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Guam declared disaster area

HAGATNA, Guam (AP) — A day after Guam was raked by a severe typhoon with wind gusts estimated at more than 180 mph, President Bush declared the U.S. territory a federal disaster area.

"The president's swift response provides the resources to help meet immediate emergency needs as we begin the process for determining further recovery requirements," Joe M. Allbaugh, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said in a statement issued in Washington.

No deaths were reported, but the entire island was without electricity, and water and sewer systems aren't expected to be fully operational for several weeks, Gov. Carl Gutierrez said Monday.

"There is no doubt that the impact of this latest storm will be devastating," Gutierrez said in a letter asking Bush for the disaster declaration.

Typhoon Pongsona hit Guam on Sunday, covering the islands for hours. The sustained wind speed estimated at 150 mph around the eye of the storm gave Pongsona "supertyphoon" status. The storm blasted some spots with gusts up to 184 mph, officials said.

Extensive structural damage was reported across the island, but it will be some time before the full extent is known, officials said.

Some walls collapsed at Guam Memorial Hospital, the island's only civilian hospital, forcing the closure of the pediatrics ward and the intensive care, respiratory and medical telemetry units, hospital administrator David Shimizu said.

Public schools, some of which were turned into shelters to house more than 2,000, people remained closed.

The governor called on National Guard troops to clear roadways and help fire personnel tend to stranded residents, said Joe Javellana, the Civil Defense Agency's acting administrator.

Although most phone service was knocked out by the storm, there were some calls reporting injuries, he said.

Barrigada resident Jackie Cabrerias said her brother's house lost its roof and his mother-in-law's house also lost part of the roof.

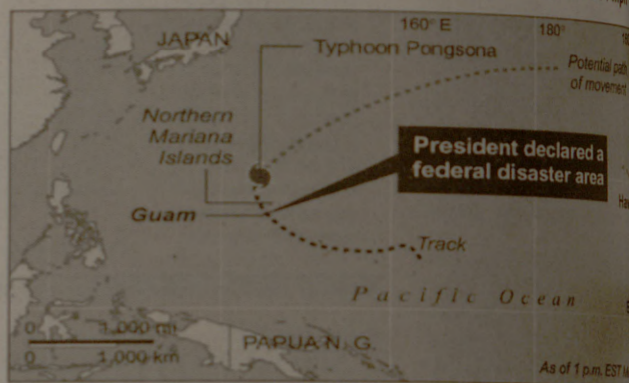
"They ran over here during the typhoon," she said. "When they were running here, the wind was pushing against them. My other brother had to go out to the porch to pull them into the house."

A wind speed of 117 mph was clocked before the National

Guam struck by storm

Typhoon Pongsona knocked out power and disrupted water and sewage systems in Guam on Sunday.

Position: 19.1 N, 144.2 E
Sustained winds: 127 mph
Movement: NNE 14 mph



SOURCES: Associated Press; Joint Typhoon Warning Center; University of Hawaii

Weather Service's wind sensor failed, along with its radar. The storm also left more than 300 people homeless on Saipan and Rota in the neighboring Northern Mariana Islands, while damaging crops on Rota and Tinian, said officials in the U.S. Commerce Department. No major injuries were reported.

Near midday Monday, the storm was located 195 miles northwest of Guam and 165 miles west-northwest of Saipan, moving away from the islands to the north-northwest at 13 miles per hour, said Air Force Capt. Robert Leejoice of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center in Honolulu.

Guam is located west of the international date line, about 370 miles southwest of Hawaii.

The storm's eye crossed the northern end of Guam, but the entire island was hit by at least part of the storm's eye wall, which contains the strongest wind.

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Trainee charged in slaying of Ohio priest

CLEVELAND (AP) — A man training to be a Franciscan brother was charged Monday in the slaying of a Roman Catholic priest who was shot to death and burned beyond recognition in a rectory fire, police officials said.

Daniel Montgomery, 37, had been training to be an assistant at the priest's parish but not to conduct religious rites. He was charged with murder and arson, Police Chief Edward Lohn said.

Investigators have not given a motive for the killing of the Rev. William Gulas, 68, pastor of St. Stanislaus Church for nine years.

The Rev. Thomas Luczak, an official with the Franciscan order, said Montgomery was told the day before Thanksgiving that he was being terminated. He did not elaborate.

Gulas was shot once in the chest and struck on the head Saturday before the fire

was set, the coroner said. His body was found inside his first-floor office.

Montgomery had spoken with television reporters Saturday as authorities removed Gulas' body from St. Stanislaus.

"The flames were that high, I could not do anything," Montgomery, who was comforting parishioners outside, told the media. "I couldn't hear him, he was probably overcome by the flames by the time I got there."

Franciscan spokesman Ned Whelan said Montgomery had been an assistant with St. Stanislaus since the summer.

"He was doing a variety of tasks — elementary, fundamental tasks — housekeeping to helping out at the parish house," Whelan said.

Montgomery was to be arraigned Tuesday. It couldn't immediately be determined if he had obtained an attorney.

The fire caused an estimated \$500,000 damage to the church, which was dedicated in 1891 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gulas came to St. Stanislaus in 1993. He was previously pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas parish in Saginaw, Mich.

Parishioners said Gulas was a beloved pastor who led a recent campaign to renovate the church and was helping to revitalize the residential neighborhood.

City Councilman Edward Rybicki, a member of St. Stanislaus Church, called the slaying "incomprehensible."

"He was a good, holy person who cared about other people and for him to be the victim of an incident like that at a holy place during a holy time of the year demonstrates the mind of a person who lacked respect for life," he said.

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