

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 والقمر الأحمر

PAKISTAN: MONSOON FLOODS

1 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. 01/2005) 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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The Situation

Pakistan is experiencing widespread flooding due to a combination of monsoon rains and heavy snowmelt leading to dangerously high river levels.

The country has also been experiencing extreme temperatures for the past few weeks, with the highest temperature recorded during the heat wave at 52 degrees Celsius (125.6 Fahrenheit). June and July are traditionally Pakistan's hottest months of the year before seasonal rains cool things off just before the mild autumn. This intense heat wave has resulted in exaggerated snow melts in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Earlier this year, the same areas had received record snowfalls. The combination of factors is resulting in extremely high river levels in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Northern Areas.

The Kabul River has a water discharge of 151,500 cusecs per second, which is well above the high flood mark. Likewise, the Swat River has a water discharge of 50,347 cusecs. It is a similar situation with the Indus River and tributaries in the Northern Areas. This has led to large displacements of local populations. This situation has arisen for the first time in the past 100 years as the water levels in river Kabul, Swat, Chitral and Kunar have assumed dangerous proportions, causing huge devastation amongst masses. According to the meteorological department, the water level in the Kabul, Swat, Chitral and Kunar rivers are expected to rise further.

In NWFP, around 20,000 people (3,000 families) have been evacuated. The districts affected are Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera. According to reports, large areas of land are under water and water levels continue to rise. Local government and the military are coordinating evacuation operations. The NWFP provincial government has been able to provide food and tents to only a limited number of people. In Nowshera, the displaced have been shifted to school buildings. There is still an immediate need of food, sandbags and tents in the affected districts. The prime minister has announced a relief package of PKR 100 million (CHF 2.15 million) for flood-affected people in NWFP.

In the Northern Areas, around 10,000 people have been affected in the districts of Gilgit, Skardu and Ganeche, where flooding has caused extensive damage to standing crops. The number of affected people is expected to rise with only limited information being available to date about the extent of the disaster.



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Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Pakistan Red Crescent NWFP provincial branch carried out an immediate assessment of the affected areas in the districts of Peshawar and Charsadda. Based on the findings of the assessment, the branch has set up a relief camp and has to date distributed 450 food parcels with 50 kitchen sets. The director of operations from the national society headquarters conducted an assessment mission in NWFP in coordination with the provincial branch and based on the findings the Pakistan Red Crescent is dispatching a relief consignment to the value of PKR 5 million (CHF 108,000), out of which PKR 1 million will be exclusively for relief assistance in the Northern Areas.

The Pakistan Red Crescent has also launched a national appeal for subsequent relief consignments.

The national society has already been heavily involved in disaster relief and rehabilitation activities this year. The Pakistan Red Crescent raised PKR 16 million (CHF 345,000) for tsunami relief assistance. In February, heavy snowfall, avalanches and floods hit parts of NWFP and the Northern Areas. The province of Balochistan, in the south west of the country was hit by severe floods affecting over 40,000 people. More than 500 people died across the nation as a result of extreme weather. The Pakistan Red Crescent provided swift relief to the affected people in coordination with the government. The national society is still carrying out rehabilitation activities in certain areas.

The current flooding situation may worsen, with the threat of flooding extending to the provinces of Punjab and Sindh. Should the situation deteriorate, and given the national society's commitment of resources to dealing with emergencies earlier this year and low donor response to date to the annual appeal, an international appeal may have to be launched.

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