

Floods in China 1996

Information Bulletin No. 2 5 July 1996

Torrential rains are continuing throughout China, resulting in a growing list of regions inundated by flood waters. The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) has collected more data from the affected areas through its provincial and local branches, as well as from government sources. Early this morning Beijing time, Dr. Sun Baiqiu, RCSC Vice President, and Mr Huang Xiangdong, Deputy Director of the Relief Department, travelled to Zhejiang Province. Mr. Liu Dewang, Director of the Relief Department and a staff member of the Information Department went to Anhui Province. Both groups will meet up with RCSC Provincial Branch staff and, as teams, conduct assessments of the situation from the RCSC perspective.

The RCSC Headquarters released 200,000 RMB to both Zhejiang and Anhui Provinces (total of 400,000 RMB). The RCSC International Department and Relief Department have been providing the Secretariat with updated information as they receive it.

The death toll is increasing. More than 200 people are known to have died. Scores are still missing. Sixteen people died in the landslide at the train station in Guizhou Province and 13 are unaccounted for.

The extent of the flooding and the continuing deluge make it difficult to do a comprehensive assessment at this time in all of the affected regions. In some areas the waters are receding but more heavy rain is predicted over the weekend. As is true in many of the affected areas, ensuring safety of the residents is still the most critical need. The Government is conducting search and rescue missions. The Army is patching together vital communications links and transportation routes. Local and Provincial RCSC staff and volunteers are providing what assistance they can at this early stage of the disaster, when access to the victims is limited by the flood waters and damage to the infrastructure, and they must be careful to not become victims themselves.

Provincial branches continue to provide the RCSC Headquarters with information. Those in Guizhou and Hunan provided the following reports:

Guizhou Province: Representatives of local and provincial RCSC Branches returned from their initial trip to survey the situation. Guiyuan City is the most seriously affected. The Army deployed 3000 soldiers in heavy vehicles to conduct search and rescue operations and provide relief. With flood waters high in some areas and the rains continuing, the operation is still in its initial stages.

Hunan Province: A tornado ripped through Hunan Province on 3 July. Strong rain is resulting in local flooding. Local and provincial RCSC staff and volunteers are co-ordinating initial relief efforts with the provincial authorities.

SUMMATION:

PROVINCE	CITIES	COUNTIES	TOWNSHIPS	VILLAGES	POPULATION AFFECTED
ZHEJIANG	3	13	309	4289	3,090,000
JIANGXI	*	3	*	*	230,000
28 May - 8 June	*	3	*	*	37,406
ANHUI	7	11	527	3184	4,090,000
HEILONGJIANG	*	3	34	270	120,340
JIANGSU-9 June	*	3	18	80	50,000
GUIZHOU	9	40	280	1460	8,000,000
HUNAN	8	14	98	1144	1,280,000

PROVINCE	KILLED	INJURED	HOMELESS	ROOMS DAMAGED/ DESTROYED	CROPLANDS AFFECTED (HECTARES)	DIRECT ECONOMIC LOSS (RMB)
ZHEJIANG	41	989	98,521	30,000/11,872	125,281	2,800,000,000
JIANGXI	*	128	12,835	25,685/10,345	1,386	36,300,000
28 May-8June	*	218	2,306	2,334/297	1,553	28,000,000
ANHUI	20	*	*	121,000/24,471	280,000	429,000,000
HEILONGJIANG	5	216	341	19,109/268	144,733	262,000,000
JIANGSU-9 June	*	5	50	315/229	7266	7,000,000
GUIZHOU	108	400	*	250,000/35,000	670,000	2,200,000,000
HUNAN	11	621	65,000	17,801/6699	*	280,000,000

* data unavailable at time Information Bulletin prepared

This flooding disaster is far from over. More rains are expected in most of the areas over the week-end. Flood waters are moving downstream which may impact other areas not included in this preliminary report. The RCSC Headquarters staff should return to Beijing by Sunday and will be communicating their findings to the Secretariat. This will provide valuable first hand data as they make decisions about needed assistance. The Secretariat will provide information from the RCSC Assessment Teams on 8 July.

Note: On 2 July at 07h05 an earthquake of 5.2 magnitude on the Richter Scale struck north of Dali in Yunnan Province. This is in the same area as the devastating earthquake last February. Local and provincial RCSC Branches are assessing the situation and will most likely be able to provide for the victims as necessary. On 3 July, 2 tremors hit the area approximately 260 km. northwest of Lhasa in Xizang (Tibet): 5.7 magnitude at 06h44, and 5.2 at 10h10. On 4 July another tremor was felt in the same area: 5.0 at 18h11. These occurred in an area that is sparsely populated. The impact on its victims is expected to require a minimal response.

Kris Hurlburt,
Desk Officer
Asia & Pacific Department

Jerry Talbot,
Director
Asia & Pacific Department