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Information bulletin Bangladesh: Tropical cyclone

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) are jointly assessing the needs in the affected areas and will soon determine if external assistance is needed.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area or here for detailed contact information>](#)



BDRCS volunteers are disseminating early warning message in Chittagong coastal area where the cyclonic storm is expected to hit. **Photo:** BDRCS.

The situation

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), the depression formed in the Bay of Bengal has turned into cyclonic storm Mahasen on 12 May 2013.

On 15 May 18:00hr, the cyclonic storm has moved over west central Bay and adjoining east central Bay moved slightly north-northeastwards and positioned over west central Bay and adjoining north Bay centred about 700 kms southwest of Chittagong port, 640 kms southwest of Cox's Bazar port and 575 kms south southwest of Mongla port (near lat 17.50 n and long 87.70 e). Over a million people were evacuated in preparation for the storm.

During the morning of 16 May, the cyclonic storm made landfall in Patuakhali district in southern Bangladesh and weakened as it advanced and a predicted storm surge was avoided due to low tide. The death toll has increased to 13 people while more than 1.2 million people have been affected. Some 95,000 houses, mostly thatched huts belonging to populations along the coastal area, have been damaged. Noakhali district in Chittagong has documented at least 15,000 mud-built houses were destroyed by the cyclonic storm. However some people who took refuge at the safer shelters have returned to their homes. The airports and ports have been reopened.

Table 1: Summary of damages and losses provided by the Government of Bangladesh, as of 17 May 2013

Total affected districts	10
Total affected upazilas	39
Total affected unions	312
Total affected people	1,285,508
Total number of death	13
Partially damaged houses	45,825
Fully damaged houses	49,178

Source: GoB SOS report

Based on the initial information received on 17 May through the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) team, the BDRCS and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) joint team on the ground, BDRCS units and German Red Cross Hatiya project team, it was recorded that the districts of Bhola, Patuakhali and Barguna have significant damages compared to other places affected by the cyclonic storm Mahasen. An advance team was sent to Noakhali, while the team in Chittagong was called back to Dhaka. Additional teams are expected to be deployed to Patuakhali, Barguna and Bhola to reinforce the potential response.

The GoB has sanctioned resources of food and cash at the field level, amounting to BDT 12 million (approximately CHF 146,323) and 3,501 MT of rice for the cyclonic affected districts. With the Cabinet's approval, the District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) have been advised to treat all public buildings as safer shelters, including some private buildings such as hotels. Around 100 water treatment plants are ready to be mobilised to the potential affected areas. The Armed Forces, under the Prime Minister's Office order, is establishing a coordination and information hub to coordinate the Air force for food distribution.

The Inter-Service Public Relation Directorate has informed that 22 ships of the Bangladesh Navy as well as four airplanes and 17 helicopters of the Air Force have been prepared for conducting post-disaster rescue operations and distributing relief materials. The GoB recognized that some island communities may pose as a concern for immediate response operation as they are difficult to reach.

The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and coast guard are on standby for any response intervention. Meanwhile, a total of 1,327 medical teams have been formed for emergency response in the 13 coastal districts.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

With the cyclonic storm approaching the coastal areas of Bangladesh, BDRCS immediately has alerted and mobilized its CPP volunteers and staff for disseminating early warning messages to the populations living in the 13 targeted districts. BDRCS called an emergency review meeting to prepare a plan for mobilizing its staff, volunteers and resources to respond to the cyclonic storm. An official order was issued to all CPP staff to be on standby for response operation.

The BDRCS cyclone contingency plan has been activated. BDRCS/IFRC has deployed three joint teams in Chittagong, Noakhali and Barisal regions which are likely to be affected by the cyclonic storm. Each of the teams has BDT 100,000 (approximately CHF 1,219) cash for use in emergency procurement of dry food at local level. BDRCS national headquarters (NHQ) has initially dispatched three trucks with 3,000 NFIs to these areas. However, due to the changing response needs, the prepositioned NFIs have been returned to the NHQ. The NFIs in Barisal region continue to be stationed at Barisal until requirement for Bhola, Barguna and Patuakhali is identified. Meanwhile the advance team will remain in Barisal to assist in dispatching of NFIs for three districts.

The Chittagong district and city units are working in close coordination with the respective Deputy Commissioners. The Cox's Bazar unit is well-prepared to respond to the cyclonic storm. Some of the safer shelters have been prepared for people to move in. BDRCS CPP and GoB have evacuated 1.1 million people prior to the cyclonic storm making its landfall to the coast.

The Shelter Cluster meeting was organized on 16 and 17 May to review the situation and decide on the response actions which include Shelter Cluster assessment, mobilization of stock, and coordination with other Clusters. Meanwhile, IFRC also participated in the Early Recovery and Health Cluster meeting.

In-country PNSs such as British Red Cross and German Red Cross have provided vehicle support for BDRCS in conducting initial response activities. The British Red Cross and German Red Cross are expected



BDRCS volunteers are disseminating early warning message in the affected community. **Photo:** BDRCS.

to work with BDRCS to support the operations in their respective project areas in offshore islands of Hatia, Khulna and, Borguna, Patuakhali districts.

BDRCS, in discussion with IFRC, is considering requesting for a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) application to assist in the three most affected districts (Bhola, Patuakhali and Barguna).

Contact information

For further information related to this operation please contact:

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Please send all funding pledges to zonerm.asiapacific@ifrc.org

1. Map [below](#)

2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page

How we work

All IFRC 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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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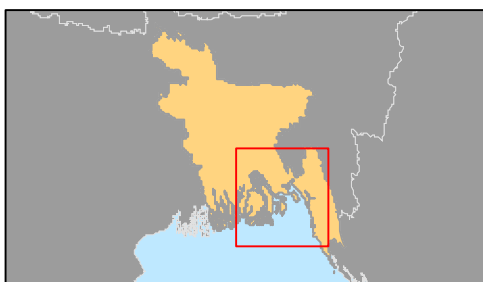
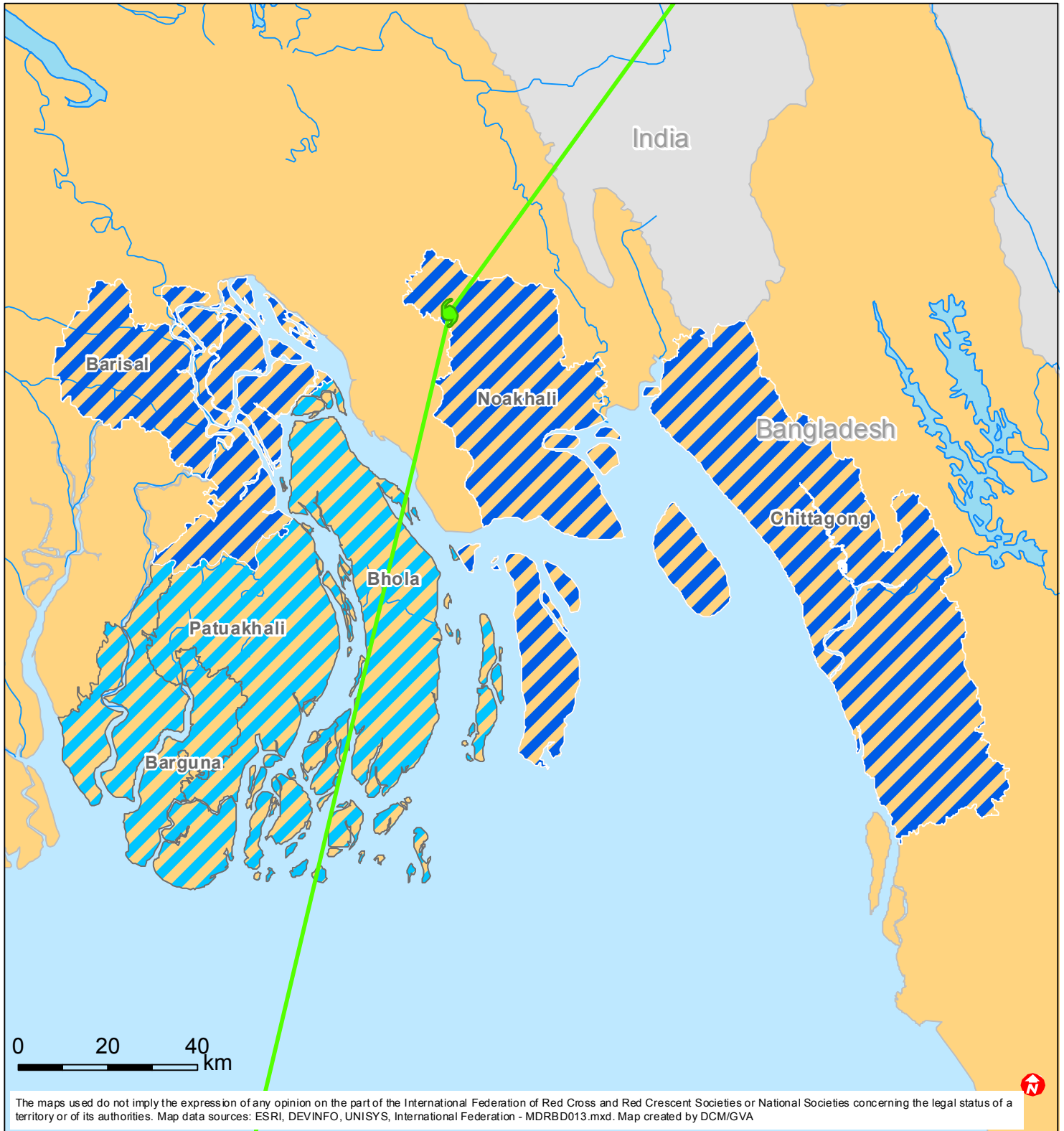




The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.



Bangladesh: Tropical storm Mahasen



-  Districts likely to be affected by storm
-  Requirement being identified