellulosic fuel, it has become clear, even to the industry's allies, that the benefits remain, as ever, years away.

The failure so far of cellulosic fuel is central to the debate over corn-based ethanol, a centerpiece of America's green-energy strategy. Ethanol from corn has proven far more damaging to the environment than the government predicted, and cellulosic fuel hasn't emerged as a replacement.

"A lot of people were willing to go with corn ethanol because it's a bridge product," said Silvia Secchi, an agricultural economist at Southern Illinois University.

But until significant cellulosic fuel materializes, she said, "It's a bridge to nowhere."

MDs Told To Get Tough About Weight

ATLANTA (AP) — Next time you go for a checkup, don't be surprised if your doctor gets on your case about your weight.

The medical profession has issued new guidelines for fighting the nation's obesity epidemic, and they urge physicians to be a lot more aggressive about helping patients drop those extra pounds.

Doctors should calculate your body mass index, a weight-to-height ratio. And if you need to lose weight, they should come up with a plan and send you for counseling.

"We recognize that telling patients to lose weight is not enough," said Dr. Donna Ryan, co-chair of the guidelines committee.

The good news? By next year, most insurance companies are expected to cover counseling and other obesity treatments, following in the steps of the Medicare program, which began paying for one-on-one help last year.

Toronto Mayor Admits Illegal Drug Use

TORONTO (AP) — Toronto Mayor Rob Ford admitted during a heated City Council debate Wednesday that he bought illegal drugs while in office, but adamantly refused to step down despite calls from nearly every councilor to take a leave of absence and get help.

"I'm most definitely keeping this job," the 44-year-old Ford said, insisting he was "a positive role model for kids."

The mayor made the admission under questioning by a former ally, Councilor Denzil Minnan-Wong. Ford publicly acknowledged last week that he smoked crack cocaine while in a "drunken stupor" last year, but his comments Wednesday marked the first time he admitted buying illegal drugs.

Ford paused for a long time after Minnan-Wong asked him if he had bought illicit narcotics in the past two years.

Then he replied, "Yes I have."

Bulger Faces Victim's Families In Boston

BOSTON (AP) — The families of people killed by South Boston crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger and his gang finally got the chance Wednesday to tell Bulger how his long reign of terror damaged their lives, calling him a "terrorist," a "punk" and even "Satan."

A stone-faced Bulger refused to look at them, again declared his trial a sham and didn't take his opportunity to address the judge.

Bulger, his back to the families, stared straight ahead and scribbled on a legal pad as a dozen relatives stood one by one in a packed courtroom and poignantly described the loss of their loved ones and their contempt for Bulger.

The son of a man who was gunned down by Bulger in 1974 addressed Bulger as "Satan" and described how his father, a member of a rival gang, first disappeared in 1974 but wasn't found until decades later when his body was discovered in a watery grave.

Sean McGonagle was 11 when his father, Paul, disappeared. He said Bulger called his family's house the following year and said, "Your father won't be coming home for Christmas." When he asked, "Who's this?" Bulger responded, "Santa Claus," McGonagle said.

Alabama Man Must Move Wife's Grave

SCOTTSBORO, Ala. (AP) — An Alabama man has agreed to remove his wife's remains from his front yard after a four-year fight to keep her grave next to the house where they lived together.

James Davis testified at a court hearing Wednesday that he will hire a contractor to remove the body of his late wife, Patsy, and have it cremated. A judge still must approve the plan.

The court ordered the 74-year-old Davis to remove the body after the city of Stevenson won a lawsuit arguing the grave amounted to an illegal cemetery and had to be removed.

The City Council rejected Davis' request for a cemetery permit for his yard after his wife died in April 2009, but he buried her a few feet from the front porch anyway.

Boehner: No Formal Talks On Immigration Bill

BY DONNA CASSATA
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Speaker John Boehner said Wednesday that the House will not hold formal, compromise talks on the Senate-passed comprehensive immigration bill, a fresh signal from the Republican leadership that the issue is dead for the year.

The slow, relatively quiet death came more than four months after the Senate, on a bipartisan vote, passed a far-reaching bill that would provide a path to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants living in the country illegally and tighten border security.

That fanfare for that bill was quashed by strong opposition among House Republican rank and file who reject a comprehensive approach and question offering citizenship to people who broke U.S. immigration laws to be in this country. House incumbents also are wary of primary challenges from the right.

One of the clearest signs that any action was unlikely was word that Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., who had worked for months on the Senate bill, had abandoned the comprehensive approach. Rubio had taken political heat from conservatives after Senate passage of the immigration bill.

Boehner, R-Ohio, reiterated that the House is focused on a piecemeal approach to dealing with the issue. But he declined to say whether lawmakers will consider any legislation this year or whether the issue will slip to 2014, when the politics of congressional elections further diminish chances of action.

"The idea that we're going to take up a 1,300-page bill that no one had ever read, which is what the Senate did, is not going to happen in the House and frankly I'll make clear we have no intention of ever going to conference on the Senate bill," Boehner told reporters at a Capitol Hill news conference.

He said Rep. Robert Goodlatte, R-Va., the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, is working on "a set of principles to help guide us as we deal with this issue."

The Judiciary Committee has approved piecemeal bills,

but they have languished since the summer despite intense pressure from a diverse coalition of religious groups, business led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, labor unions and immigration advocates.

Although House Republican leaders say they want to resolve the issue, which has become a political drag for the GOP, many rank-and-file Republicans have shown little inclination to deal with immigration.

The bitter standoff with

President Barack Obama on the budget and near default further angered House Republicans, who have resisted any move that might give Obama an immigration overhaul, the top item on his second-term domestic agenda.

Many House Republicans are wary of passing any immigration legislation that would set up a conference with the Democratic-controlled Senate, fearing the House could lose out in final negotiations.

One of the Democrats who

spent months working with Republicans on the Senate bill expressed incredulity that the only House vote this year on immigration was to resume the deportation of hundreds of thousands of immigrants brought illegally to the United States as children.

It was a largely symbolic vote to block implementation of Obama's 2012 election-year order to stop deportations of many so-called DREAM Act individuals.



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Please Help Us Welcome Micah M. Likness, MD To Our Community

Dr. Likness completed his bachelors degree at the University of South Dakota and his medical degree from the Sanford School of Medicine of the University of South Dakota. He completed his residency with the State University of New York. As an Otolaryngologist, Dr. Likness is seeing patients in the Ear, Nose, & Throat Associates, P.C. office. Along with Dr. David Abbott and Dr. Catherine A. Wright, Board Certified Otolaryngologists, and Audiologists Dr. Beth Beeman and Dr. Todd Farnham, Dr. Likness joins our health care team to provide Yankton area residents with the highest quality of health care for the head and neck region.

Dr. Likness and his wife, Tabitha and son Grady, are eager to meet the people of our area. With the addition of Dr. Likness, patients of Ear, Nose & Throat Associates, P.C. will experience shorter wait times for appointments with a Doctor of Otolaryngology in the Yankton office Monday through Friday.

If you suffer from sinus problems, balance disorders, hearing difficulties, sleep apnea, snoring, or any other ailment in the ear, nose or throat area, please call 605-665-0062 to make an appointment with Dr. Likness.



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