

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## India: Floods

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This bulletin is being issued for information only.

Heavy rains in the province of Assam have resulted in floods in the districts of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Sonitpur. According to the disaster management division of the ministry of home affairs, there are up to 54 fatalities and approximately 311,000 people affected. The Indian Red Cross Society has activated its disaster contingency plan with the support of the International Federation and has mobilized state and district disaster response units to respond to the needs of those affected by the floods in coordination with government authorities.

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), with the support of the International Federation, has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

[<click here for detailed contact information; a map of the affected areas will be made available as soon as possible>](#)



A vehicle being ferried across a portion of the flooded NH-52 highway near the north Lakhimpur town on 16 June 2008.

### The situation

The annual monsoon rains have swept across India about two weeks early, causing floods that have killed 52 people, including 27 in the northeast states, according to the disaster management division of the ministry of home affairs. Heavy rains have resulted in flash floods and landslides in the state of Assam, severely affecting the Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Sonitpur districts.

In Assam, up to eight people have lost their lives and more than 311,420 people have been affected by the floods. In the worst-affected district of Lakhimpur, approximately 500 villages have been inundated. Railway tracks at several places and the National Highway-52 has been submerged, resulting in the disruption of train/traffic movements. Power supply and telecommunications were partially disrupted in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur districts. In the adjoining state of Arunachal Pradesh, a series of landslides left 19 people dead and about 15 injured. The incidents took place in and around the state capital city of Itanagar.

Following heavy rains on Monday, the government deployed the military to rescue marooned villagers from approximately 300 villages in Assam's Sonitpur and Lakhimpur districts. The villagers were housed in about 50 makeshift camps and were provided with food, water and medicine. Up to 15 boats were used in the relief operation. Air Force helicopters are also on standby.

A Central Water Commission bulletin issued on 16 June reported that the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries were flowing above the danger level in at least ten places. The water level is likely to rise further.

## Red Cross Red Crescent action

In response to the disaster, the IRCS used its recently consolidated state-level flood contingency plans which include a pre-mapped state- and district-level disaster response capacity. These plans are part of the annual preparedness measures taken by the national society which include a national level flood contingency planning initiative. In addition, the IRCS national headquarters have 45,000 pre-positioned disaster preparedness stocks that include hygiene kits and jerry cans available at six strategically located regional warehouses as well as five water purification units which can be deployed at a short notice.

The national society's disaster management centre was activated and approximately 90 national, state and district disaster response team members from the Assam state branch have been put on alert. The Honorary Secretary of the IRCS Assam state branch is leading the relief operations and has alerted all the district secretaries to cope with the disaster situation, utilizing local available resources in addition to the support provided by the state branch. Up to three IRCS psychosocial support teams, 72 first aid-trained volunteers and four hospitals (each with 100 beds' capacity) are available within the state.

The branch has mobilized state and district disaster response team members to help assess the flood situation. According to the IRCS Assam state branch, there are currently no reports of water borne diseases. Local IRCS members, first aid-trained volunteers and community health workers are working in coordination with the local administration and are providing their services in the relief camps and shelters run by the government.

State and district disaster response team members along with army personnel, the national disaster response force and the local district administration are conducting rescue and relief operations as and when needed.

The IRCS disaster management team and the International Federation's country office in India are monitoring the situation and are in regular contact with the disaster management focal points from the affected state branches.

### 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.**

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its 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".

#### Global Agenda Goals:

- 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

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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