

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الإتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## INDIA: FLOODS

Date 11 July 2003

Information Bulletin N° 03/2003

Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: N/A

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For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

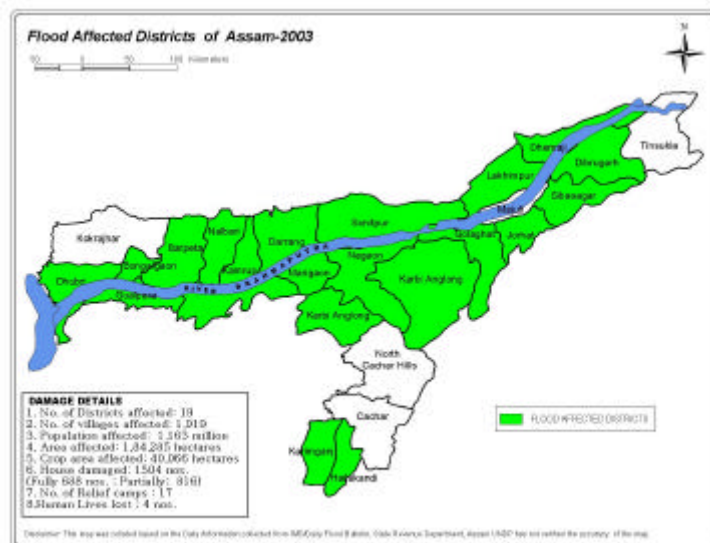
### In Brief

**This document is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. Flooding in India, which initially affected Assam and then Bihar, has now extended into Arunachal Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal.**

### The Situation

The annual South Asia monsoon, while in its early stages, is having a severe impact on populations in the region. To date, at least 255 deaths, directly related to the monsoon, have been recorded in India, Bangladesh and Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is only the start of India's monsoon season, and the Indian Meteorological Department forecasts a higher than usual rainfall for India over the next three months.

The flood situation in India's states of Assam, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Arunachal Pradesh, appears grim. Most rivers in these areas are flowing above the danger level, and the water levels show no signs of receding. Many districts remain cut off from the rest of the country as flood waters have badly damaged the roads.



The worst-hit areas in India are the north-eastern states of Assam and Bihar. It is estimated that some 20,000 people are stranded in a single district of **Assam**, where more than a dozen emergency camps have been set up to provide shelter, food, clothing and medicine for the homeless. With more than 70 percent of its one billion citizens engaged in agriculture, India depends on the monsoon's rains. However, parts of the country such as Assam, where more than 100 rivers flow from surrounding mountains, are ill equipped to deal with the annual deluge.

In neighboring **West Bengal** state, at least 25 people were killed early on Tuesday in landslides caused by heavy monsoon rains, and nearly 200 were left homeless in the mountainous district of Darjeeling. The Flooding has washed away thousands of bamboo and straw huts, as well as roads, bridges, railway tracks and power lines.

The flood situation in the North Bengal District of the State is severe following ten days of continuous rain. Darjeeling's hilly interior region has been practically cut off, and the road links with both Darjeeling and Sikkim remain blocked.

Bihar's state capital Patna, has been added to the list of flood affected districts in **Bihar**. The overflowing Punpun River is threatening to inundate low-lying areas around the city. Bihar experienced the first wave of floods due to heavy rainfall in its upper catchments areas during the last week of June. The current flood has affected six districts so far: Samastipur, Muzaffarpur, Madhubani, Sheohar, West Samparan and East Samparan. The number of people marooned by the floods is now 250,000. Communication systems have been severely affected including road links. The only means of access at the moment is by river boats. The number of displaced persons is increasing daily and the figure at 9 July was as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>Displaced persons</b>
Samastipur	50,000
Muzaffarpur	25,000
Madhubani	35,000
Sheohar	22,000
West Champaran	10,000
East Champaran	15,000
TOTAL	157,000

The coastal area of **Orissa** has been threatened by more floods as heavy rains pound the upper and lower catchments areas of the Mahanadi River.

The flood situation in **Arunachal Pradesh** has become more severe with areas of East Siang and Lohit joining the list of districts affected. The surface communication between Pasighat, Pangin and Boleng in East Siang districts has remained cut-off since 5 July. Shortages of essential commodities have been reported in some parts of the state. The water level of the Siang River and its tributaries are also flowing above danger level.

## **ASSAM**

### **Red Cross/Red Crescent Action**

The State branch has already taken adequate measure for preparedness. The State branch is in regular contact with the District branches of the affected districts. A high-level assessment team from the HQs of the State branch has already started its assessment of the flood-affected area. The State as well as District Branches has distributed relief materials from their local resources. The National Society is in regular touch with the branches.

### **Government Action in Assam**

On 7 July a state level meeting of NGO's and government was held. The meeting covered the role of voluntary organizations in the state's flood relief operations. The Assam Government, with the assistance of the military is carrying out relief activities and is running two relief camps. The District Commissioner expressed his appreciation of Indian Red Cross Society Disaster Preparedness activities such as: construction of raised platforms, provision of drinking water and toilet facilities in sheltered areas in the flood-affected regions.

## **BIHAR**

### **Red Cross/Red Crescent Action**

The Bihar State Branch of the Indian Red Cross Society has already deployed 70 boats to assist with relief and rescue operations. The District Branches are responding to the immediate needs of the flood victims, and are distributing ready-made food. The branch's capacity, however, is limited with collecting and organising relief materials. The State Branch is in the process of purchasing 500 pieces of tarpaulin sheets, and 100 bags of bleaching powder for use by the district branches for flood relief. The State Branch is also providing 100,000 water purification tablets for distribution.

## WEST BENGAL

### Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Indian Red Cross Society State Branch has distributed the following materials from their local resources:

Non-medical items	
PVC sheets	200 rolls
Tarpaulins	1000
Rice	20 metric tonnes
Emergency rations	5 metric tonnes
Children's garments	10,000 pieces
Dhoti	10,000 pieces
Saris	10,000 pieces
ORS	10,000 packets
Medicines	
Halozen tablets	500,000
Cash fund	Indian Rupees 500,000

## Arunachal Pradesh

### Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Indian Red Cross Society State Branch has started distributing relief items. The Indian Red Cross Society's National Headquarters is in regular contact with the Branch, and is closely monitoring the situation.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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**For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal for India.**