

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: CYCLONE SIDR

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 01/2007) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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The Situation

A powerful cyclone SIDR hit the Bangladesh coastline on the night of Thursday, 15 November 2007, killing 3,100 people¹ and leaving thousands of houses destroyed and trees uprooted. The death toll in the country has been rising by the hour and efforts are still on to help survivors reach hospitals.

The cyclone, which built up in the Bay of Bengal, crossed the states of Orissa and West Bengal in India before reaching Bangladesh. In India, following a warning raised by the Indian Meteorological Department, thousands of people along the coast in both the states were evacuated to cyclone shelters built along the coastline. They were kept in these shelters till the warning was called off. In addition, fishermen were advised to stay clear of the coastline in both states.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The disaster management centre at the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) national headquarters was immediately activated following the cyclone warnings issued by the Indian Meteorological Department. During the 'alert' phase, disaster management teams from the IRCS and the International Federation successfully communicated with the IRCS' state branches in Orissa, West Bengal and the north-eastern states, in order to remain prepared.

West Bengal: No deaths were reported from the state, but houses and standing crops were destroyed in the coastal areas of the South and North 24 Parganas districts. Approximately 100 IRCS volunteers were mobilized to help the affected people. The state disaster management coordinator shared information with state disaster response team members in Medinapur, 24 Parganas (south and north).

Orissa: On 12th November, the control room at the IRCS' state branch in Orissa was made operational immediately after information on cyclone SIDR was received from the Orissa state disaster management authority.



People being evacuated to safer places in Orissa

¹ According to media reports

The Orissa state branch worked round-the-clock and was able to share information among community members. All the 74 IRCS multi-purpose cyclone shelters were kept on alert and made ready for immediate occupation. On 15th November, around 8,000 community members from low lying coastal villages in Balasore, Kendrapara, Jagatisingpur, Puri and Ganjam districts were evacuated and accommodated in cyclone shelters, which were stocked with dry food, dry clothes and drinking water by the local Panchayats².

At the district level, the secretaries and district field coordinators of IRCS' district branches took necessary action for sharing information with the communities, through the IRCS volunteers. In Kendrapara district, the district field coordinator and joint secretary of the district branch kept close contact with the district administration. On behalf of the administration, the district branch alerted all the cyclone shelters about cyclone SIDR. The communities near the cyclone shelters, headed by the community based shelter disaster management committees, kept vigil and maintained regular contact with the administration at both district and block levels. The district branch coordinated with the administration to take charge of two vulnerable blocks in the district.

In Bhadrak district too, the joint secretary and district field coordinator of the district branch coordinated with block and district level administration. The communities near the cyclone shelters were updated about the latest situation and directed to remain vigilant. Similarly, in Balasore district, the district field coordinator and secretary of the district branch visited two of the most vulnerable regions in the district. Till the cyclone warning was withdrawn, the district field coordinators kept hourly contact with state disaster management unit and disseminated up-to-date information to the communities.

As compared to the situation during the massive cyclone in Orissa in 1999, this time the IRCS showed a higher level of preparedness, with improved communication among all the key stakeholders in the state. There was also visible preparedness at the household level, as a result of awareness programmes that had been carried out earlier by the Orissa state branch.

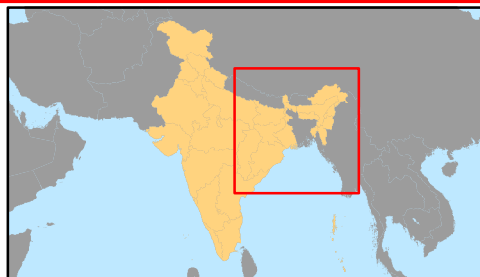
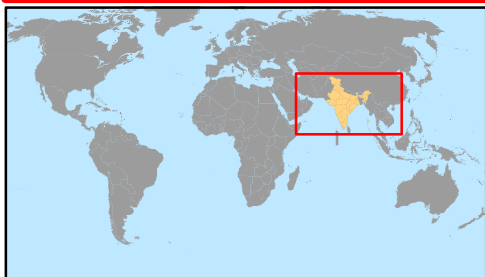
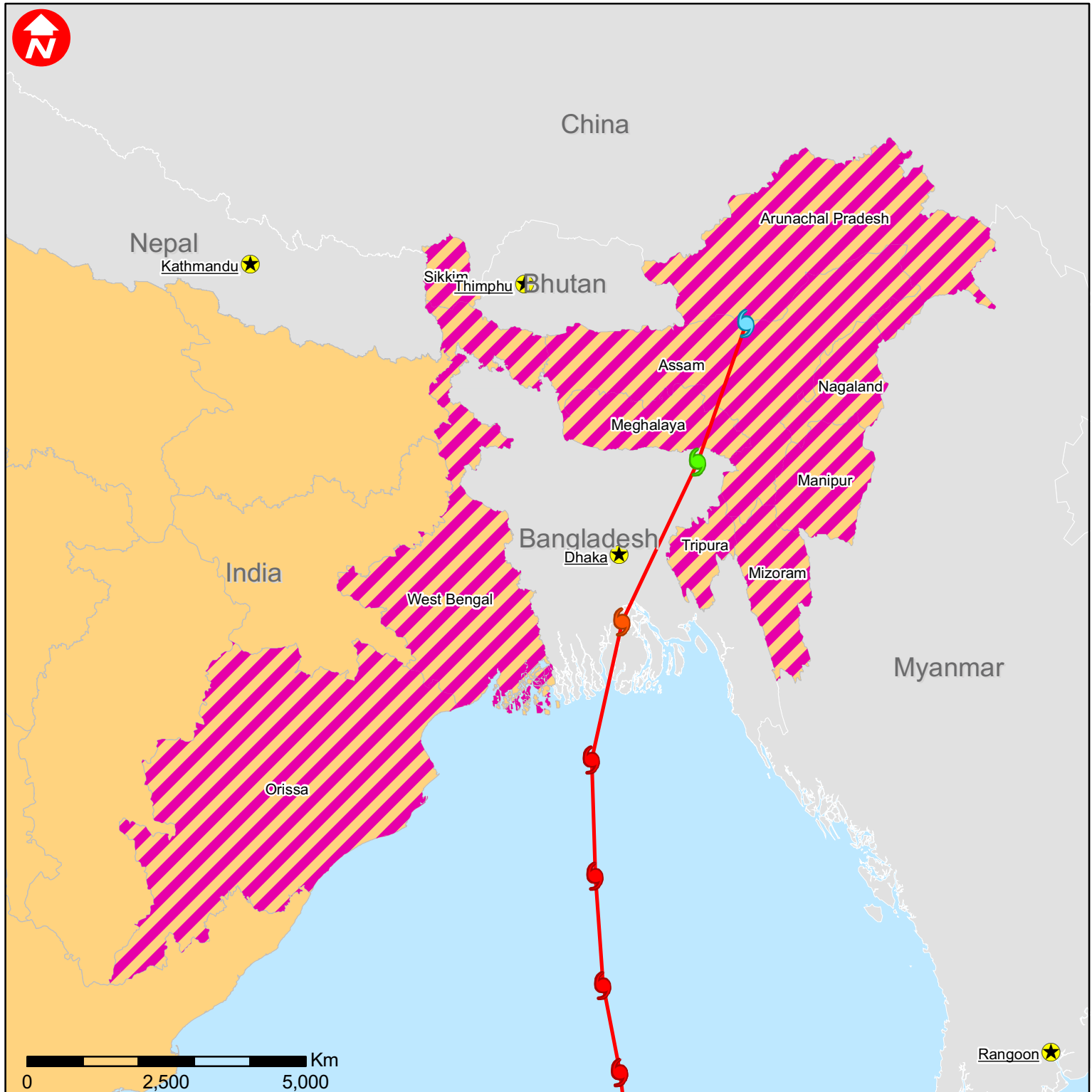
How we work	
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.	
<p>The Federation's Global Agenda The International Federation's activities are aligned with under a 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".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	
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² Local government body at the village level



India: Cyclone Sidr



- CYCLONE-4
- CYCLONE-3
- TROPICAL STORM
- TROPICAL DEPRESSION
- Track of Sidr
- Capitals
- Disaster management teams were in alert in these states

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources
 ESRI, Devinfo, GIST, GRUMP
 Federation, University of Hawai'i