

# 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: MAHARASHTRA MONSOON FLOODS

2 August 2005

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

### In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 7/2005) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The Situation

Torrential rain lashed Mumbai on Sunday 31 July, further disrupting flights, hampering rescue efforts and bringing more misery to people as the death toll in the state of Maharashtra approached 1000. Authorities say the lives of 20 million people have been disrupted by the floods.

Authorities issued new flood alerts and appealed to residents to stay indoors. The Mumbai meteorological department predicted heavy rainfall in Maharashtra and adjoining states over Monday and Tuesday.

The city's low-lying suburbs were again flooded under up to 90 centimeters (three feet) of water as police



Indian residents, including a man carrying milk cans on his bicycle, wade through the waterlogged streets of Mumbai. Photo: REUTERS/Paranjpe/Courtesy of [www.alertnet.org](http://www.alertnet.org)

urged people not to travel on certain routes. Rail services were disrupted or cancelled.

The Koyna reservoir, about 200 kilometres south of Mumbai, overflowed and cut off 50 villages in the Satara district.

The Godavari river at Kopergaon, about 100 kilometres northeast of Mumbai, is flowing above its danger level. Approximately 10 million people in 250 villages in this area have been affected by flooding, and approximately 10,000 people are living in relief camps.

Flooding and landslides have claimed 989 lives in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra since the rains began on 24 July. It is estimated that 225,000 hectares of crops in 15 districts have been destroyed.

Authorities have begun recovery operations to deal with the numerous landslides, using heavy machinery and labour to remove rubble and debris from affected areas. Across the state, 130,000 municipal workers are involved in repairing roads, unclogging drains and restoring electricity and drinking water facilities.

The Indian prime minister has offered federal assistance to Maharashtra state while the military is being utilised for relief and rescue operations.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

On Monday, the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) national headquarters deployed two mobile water sanitation units provided by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). They are being transported from regional warehouses near Delhi and Chennai. Each unit has the capacity to produce 10,000 litres of clean water per day.

Five thousand family kits have been mobilized. These contain various relief items such as blankets, tarpaulins, mosquito nets, kitchen sets and sheets. Funds have also been allocated to the Maharashtra state branch for transportation of relief items. Three members of the IRCS national disaster response team are being deployed to the state.

The Maharashtra state branch disaster management coordinator has collected locally five tonnes of dal and 10 tonnes of rice. This will be distributed today at Kalina in the Thane district in northern Mumbai today. Three thousand people in the Thane district have been served two meals daily since 27 July by state branch run kitchens. Fifteen hundred stranded people in Ratnagiri district have been provided cooked food at bus terminals by the local IRCS district branch.

State branch staff and volunteers have repacked 12,000 rolls of bread and 1,500 packets of biscuits provided by the authorities into food parcels for airlifts by the government to stranded people. In Nanded, food, including rice and dal, is being distributed among stranded people.

The state branch is distributing 800 sheets, 400 saris and mats in affected areas of Mumbai; there are intentions to distribute 3000 of each item in the city. A truckload of relief material has been sent to Ratnagiri district by the Maharashtra state branch, consisting of 500 blankets, 300 sheets, 1000 bars of soap, 44 rolls of cloth, 1000 bottles of water and 3680 packets of biscuits, as well as anti-diarrhoea medicine, saline and sterilising fluid.

The IRCS district branch in Nasik (about 80 kilometres northeast of Mumbai) has deployed a team of six doctors and two paramedics. The Nanded district branch medical staff have conducted 19 clinics since the floods began. The state medical unit deployed in Ratnagiri district is providing primary health services to six villages. To date, 220 people have reported condition such as dysentery, stomachaches and fever.

It is hoped to distribute stocks of assorted clothing soon. These are held in the IRCS Maharashtra state warehouse, which is currently waterlogged and temporarily inaccessible.

Planning and coordination meetings have been taking place. On Monday, the vice-president of the IRCS held a meeting with the head of regional delegation and the acting head of the India delegation. A further meeting, hosted

by the national society's secretary-general, planned a streamlined IRCS response and avoided duplication of activities. National society and Federation staff also attended a SPHERE India meeting in Delhi on Saturday, discussing areas of possible response by member organizations.

The disaster management staff of the national society, country and regional delegation is meeting today to plan the future response to the flooding.

The disaster management centre at national headquarters in New Delhi is monitoring the situation, and all personnel at national headquarters and the India delegation are on alert. The IRCS state branch and national headquarters are sharing information with the Federation South Asia regional delegation. Daily information reports are being produced by the disaster management centre. The Federation and national headquarters' disaster management team has checked the disaster preparedness stocks at the regional warehouse outside Delhi.

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