

# 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  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## INDIA: LAKE FLOOD THREAT

13 August 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 1/2004) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. However further funds are required for the India: Floods Request for Assistance (16/2004). That request for assistance may be revised to accommodate increased demand for aid should the situation in Himachal Pradesh deteriorate.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The Situation



Over 400 villages along the Sutlej River are under threat – map courtesy BBC

A huge artificial lake created by landslides is threatening to overflow and inundate villages in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh.

The lake lies over the border in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. It formed behind a landslide last month that blocked the Pareechu River, a tributary of the Sutlej River which flows into Himachal Pradesh.

Chinese and Indian Government data indicate the lake is spread over 188 hectares and is up to 35 meters deep.

5000 people from 60 at-risk villages on the banks of the Sutlej in Himachal Pradesh have moved to safer ground but a further 350 villages would be vulnerable to flooding.

The Indian Government has put the army on standby and the air force has helicopters ready in case of the need for evacuation.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The India Red Cross Society (IRCS) is closely monitoring the situation through its state branch in Himachal Pradesh. The national society is also liaising with the Resident Commissioner of Himachal Pradesh based in New Delhi.

The IRCS has set up a joint taskforce with Federation counterparts, which includes senior managers from the national society and cross-sectoral representation from health, relief, logistics, finance and reporting. The taskforce is reviewing the situation daily.

The taskforce is receiving information via the administrator of the India Red Cross Disaster Management Centre at national headquarters who is monitoring the situation and drawing upon various sources of information.

The India Red Cross Disaster Management team is on standby and an alert for National Disaster Response Team members has been issued. The IRCS is considering mobilisation of volunteers from the neighbouring states such as Punjab.

Most of the current Disaster Preparedness stock from regional warehouses has been released in response to the flooding in Bihar, Assam and Gujarat, leaving low capacity for distribution to Himachal Pradesh if required. Should a flood situation develop in Himachal Pradesh, the India Red Cross/Federation would consider expanding its current [‘India: Floods’ request for assistance \(16/2004\)](#).

*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation’s [Annual Appeal](#).*

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