

# 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: MAHARASTRA MONSOON FLOODS

28 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. 05/2005) 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

Areas of the western Indian state of Maharashtra have been deluged by torrential record rainfalls since Tuesday with reports of more than 400 deaths. The downpour has left large areas of the state capital Mumbai flooded while the districts of Ratnagiri, Raigad, Konkan and Indudurgh have been severely affected by flooding and landslides.

It is reported that between 100 to 150 people were killed in a landslide in the village of Juigaoin, 150 km south of Mumbai. Communications outside of the city are still severely disrupted and there are conflicting reports about the number of deaths.

Mumbai, a city of 15 million people, was paralysed for 48 hours with flights, buses, trains and road traffic disrupted, and thousands of people stranded. Phone and power lines were severely disrupted. Transport and communications are slowly returning to normal but the city is still badly affected. After been closed for almost two days, Mumbai airport is open again, but with a limited service. Some train services have resumed while traffic is moving again. The city has also been buffeted by strong winds.

The government is utilizing the army, navy and air force to carry out search and rescue operations. Air force helicopters are being deployed to airdrop food packages. Approximately 10,000 people have been evacuated. A team of 6 medical doctors is leaving tomorrow morning (29 July) for Ratnagiri District with pari-medical supplies - probably a mobile medical unit. They intend to meet with the district authorities who will assign them duties.

The torrential rains eased today but more rain has been forecast for Maharashtra and for the state immediately north-west of it, Gujarat, which has already suffered severe flooding since the onset of the monsoon.

An emergency meeting was convened today by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra relating to relief operations in the flood-affected areas. A detailed damage assessment survey will be undertaken in the affected districts once flood waters recede.

The state relief and rehabilitation department has released funds to district administrations for relief operations. Government authorities are organising supply of food and temporary shelters.

Hundreds of oil workers have arrived in Mumbai after being rescued from an oil rig fire, about 160 kilometres out to sea. The fire broke out at 1630 hours Wednesday morning with ten people confirmed dead and 25 missing.

## **Red Cross action**

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Maharashtra state branch repackaged 7,000 loaves of sliced bread provided by the state relief department into smaller packets of 5-6 slices to be air-dropped by government helicopters to stranded people.

The Ratnagiri state branch has requested chlorine tablets from the state branch. The state disaster management coordinator is attempting to mobilize these, but the state branch warehouse is currently inaccessible due to the flooding. State headquarters is attempting to assess if other district branches can assist with supplies.

Indian Red Cross volunteers are supporting the government relief and rescue operations, including carrying out a number of relief activities such as running community kitchens using food donations collected from neighbours and collecting donations of medicines.

On Wednesday, branch staff distributed food packets (in the form of bread and butter, bananas, biscuit packets and chocolate bars) to 1,500 people stranded at railway stations in Mumbai. Local authorities are utilising Indian Red Cross volunteers to distribute a total of 10,000 food packets in the city.

The Maharashtra state branch is trying to mobilize more resources locally and at this stage is not seeking further support from national headquarters. However national headquarters is on standby to assist. The regional warehouse in Bahadurgarh (near Delhi) currently has disaster preparedness stock including 12,000 family packs which was inspected by the Federation and national society disaster management teams yesterday.

The disaster management centre at national headquarters in Delhi is monitoring the situation and producing daily reports. Information is being shared by the IRCS state branch and national headquarters as well with the Federation South Asia Regional Delegation.

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