

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

BANGLADESH: MONSOON FLOODS

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This Information Bulletin is intended for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

Early monsoon rains during the last 48 hours have swollen three rivers above danger level in north-eastern Bangladesh. Approximately 13 inches of rain fell in the region on 5 and 6 June 2001, increasing water levels on the Manu, Kushiara and Khowai rivers, causing flash floods in the six districts of Sylhet, Hobigonj, Sunamgonj and Muolovibazar in the north-eastern region, Nilphamari in the north-west and Brahmanbaria in the east. All three rivers were well above their red flood danger marks, overflowing their banks and submerging many areas. The Gumti river in Comilla District reportedly has also been rapidly rising.

Thousands of people have been affected due to the sudden inundation of their houses. Five children have reportedly died in Kuluara. The downpour and onrush of water from the hills in the Tripura State of India also threaten to cause flooding of the Surma and Kushiara rivers in Sylhet, the Sunamgonj and Monu rivers in Moulvibazar, and the Khowai river in Hobigonj. The heavy rains and high river levels have necessitated opening of the gates of the Gajal Doba Barrage on the Teesta river. Many road and rail communications in the affected areas have been cut off. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department forecasts indicate that the heavy rainfall is likely to continue for several days.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), supported by the Federation, have been closely monitoring the situation. The BDRCS have initiated assessment activities with branches in the affected districts. Contacts have been made with the local authorities to establish coordination and information sharing.

At this stage no relief action is anticipated as there is no clear picture concerning the needs in any of the affected districts. Depending on the evolving nature of the flooding and if the situation worsens, each BDRCS unit is capable of immediately releasing the available Disaster Emergency Funds (approximately CHF 4,000 per unit) in each of the affected districts, and to begin local procurement of most of the necessary relief items. Close monitoring of new developments by the BDRCS and the Federation will continue and a joint plan of action will be formulated if it is considered necessary.

Needs

At this stage there is no need for external assistance.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

For further details please contact:

- *Tony Maryon, Head of Delegation, Bangladesh; Mobile Phone 88.017 521 615, email ifrcbd03@ifrc.org*
- *Martin de Vries, Phone 41 22 730 4320; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email devries@ifrc.org*

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Head, a.i.
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashiura
Head
Asia & Pacific Department