

INDIA: CYCLONE

13 November 1996

preliminary appeal no. 20/96

situation report no. 01

period covered: 8th - 13th November 1996

Search, rescue and relief operations are in full swing in cyclone stricken Andhra Pradesh . The State RC Branch, with material support from Indian RC HQ, has already begun emergency relief services in the area and is preparing to extend its assistance. The Indian RC/Federation assessment team has almost completed its survey: its findings will form the basis of a detailed appeal.

The context

On Wednesday 6 November, the Godavari Delta of Andhra Pradesh was hit by a high velocity hurricane, violent rains and 8 to 10 feet high tidal waves which, according to official sources, left more than 700 people dead and tens of thousands homeless. The East Godavari district was the worst hit , accounting for 70% of the total damage. Two villages - Bhairvapada and Bulusutippa in Eastern Godavari district -- were reportedly totally wiped out. The total population affected by this cyclone is estimated at seven million.

Latest events

As of 11 November, the Indian Coast Guard service was still searching for missing persons and Defence Force helicopters were providing food and water packets and medicines for the relief operations. In rural areas, dead bodies are being dug out from under the debris of collapsed houses and from deep mud left behind by the tidal waves. About 450,000 houses have been partially or completely destroyed, leaving tens of thousands without a roof over their heads. As of 13 November, more than 190,000 people were housed in 790 relief camps. There are 324 medical teams and 217 para medical teams providing assistance in the area . About 353,000 hectares of paddy (rice) crop, 56,000 hectares of other crops and more than 70,000 hectares of coconut plantations have been completely destroyed.

Government action

State and Defence Forces medical teams are attending to the medical needs of the affected population and a round the clock operation to restore transport and communication facilities is in progress. The power supply is being restored in 350 villages. Clearance of roads is already completed, except in Mundivaram, Polavaram and Katrenikona Mandals in East Godavari District.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Red Cross volunteers are helping in rescue and relief operations in the affected areas. Following an aerial survey of the affected areas, the Andhra Pradesh State Red Cross Branch began emergency relief through its district branches. The Secretary General of the Indian Red Cross is visiting the cyclone hit areas together with Federation assessment team. An initial Rs. 2.5 million (approx. CHF 87,000 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund) was released to Andhra Pradesh State Red Cross Branch from the National Headquarters for the purchase of emergency supplies. In addition, the Headquarters has already despatched relief items to the State Branch, as follows :

Emergency rations	16	MT
Cotton blankets	4500	Pces
Woollen blankets	400	Pces
Cloth sheeting	3000	Mtrs
Used clothes	15,000	Pces
Polythene sheeting	50	Rolls
Soap cakes	40	Kgs
Petticoats	250	Pces
Baby blankets	600	Pces
Ladies clothing	400	Pces
Children kits	1000	Pces
Milk powder	3000	Kgs
Cooking utensils	500	Pces
Towels	1000	Pces
Cotton cloth	1000	Mtrs
Rice	2000	Kgs
Tents assorted	400	Pces

Outstanding needs

Although the assessment mission has not yet been completed, the Indian Red Cross Society is already preparing to provide :

1. immediate temporary shelter in tents for the homeless;
2. drinking water ;
3. bleaching powder and/or chlorine tablets to purify water;
4. emergency food and milk powder;
5. cotton and wool blankets, and bed sheets;
6. clothing;
7. vaccines and preventive and curative medicines to prevent the out-break of diseases (cholera, malaria, diarrhoea and dysentery, jaundice), ;
8. utensils for cooking, and kitchen sets;
9. soap and towels.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Indian Red Cross is co-ordinating closely with the Government.

Conclusion

The assessment mission will continue through Thursday, 14 November. Once its evaluation is received a detailed Appeal will be issued. A tentative option is for IRCS/Federation to provide a basic food relief package consisting of rice, dhal and oil to approximately 100,000 people currently residing in the relief centres, but this needs to be confirmed by the survey. Cash contributions are encouraged and the Federation thanks those National Societies which have already contributed to the Preliminary Appeal.

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