

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: PUNJAB TRAIN COLLISION

16 December 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no.01/2004) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In India: Indian Red Cross Society, Vimala Ramalingam, Secretary-General, vimalaramalingam@indianredcross.org, phone 91112371644, fax 911123717454.
- In India: Delegation contact Azmat Ulla, head of delegation, India delegation, New Delhi, email ifrcin65@ifrc.org, phone 911123324203, fax 911123324235.
- In Geneva: Jagan Chapagain, regional officer, Asia Pacific Regional Department, email jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org, phone 41227304316, fax 41227330395.

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The Situation

A head on collision between the Jammu-Tawi Express bound for Ahmedabad, Gujarat and a local train on Tuesday resulted in 51 people dead, including nine women and four children, and more than 200 injured. The mishap occurred in the village of Mansar in Hoshiarpur district, North Punjab, and most of the dead were passengers on board the local shuttle between Jalandhar and Pathankot districts. So severe was the impact that many people died within minutes of the accident.

The incident occurred at midday and 'human error' is blamed for the mishap. According to eyewitnesses, both trains sped towards each other on the same track and brakes were apparently applied only at the last minute when the drivers of the two trains presumably saw each other.

Residents from nearby villages rushed to the aid of the injured while the army respond first to the tragedy, followed by the civil administration. The injured were sent to nearby hospitals in the districts of Pathankot, Mukerian and Dasuya. Authorities say the search for survivors and victims wound up by about four in the evening. Clearing of tracks at the site continues.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) at the Hoshiarpur district branch and the Mukerian sub-district branch are actively involved in the emergency relief and rescue operation, providing first aid to the injured and transporting them to the district hospital. Red Cross volunteers from the state and district branches along with the local people

are helping remove dead bodies. The Red Cross volunteers have also, together with the local and district administration, helped in rescuing passengers trapped inside bogies and provided psychological support to them. The Punjab state branch has dispatched a funeral van and six volunteers to the site, along with medicines and 80 woollen blankets. The local authorities have set up stalls to provide food to victims and their families in the affected area.

The Secretary-General of the Indian Red Cross Society has termed the incident unfortunate and sanctioned the release of 300 woollen blankets from the IRCS warehouse.

The state secretary and deputy secretary of the Punjab state branch are monitoring the situation.

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's [Annual Appeal](#).

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