

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/MAHARASTRA: TEMPLE STAMPEDE

27 January 2005

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. 01/2005) 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: Dr Vimala Ramalingam, Secretary General Indian Red Cross Society, New Delhi, email: vimala.ramalingam@indianredcross.org, phone: 91 11 2371 6441, fax: 91 11 2371 7454*
- *In India: Azmat Ulla, Head of Delegation, New Delhi, email: ifrcin65@ifrc.org, phone: 91 11 2332 4203, fax: 91 11 2332 4235*
- *In Geneva: Regional Department, Jagan Chhapagain, Regional Officer, email jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org, phone: 41.22.730.42.24; fax 41.22.733.03.95*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

Tragedy struck on Tuesday 25 January at the Mandharadevi Kalubai temple, about 80 kilometres from Pune in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, when over 250 pilgrims were killed in a stampede during a procession assembled for an annual religious fair. Nearly 200,000 pilgrims had gathered to attend this religious celebration.

According to government officials, the incident occurred at 12.30pm when a huge pool of coconut water accumulated in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple after coconuts were broken in large numbers as an offering to the Goddess Kalubai. Some people slipped on the floor, while overhead wires in the temple snapped, causing panic among the pilgrims. Adding to the confusion was a large group of pilgrims coming up towards the temple while fires broke out in nearby shops.

Indian Red Cross action

The Indian Red Cross hospital at Panchgani, situated 12 kilometres from the disaster site, was pressed into action immediately. The Red Cross hospital staff and doctors have been involved in providing medical relief in

coordination with the local administration. This hospital, which comes under the Indian Red Cross Maharashtra state branch, has 250 beds and staff of 130. It is primarily involved in tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS work.

Police contacted the hospital immediately following the disaster and two ambulances were despatched for transportation of the wounded. Staff were also involved in tending to casualties and assisting with collection of bodies.

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

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