



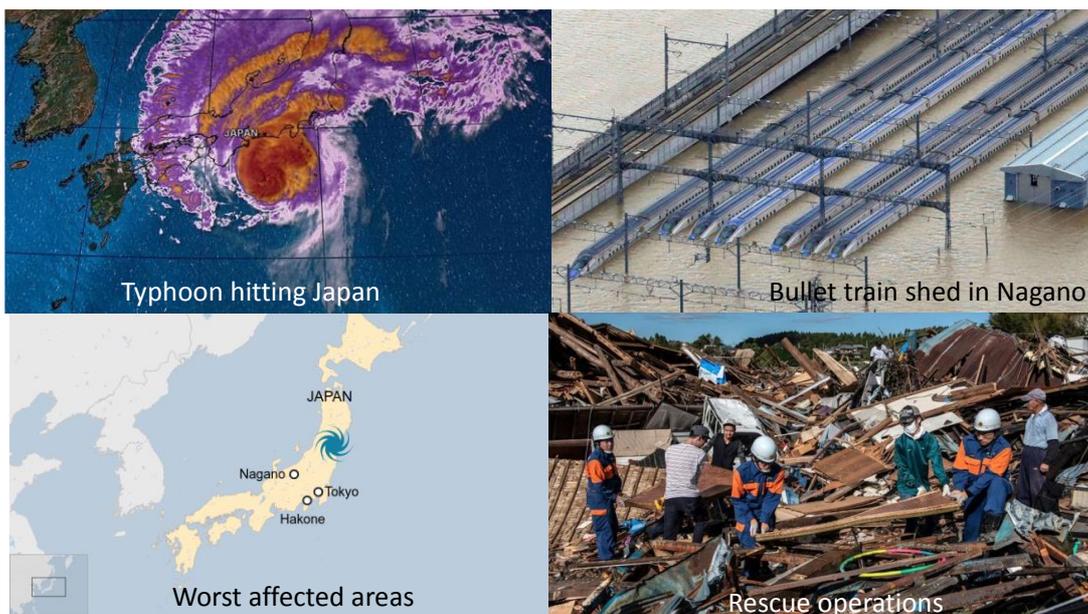
## First Hand Information on Preparedness for Typhoon Hagibis

# My Experience of Typhoon Hagibis (The Swift One)

- Ranit Chatterjee

## 1. Background

Typhoon Hagibis made a landfall near to Tokyo on the 12th of October 2019. The worst storm to hit the country after 1958. The size of the typhoon was almost the size of Japan as can be seen in the picture below. The typhoon has left at least 40 dead, with 16 missing due to flooding, landslides and other cascading disaster events. The Typhoon with wind speeds of up to 225km/h affected Tokyo, Nagano and other areas badly. This article chronicles the individual experience during the typhoon and what consideration and actions were made.



(Source: BBC, CNN)

## 2. Weather in the days preceding T- day<sup>1</sup>

9<sup>th</sup> October – It was sunny with weather turning extremely cold suddenly in the evening around 6pm with icy cold wind.

---

<sup>1</sup> Typhoon day

10<sup>th</sup> October- It was sunny and humid with temperature returning back to normal

11<sup>th</sup> October- it started being sunny and humid. Slowly turning cloudy with heavy nimbus clouds gathering by afternoon. It became dark by 4 pm.

8	9	10	11	12
Actual Temp				
23°/20°	24°/15°	27°/15°	29°/20°	25°/21°
Hist. Avg. 24°/15°	Hist. Avg. 23°/15°	Hist. Avg. 23°/14°	Hist. Avg. 23°/14°	Hist. Avg. 23°/14°

(Source: Accuweather)

### 3. Early warning

Almost a week before the T day there were social media posts on the low pressure developing in the Pacific Ocean. I was tracking the typhoon due to my own professional interest. There have been forecast of it being developing into a very strong typhoon by 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

### 4. Family and Individual considerations

- **Cancelling a family get-together-** A family gathering was planned a month earlier for the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The date was reconsidered on the 9<sup>th</sup> after getting confirmed information about the Typhoon. The gathering date was changed to the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> October in anticipation that it will be all clear.
- **Visiting the Doctor-** My daughter was having cough and cold we considered visiting the hospital well before Friday anticipating it might be difficult to visit on the Friday due to rain.

- **Cancellation of school annual sports day-** My daughter's kindergarten cancelled the annual sports meet planned for the 13<sup>th</sup> October morning in anticipation of the Typhoon.

As it was a long weekend, people were going back home to be with their family from Thursday.

### **The P-Day- A day before the T-day**

This is the ***P-day***<sup>2</sup> when all preparations will take shape.

- **Groceries-** A stock taking was done of the available groceries, fruits and vegetables on the 10<sup>th</sup> October. Bread, Noodles, potato, milk, were bought on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> October to last for 3 days. By the evening I made a visit to the nearest convenience store and by then most of the shelves have been cleaned. A reason may be due to the high-risk perception from the experience of September 2018 Typhoon.

I came back early from the University at around 5:30 pm anticipating strong wind and rain which makes cycling difficult. ***Stay safe*** was the parting message to all the lab mates. I enquired from a fresh PhD student from Malaysia whether she is aware of the typhoon and if she is staying closer to the river that dissects the Kyoto city as it flows. On the way home I withdrew some cash from ATM for emergency though I have a card and I can use electronic money. This is necessary as at times with no power only cash works for buying commodities.

A quick analysis of the local supermarket in preparation for Typhoon Hagibis at 8 pm... bread, egg, meat and vegetables which stay longer (potatoes, ginger, garlic) sold. Perishable items were still available, fish was not selling fast. Interestingly alcohols

---

<sup>2</sup> Pday- Preparation day

were sold in high numbers. Hopefully the supermarket had more supplies of certain commodities from their past experiences. By then drizzles have started.

My next-door neighbour in the University dormitory is from India, we meet over dinner and discussed on what to expect as it was their first experience of Typhoon in Japan. They were concerned on the safety of the building what to expect and where to evacuate. In Japan, the school buildings double as safe shelters from various disasters. We discussed on what if there is an earthquake as this region is seismically active and this would add complexity to the preparation while discussing on the HAARP conspiracy theory.



We limited the drinks to a peg or two so that we are sober, alert and agile for any eventuality.

Before going to bed we made sure all clothes the baby stroller and other things in the balcony are brought inside. Charge the phones and put them on energy saving mode. Charge the extra battery. We made sure the glass doors to balcony are locked. Keep checking the Japan Meteorological Site for updates on the Typhoon. Also visit Facebook sites for updates.

### **The T-day**

I woke up to a calm day with not a single leaf moving in the trees. The calm before the storm. Went out to see the traffic and people's reaction. There was hardly any

traffic on the road. The train was running and shops were stocked and open. The staff at the 7-11 store were tying the dustbin with a rope to protect it from flying away.



**Rainfall forecasting for the T-day (Source: JMA and unknow source on FB )**

By 10: 00 am the wind has picked up speed and trees have started swaying sideways. There was mobile alert message from the Kyoto city on possible. By this time the Typhoon has moved further away towards to the sea, the Kyoto was not within the red zone (High impact area).

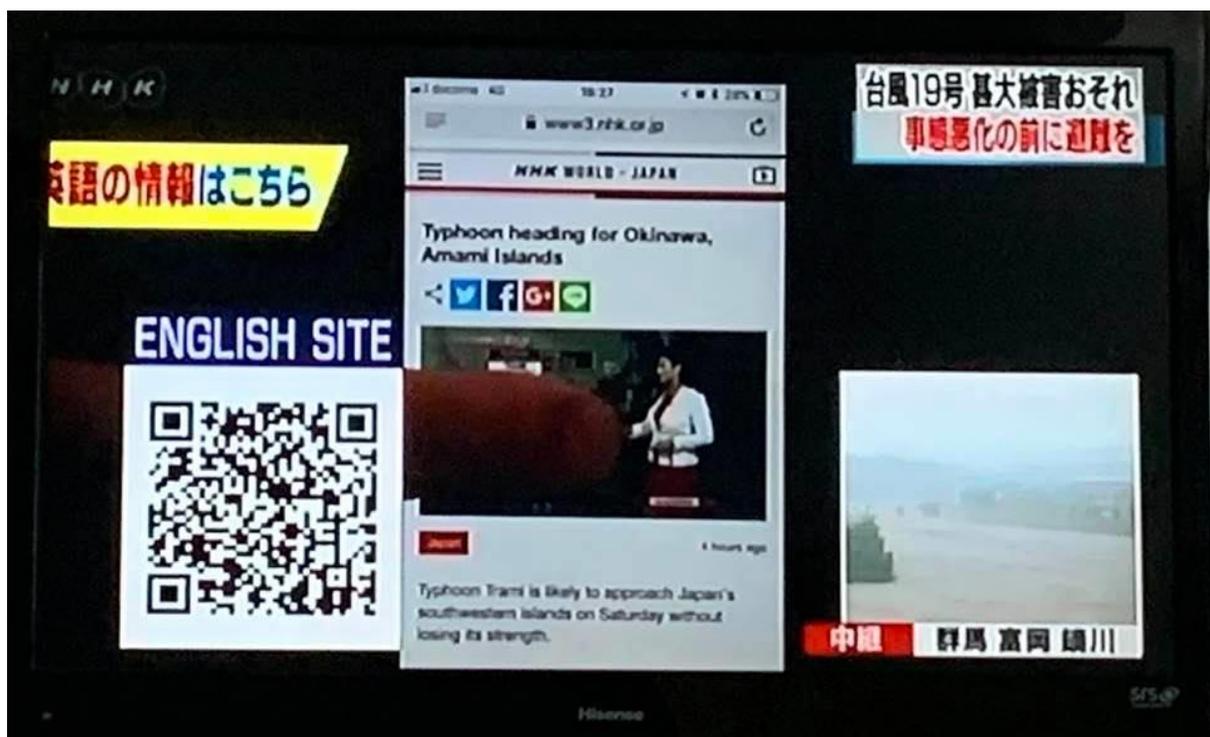


**Between 1pm- 2pm-** The howling of the wind has increased. We stayed indoor checking the JMA webpage.

**Around 6:30 pm-** The first message of a 5.3 magnitude earthquake hitting Chiba close to Tokyo was doing the round on the internet. By then wind and rain in Kyoto has calmed down, the tail was bringing in little rain to this area. Kyoto is spared this time, but the concerned for Tokyo and Nagano increased as the Typhoon was barreling down the Honshu area.

### **The role of Electronic and Social Media**

The electronic and social media was abuzz with the updates of the Typhoon Hagibis. The Japanese news media made concrete effort to be foreigner inclusive.



(Source: NHK and Asahi News taken from Prof .Rajib Shaw's FB post)

### **Excerpts from Prof. Rajib Shaw's FB post**

“Effective risk communication: very good to see how media is spreading typhoon early warning in an easy to understand form. Some improvements noted are :1) comparison with immediate (fresh in memory) and historic (catastrophic) experience, 2) not only just provide amount of rainfall or wind speed, but also providing schematic figures of intended damages, 3) specific suggestions on household preparedness, and 4) final message to evacuate early from coastal or river areas”.

“The news Media and Social media played very important role in warning dissemination. Role of media in an evolving world: once again, a big thank to media in reaching out to the communities in different ways, not only just giving information, engaging them, learning from the past disasters. Although we lost 9 people in this big Typhoon, but we need to take positive lessons forward. This time, even information for foreigner was broadcasted quite extensively. Even the dam water release information was there in the English site. A big lesson, we will do proper documentation and analysis”.

A disaster is an opportunity to launch new initiatives on of them was 00000 Japan. Japanese companies coming together to provide free wifi. See it on youtube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYYZUYiiyck&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1pQLXI1MjTFagt7c9ggbl dj2HcPb42sGxFiooubBI4DTpmOa69ZrIIYvQ>

