

Myanmar: Floods

22 August 1997

Information Bulletin N° 2

The Disaster

Incessant monsoon rains from the last week of July 1997 to the third week of August, compounded by the especially high tides, resulted in extensive flooding of the low lying areas along the rivers, Chindwin, Ayeyarwaddy, Sittaung and Thanlwin (Salween) rivers.

Floods have been reported in Sagaing, Magwe, Ayeyarwaddy, Bago Divisions and the MON, Kachin and Shan State (North) and the Rakhine States. In the hilly regions flash floods have caused immense damage, washing away human dwellings with considerable loss of property (though with limited loss of human life. Low lying plains and villages and parts of towns have been totally submerged by flood waters.

Preliminary data available to the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) shows a total of 69,474 families (361,800 persons) are affected. The President of MRCS and his team of officials from the national headquarters will tomorrow accompany the disaster assessment and response team with more relief materials and medical supplies to Bago Division where the Sittaung River has exceeded its danger level and submerged densely populated rice producing areas. Damage to crops is expected to be heavy.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Red Cross Volunteers from the different MRCS Branches have been active in rescuing and assisting people to save their belongings and move to safer areas. Cooked food is being collected from benefactors and distributed to those affected by the floods and accommodated in temporary shelters. Clothing and utensils received from Finnish and Danish and Korean RC Societies are being distributed during this disaster.

Needs

MRCS will be able to assess the needs only when the President and his team return from their assessment trip. The MRCS will then be able to plan the relief and rehabilitation action to be taken.

Ann Naef
Acting Head
Appeals & Reports Service

Hiroshi Higashiura
Director
Asia & Pacific Department

