

## INDIA: FLOODS

26 January 2001

*appeal no. 19/2000*

*situation report no. 6; programme extension to 30 April 2001*

*period covered: 11 November 2000 - 17 January 2001*

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*The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) is carrying out distributions of relief goods through its state branches. In Assam, distributions are underway at present in flood affected districts; in West Bengal, the first round of distributions of tarpaulins and kitchen sets was completed in December 2000 and a second round of distributions of clothing, blankets, mosquito nets and food, is to take place shortly. In Bihar, the state branch is carrying out distributions of 20 kg. of rice, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, blankets and garments to 10,000 affected families. It is expected that all distributions will be completed by 28 February 2001. The mobile medical teams continue to bring basic health care to remote communities in Assam and West Bengal. The social and economic impact of the floods will be felt in the hardest-hit areas for years to come, particularly amongst the most vulnerable.*

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### *The context*

Over 30 million people have been affected by the floods in north and north eastern India between the months of July and September 2000. In the north-eastern state of Assam, there were initial reports of flooding in late July. The situation worsened dramatically at the beginning of August when flash floods resulting from heavy rains in the Himalayas swept south, causing breaches in the embankments along many parts of the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries, inundating the surrounding area. The combined death toll due to floods, landslides and torrential rains in India, Bangladesh and Bhutan stands at over 1,500.

The situation in the state of West Bengal became critical in September when heavy monsoon rains caused a second wave of floods that swept across a vast and densely populated area. Local authorities state that over 17 million people were forced to flee their homes. The floods have claimed 1,266 lives, and around 74,000 heads of cattle have perished.

The northern state of Bihar was also severely affected by another disastrous wave of floods in September. Three consecutive flood waves hit a total of 31 districts and claimed 163 lives.

In addition to Assam, West Bengal and Bihar, the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Marahastra have also experienced extensive flooding caused by the seasonal monsoon rains. As the waters have receded, many people are now attempting to return to their homes. However, millions of people who have lost their houses are now living in makeshift shelters.

## ***Latest events***

Life is slowly returning to normal in the north eastern Indian states inundated by the successive waves of floods during last year's monsoon's season. However, the social and economic impact of the severe floods will still be felt in the hardest-hit areas for years to come, particularly among the most vulnerable. According to the local media, the government of West Bengal continues its struggle to obtain more funds for the reconstruction of the flood-affected areas. A recent decision of the central government to set up a Central Calamity Assistance Fund may soon result in a fresh release of funds for more flood relief and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure in West Bengal.

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

*Logistics:* All procurement procedures for 66,000 garments and 99,000 blankets were completed, orders have been placed with the selected suppliers and deliveries to the state branches should take place by the end of the month. During the period covered by this report, two four-wheel drive vehicles were purchased by the Federation and donated to Assam and West Bengal state branches. A third vehicle is currently being purchased for Bihar state branch and the Federation's logistics delegate is assisting the IRCS with the procurement of two boats, funded by the Spanish Red Cross, to be utilised in Assam as floating mobile clinics. In addition, the last three New Health Emergency Kits, funded by ECHO, arrived in India in December 2000 and were immediately dispatched to Assam.

*Relief:* Distributions of relief supplies are underway in several flood-affected districts of Assam. In West Bengal the first round of distributions was completed in December 2000 and a total of 9,000 tarpaulins and 9,000 kitchen sets have reached the beneficiaries in the districts of Murshidabad, Birbhum, Nadia, North 24 Parganas and Hoogly. A second round of distributions, including garments, blankets, mosquito nets and food will start as soon as some remaining relief items, forwarded from New Delhi, are delivered. The Federation's relief delegate is currently visiting all the districts in West Bengal involved in the operation to monitor their relief activities and collect distribution reports.

In Bihar, the state branch is now dispatching all relief supplies purchased in New Delhi to the districts where distributions will be carried out. All relief items, including the emergency food ration of 20 kg of rice, tarpaulins, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, blankets and garments will be distributed to a total of 10,000 families in one round of distributions only. These distributions, covering nine flood-affected districts of Bihar, are scheduled to start at the end of January.

All distributions of food and non-food supplies to flood victims in India are expected to be completed by the end of February 2001.

*Health:* The Red Cross mobile medical teams continue to bring basic health care to remote rural communities in Assam and West Bengal. Given the high demand on the services provided by the mobile clinics in Assam, a second doctor has been added to each of the six teams to enable them to see a larger number of patients. The Federation is also supplying the medical teams with locally purchased medicines requested by the doctors.

The first training course for community health workers was held in Guwahati between 25 December and 7 January. The course was attended by 59 Red Cross volunteers from 12 district branches in Assam. The training programme focused mainly on essential public health issues such as first aid, hygiene and sanitation, infectious diseases, mother and child health care, nutrition and health-related disaster preparedness. Preparations are underway for the second training course, scheduled to start on 21 January.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

A press conference was held in Guwahati, Assam, on 30 November 2000. During this conference, attended by a large number of journalists working for both local and national media, Federation delegates and the Assam state branch Secretary provided an overview of the floods relief operation in north eastern India and addressed several issues raised by the participants. This conference ensured comprehensive and positive coverage of Red Cross activities on behalf of the flood victims in the Indian press.

During the months of November and December 2000, Federation delegates continued to attend co-ordination meetings held mainly in West Bengal and to co-ordinate Red Cross activities with local authorities in the flood-affected states, local and international NGOs and UN agencies.

## ***Outstanding needs***

As the relief activities in flood-stricken north eastern India near completion and as a result of the swift and generous donor response to the request for assistance for floods in India, there are currently no outstanding needs for the operation.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
Head a.i.  
Relationship Management Department

Hiroshi Higashiura  
Head  
Asia & Pacific Department

**This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>**

<b>India Floods</b>						ANNEX 1
<b>APPEAL No. 19/2000</b>						<b>PLEDGES RECEIVED</b>
						01/25/01
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
<b>REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF -----&gt;</b>				<b>3,480,157</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 128.6%</b>
AMERICAN - PRIVATE		20	USD	34	22.08.00	
AUSTRALIAN - RC		11,613	AUD	11,594	02.10.00	
BRITISH - RC		50,000	GBP	126,000	11.08.00	PURCHASE, TRANSPORT & DISTRIBUTION OF RICE
BRITISH GOVT/RC - DFID		245,098	GBP	617,646	11.08.00	
CANADIAN - GOVT/RC		99,000	CAD	111,118	11.08.00	
DANISH - RC		250,000	DKK	52,650	21.08.00	
DANISH - RC		950,000	DKK	200,070	14.08.00	
DANISH - RC		231,250	DKK	48,285	29.09.00	
ECHO		755,000	EUR	1,153,489	26.10.00	EC/IND/210/2000/01001
FINNISH - RC		84,094	EUR	132,162	11.08.00	
FINNISH - RC		33,637	EUR	52,383	27.09.00	
FINNISH - GOVT		134,550	EUR	205,565	17.11.00	
GERMAN - GOVT		300,000	DEM	234,330	02.10.00	15'800 KITCHEN SETS, 3 NEW EMERGENCY HEALTH KITS, INCL. TRANSPORT
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,456	11.08.00	
IRANIAN - RC		30,000	USD	51,375	23.09.00	
JAPANESE - RC				150,000	14.08.00	
JAPANESE - RC				148,000	02.10.00	
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF - RC				30,000	28.08.00	
LIECHTENSTEIN				50,000	02.10.00	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				300	28.11.00	
MONACO - RC		40,000	FRF	9,316	11.08.00	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		400,000	NLG	277,277	09.10.00	BLANKETS
NETHERLANDS - RC				30,000	09.10.00	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		2,886,000	NOK	546,245	05.12.00	
SPANISH - RC		5,000,000	ESP	47,225	18.08.00	SPANISH DEL. MEMBER OF FACT TEAM
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		750,000	SEK	140,775	11.08.00	
SWEDISH - RC		250,000	SEK	46,925	11.08.00	
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>				<b>4,477,220</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>128.6%</b>
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>CHF</b>	
<b>THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:</b>						