

# ***BANGLADESH: CYCLONE***

*27 September 1997*

## ***Information Bulletin N°02***

### ***The Disaster***

As foreshadowed in the International Federation's information bulletin (26 September) severe cyclone storm *Two B* crossed the southern coast of Bangladesh on the early morning of 27 September 1997 (local time). The mainland areas of Potuakhali, Bhola, Sitakundu and Noakhali with the offshore islands of Hatiya and Sandwip and the many chars of the river Megna estuary were hardest hit. After striking the coastal area at around 08h00, the storm weakened into a land depression and is now moving in a north easterly direction towards India's Assam state. Initial damage reports received through the Cyclone Preparedness Programme ( CPP ) network, as at 13h00 Saturday, give initial estimates of 1,529 people injured, 27 deaths, 71,800 houses fully damaged and 70,600 partially damaged. It is estimated that by 15h00 yesterday (Friday) some 612,000 people had taken refuge following the CPP mobilisation and a severe warning signal for evacuation which commenced at 11h00. Much of the affected area is highly exposed and not easily accessible. Casualty/damage figures are likely to increase over the next few hours.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, supported by the International Federation is presently purchasing essential rations of chira and ghur for 1,500 families and will use buffer stocks of plastic sheeting for distributions to a further 1,200 families. Senior officials of both the International Federation's Dhaka delegation and the National Society remain in close contact with relevant government ministries. Representatives from the Society and the delegation are to attend an initial meeting with the Association for Disaster and Development ( ADAB ) and are currently providing information to Government, UNDP and the NGOs, through the Disaster Forum.

### ***Needs***

Until the survey to assess the damage is completed tomorrow (Sunday) it would be premature to provide a precise listing. However, past experience in similar situations indicate **cash** for food, shelter materials, water purification tablets and medical teams with medicines could be urgently required. Donors are urged to take some preparatory action to provide cash donations by the beginning of the coming week.

Anne Naef  
Acting Head  
Appeals & Reports Service

Hiroshi Higashiura  
Director  
Asia and Pacific Department

