

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## India: Floods

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India has been facing the second cycle of floods with some new areas being affected like the state of Uttar Pradesh. In total more than 5.7 million people have been affected and 438 people have lost their lives due to floods this year. Renewed flooding is also visible in the states of West Bengal and Assam. The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) has carried out assessments at state and district level with the help of the district and state disaster response team in Assam, Orissa and West Bengal. The state and district branches have mobilised their own resources except for West Bengal, where the IRCS national headquarters released relief material during the previous flooding cycle. Presently the state branch is mobilising its own resources and coping with the situation. The International Federation has been supporting the IRCS by developing daily situation reports on floods, which feed into the weekly IRCS floods report.



An IRCS assessment underway in a flood affected district

The Indian Red Cross Society, with the support of the International Federation, has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

## The Situation

The country is facing a second wave of the south west monsoons resulting in widespread flooding in the states of Bihar, Assam and West Bengal, as reported in the Ministry of Home Affairs bulletin of 21 July 2008.

Prior to the week of reporting, the state of Uttar Pradesh witnessed one of its worst flooding with widespread human and monetary losses. The flood situation still remains grim in the Terai area and certain eastern districts of the state. Many of the key districts are flooded, including Behraich, Gonda, Balrampur, Shrawasti, Sant Kabir Nagar and Siddhartha Nagar and are facing the flood fury. Around 300 villages are still inundated and hundred's of acres of cultivated land have been submerged in these areas. A total of 15 people have died during last 36 hours in rain-related incidents in the state<sup>1</sup>, bringing the death toll in the state to date to 61. The rivers Ghagra, Kunhra, Kuano and Burhi Rapti are rising at many places while Rapti is receding all along its course. Many river embankments in Terai and eastern regions have developed seepage.

In the latest bulletin received from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the state of Bihar has received moderate to heavy rainfall in some parts, reporting one death in the past 48 hours. Water logging still continues in the city of Patna leading to widespread traffic disruption. River Kosi, Bagmati and Pun Pun are still flowing above their danger levels at different places in the state.

<sup>1</sup> source: Ministry of Home Affairs bulletin, issue no. 1121, dated 18 July 2008

Further, the state of Assam received fresh rains in some parts; the rainfall received was heavy and extremely heavy in isolated pockets. Presently 165 people are staying in the two relief camps operated by the state government. River Brahmaputra, Dhansiri, Jiabharali and Beki are still flowing above its danger level at various places of the state.

The state of West Bengal also received fresh heavy rainfall in some parts; approximately 257,731 people still continue to stay in the 479 relief camps. River Ganga is flowing above the danger mark in Farakha.

According to government sources, the total death toll has reached to 438 with 6 human deaths reported through out the country in the past 48 hours.

The Indian meteorological department predicted the following on 21 July - that the axis of the monsoon now passes through Ferozpur, Karnal, Shajahanpur, Gorakpur, Purnia hence eastwards to Nagaland through Bangladesh. The cyclonic circulation on eastern Uttar Pradesh persists and is resulting in widespread rainfall in the north-eastern states. Further, in the coming days the sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand are also in the focus for next 2-3 days. Heavy rainfall is also predicted in Karnataka coast to Kerala coast in coming 3 to 4 days.

Under the deployment of the national disaster response force (NDRF) almost 200 people are deployed in Assam and are divided in to five teams for effective response. In Jammu and Kashmir 45 personnel are deployed for a religious pilgrimage as preparedness measure in Amarnath. In Uttaranchal 45 personnel have been deployed on the way to a pilgrim point in Pithoragarh district.

Name of the state	Population affected	No. of human lives lost	No. of crops affected	No. of houses damaged
Assam	399,095	9	35,687	51,272
Bihar	40,000	6		399
Gujarat		37		160
Goa		09		58
Haryana		2		10
Jharkhand	25,155	1		1,411
Kerala	20014	38	414	2,285
Karnataka		26		1,030
Maharashtra		10		
Madhya Pradesh		13		4,467
Punjab		5	12,067	90
Orissa	1,494,746	14	119,000	31,523
Rajasthan		43		504
Uttarakhand		36		154
Uttar Pradesh	26,724	61	508	468
Tamil Nadu		11		
West Bengal	3,703,954	117	118,859	398,085
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,709,688</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>286,535</b>	<b>491,916</b>

*Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India*

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

As indicated in the previous information bulletins, the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) disaster management centre has been activated and national disaster response team (NDRT) and the state disaster response team (SDRT) member's have been put on alert. The IRCS national headquarters has pre-positioned 43,000 non-food family packs as disaster preparedness stock. This stock is available at strategically located six regional warehouses. The national society has put on alert seven water purification units, which can be deployed at a short notice and are stationed at these regional warehouses.

The IRCS is reviewing the situation on a daily basis and is constantly in touch with the affected branches, a taskforce can be formed within the national society, if the situation turns grave. Information sharing during this flooding season has been good with IRCS compiling a daily and a weekly situation update with support of the International Federation. Further external agencies like United Nations Disaster Management team and the Sphere meet regularly and share situation updates with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In addition the IRCS' state branch in Maharashtra is conducting a real time search-and-rescue training in Varshi, which aims to impart required skills to IRCS volunteers to save lives.

The Honorary Secretary of the **Assam state branch** has informed that the three districts of Lakhimpur, Sumitpur and Majuli are currently most severely affected, though there are flash floods in Karbi Anglong. The state branch secretary visited the flood affected villages and did a first hand assessment of the situation and based on that relief goods were distributed. Materials including blankets, mosquito nets, tarpaulins, male and female clothing, towels, kitchen set containing 21 pieces, and essential medicines were mobilised by the local district branches and were distributed with the help of 30 volunteers. The government also is carrying out the relief distribution in which four members from the state branch and 40 volunteers assisted the government.

Further, a special request has been made by the Assam state branch secretary to all the trained volunteers in order to assess their local situations and to pass on the information to the state branch, so that relief materials can be arranged by them. In addition, the volunteers are taking proactive measures to avoid any epidemic, which is usually caused after floods.

The state of **Bihar** is witnessing a second phase of floods with three districts affected i.e. Muzzaffarpur, Supaul and Patna. Each of these districts has reported breaches and has received more than 15 cm of rainfall. The level of flooding is rising. According to IRCS sources, about 97 villages are affected in Muzzaffarpur, 10 villages in Supaul and 50 villages in Patna. The total value of loss is predicted to be over INR 0.75 million or CHF 178,675. Presently, the SDRT is conducting an assessment of Patna city, which is largely inundated. The report is expected in a couple of days. Preliminary assessments have identified slum areas for the provision of assistance though the quantum of assistance needs to be agreed upon.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, the districts of Hamirpur, Etawah, Pilibhit, Pratabgarh, Lucknow and Baharaich have been badly affected due to floods. The state branches have distributed items like female clothing (2,117), bedsheets (1,184), towels (1,058), woollen blankets (550), children's clothing (35), cotton blankets (20) and assorted clothes to the affected population. The Pilibhit district branch has raised INR 0.2 million to undertake relief operation. In the latest reports from the state, the IRCS state branch is in talks with the state government to finalise the action plan for flood response and its role in the plan.

The IRCS disaster management team and the International Federation's India Office are monitoring the overall flood situation of the country and are in regular touch with the disaster management focal points from the affected state branches. The International Federation DM team and information focal point, along with the IRCS DM team are also producing daily flood updates for information sharing.

Further, the national society is in the process of developing a national contingency plan for floods. One of the major learning from last year's floods were the continued support from the International Federation in pre-positioning disaster preparedness stock in the regional warehouses and the capacity building of the IRCS district branches in forming state and district disaster response teams. This proved beneficial for effective and immediate response.

## How we work

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

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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- Federation country office in India: Satchida Rana (disaster management manager), email: [satchida.rana@ifrc.org](mailto:satchida.rana@ifrc.org); phone: +91.11.2332.4203; fax: +91.11.233.4235
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