Written by Administrator Friday, 25 February 2011 09:32 -

JACKSON, Miss. — A line of severe storms that pushed across Mississippi

damaged a casino, sent water pouring into a college gymnasium during a basketball game and knocked out power to the state's biggest prison, authorities said Friday.

There were no immediate reports of injuries. Officials considered the damages minor.

The severe weather hit Mississippi Thursday and early Friday, knocking down dozens of trees and power lines and damaging a few homes and other structures, mostly in the Mississippi Delta and north of the Interstate 20 corridor, said Joanne Culin, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Jackson. Scattered power outages were reported.

The Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, a sprawling maximum-security prison in Sunflower County that is home to Mississippi's death row, was running on emergency power Friday morning after the storms knocked down power poles nearby, officials said.

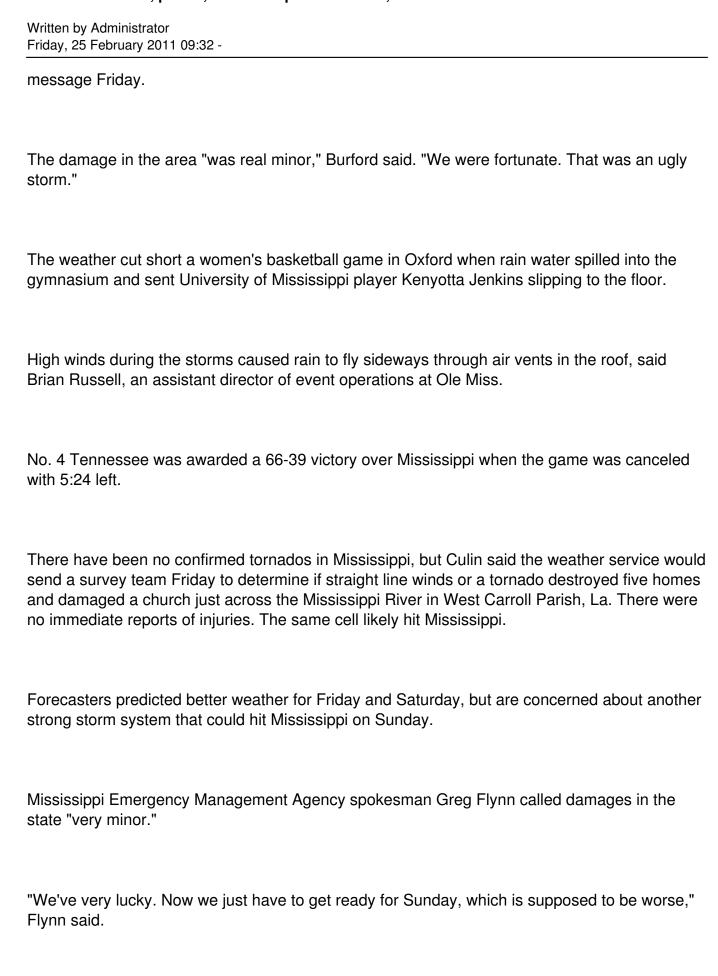
Mississippi Department of Corrections spokeswoman Suzanne Singletary said officials were assessing the damage Friday morning and the prison was being powered by generators.

Danny Prater, Sunflower County's deputy director of emergency management, said the storm knocked down at least 10 power poles and lines that feed electricity to the prison.

In neighboring Washington County, Harlow's Casino Resort and Hotel evacuated its top two floors Thursday when strong wind peeled back some of the roof, blowing insulation into the parking lot and allowing water to pour inside the building, officials said.

Washington County Emergency Management Director David Burford said the casino was not heavily damaged and remained open. The casino's manager did not immediately respond to a

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