

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: FLOODS

(FORMERLY INDIA: SOUTH GUJARAT FLOODS)

8 July 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. 03/2005) 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](#) 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

Rains are easing in the western state of Gujarat but it continues to be affected by widespread flooding. The death toll in the state has now risen to 226 with a further 13 people reported missing. Meanwhile, there is flash flooding in the northern Jammu and Kashmir region while several other states continue to be affected.

Large areas of Gujarat have been left inundated after ten days of continuous heavy rain which has only abated this week. The situation is reported by authorities to be critical in the districts of Vadodara, Anand, Saurashtra and Nadiad. Many people are marooned on 'islands' of dry land amid large areas under water. The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Gujarat state branch reports that there has been no significant rain in the last 48 hours. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report issued on 6 July states that the flood waters have started receding and life is slowly getting back to normal.

According to the UNDP, the irrigation department has issued an alert for 41 dams in the affected districts – 12 are on high alert. Thirty-two dams are overflowing in the Saurashtra region (27) and Gujarat region (5).

¹ Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

In Jammu and Kashmir, seven rivers are flowing above danger levels with 3,000 villages vulnerable to flooding. A total of 36 points of the 300 kilometre Jammu-Kashmir highway are impassable due to damage caused by rain and landslides.

There have been reports of flash floods with 150 people having to be rescued by helicopter. A total of 15,000 have had to be evacuated to date as rainfall levels reach their highest in 50 years in certain areas.

Heavy rains continue in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, disrupting road and rail traffic. There have also been reports of landslides in Kerala triggered by heavy rains.

With no further rain in the last 24 hours in the state of Madhya Pradesh, access for relief and rescue operations has improved. According to the 7 July UNDP report, 11 districts have been inundated, affecting a total of 250,000 people in 358 villages. To date, there have been 23 flood-related deaths reported in Madhya Pradesh. Roads and telecommunications have been affected in some districts.

Flood waters are receding in the state of Himachal Pradesh but there is still a high alert along the banks of Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers which are flowing above the danger mark. River levels are rising in Bihar and the authorities are taking preparatory measures to prepare for possible flooding. The Bihar state disaster management department has activated taskforce committees in 20 flood-prone areas.

Government and other agencies action in Gujarat

In Gujarat, the government is running 600 relief camps and providing food packets, water pouches, family kits, milk powder, etc. The state water board is coordinating drinking water arrangements. An adequate supply of essential medicines, water purification tablets along with 10 metric tonnes of bleaching powder in Vadodara and 3.5 metric tonnes in Anand and Nadiad is being distributed. The government is establishing NGO coordination cells to avoid duplication in the affected districts starting with Baroda. The local administration is trying to contact all the affected villages in order to assess the damage to property and agriculture. Work is continuing on restoration of power supplies to affected areas while road traffic is returning to normal. However, rail services on the Ahmedabad-Baroda-Mumbai, and Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar-Rajkot routes continue to be impeded.

Community kitchens and langars (free public food distribution) centres are being run by NGOs. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is providing assistance to the state government by supplying emergency items such as Oral Re-hydration Salt packets and chlorine tablets.

The World Health Organization (WHO) field offices are monitoring the health and sanitation conditions in the affected districts. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has a staff member in Gandhinagar to monitor the situation. NGO, the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) has started a feeding programme for 9,000 displaced people living in temporary shelter. Other NGOs are also working in the affected districts providing medical and relief supplies.

Government action in Madhya Pradesh

The army has been deployed to assist district administrations. Relief distributions through air drops have been carried out in Sagar, Damoh and Panna districts. Army personnel are assisting in building temporary bridges. A total of 117 government-run relief camps have been established.

Red Cross action

Gujarat

The IRCS state disaster response team (SDRT) has been deployed in the districts of Anand, Vadodara, Saurashtra and Nadiad. An assessment has been undertaken and a report submitted to the national headquarters.

A team from the national headquarters is visiting Gujarat along with the Federation disaster management team with the following objectives:

1. Review the efforts undertaken so far by IRCS state and district branches, including distribution plans for 3,000 family packs released from warehouses;
2. Meet with relevant government representatives and other humanitarian agencies;

3. Visit affected areas to obtain an overview of the current floods situation;
4. Identify outstanding needs in flood-affected districts and make recommendations.

The Bhuj branch has deployed six disaster management trained volunteers in the districts of Anand, Vadodara, Saurashtra and Nadiad to assist with relief work.

The Gujarat state branch has deployed two medical mobile units - one in Vadodara and the other on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. These units provide basic health care services and have a capacity of serving 1,500 people per day.

Another consignment of relief goods will be dispatched on Saturday 9 July to Surat. This will complete the distribution of the 3,000 family packs released by national headquarters on 5 July. The national headquarters has also deployed two vehicles to assist relief work in Gujarat.

Madhya Pradesh

The IRCS state branch has been monitoring the situation closely and branch volunteers are assisting the government operation in the rescue of marooned people. The state branch has been providing cooked food in 18 local authority camps located in the districts of Chattarpur, Jabalpur, Katni, Rewa, Satna, Sagar and Damu. The state branch has put all its volunteers and staff on high alert, as the meteorological department has forecasted more rain.

National headquarters

The disaster management centre at the national headquarters is continuously monitoring the flood situation, generating daily floods reports. There is disaster preparedness stock of 22,000 family packs across the various regional warehouses. The national headquarters is pre-positioning 5,000 family packs as disaster preparedness stock at the Bihar state branch and is releasing 2,000 family packs for Madhya Pradesh state branch to be distributed to affected people.

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