

BANGLADESH: CYCLONE 05B

28 October 1999

Information Bulletin N° 1

The Disaster

At 15:00 local time today Bangladesh's Storm Warning Centre reported that a severe cyclonic storm over the east-central part of the Bay of Bengal was moving north-westwards and was centred about 600 kilometres south-west of Chittagong and 550 kilometres south-southwest of Khulna town. The storm is predicted to intensify and to continue on its present course, moving at a speed of 15 kilometres per hour (kph) and may cross the West Bengal/Sundarbans Coast on 29 October.

The maximum wind gusts reported within a 74-kilometre radius of the storm centre have been about 130-150 kph. Heavy seas and tidal surges are three to five feet are expected.

The maritime port of Mongla has been advised to hoist danger signal number 6. The coastal districts of Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Borguna and their offshore islands will come under this signal.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

On 25 October when the depression was first reported to the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and the International Federation's delegation, the National Society opened its Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) operation room on a 24 hour roster, and has been continuously tracking the cyclone. On the same day, CPP volunteers in the coastal regions were put on alert and the radio rooms were opened at the unit level to provide regular reports to the national headquarters.

The Acting Secretary General of the BDRCS sent an urgent Alert on 27 October to all district units situated in the cyclone prone areas and instructed them to take action on the following:

- w call meetings of unit executive committees immediately
- w deploy squad/core/Red Crescent youth volunteers to take necessary measures
- w provide necessary support to CPP teams for disseminating warning signals
- w keep the control room open continuously and provide important contact numbers.

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wThe Federation delegation is working closely with the CPP, Community Based Disaster Preparedness and relief departments of the BDRCS. The Federation's Disaster Preparedness delegate has attended the last two cyclone co-ordination meetings between the government and the BDRCS.

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