

BANGLADESH: Flash Floods

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The Disaster

Flash floods caused by torrential rains over the past few days have been reported in the districts of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, in the south-east of Bangladesh. Most of the low-lying areas of these districts have been inundated. At the time of writing six people have reportedly been killed, either by floods or reluctant landslides. The road link between Chittagong and Cox's Bazar has been broken after a culvert on the highway at Islamabad union collapsed. Road communication between Bandarban and Khagrachari has also been disrupted.

According to press reports in Chittagong, the low-lying areas of Narayanhat, Bhuspur and Datmara unions and Anwara, Satkania, Banskali thanas are inundated. In Cox's Bazar, low-lying areas of Sadar Ramu and parts of Chokoria thana are under water. Low-lying areas of the Sadar thana in Bandarban are also flooded. In Chittagong and Cox's Bazar large areas of crops and seedbeds remain inundated. Hundreds of thousands of people have been marooned and many of the victims have taken refuge in shelter centres.

A total of 350 mm of rainfall was recorded in Chittagong in 48 hours. In Cox's Bazar 308 mm of rain fell over a period of 38 while 194 mm of rainfall was recorded over a two day period in Bandarban. All major rivers in the affected areas are well above danger levels -- given the onset of the monsoon season and the forecast for more rain the likelihood is that the situation will get worse before it gets better.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Federation Delegation has been in contact with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) which is maintaining close contact with its Units (Branches) in the affected districts. The detailed information collected by these units will form the basis for any further action. The government has not made any formal request to the Red Crescent or NGOs in Bangladesh to provide direct assistance, but they have ordered a distribution of 25 tonnes of rice in the Cox's Bazar area. National Societies will be kept informed as more detailed information is gathered from the field and other sources.

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