

INDIA/GUJARAT: EARTHQUAKE

31 January 2001

appeal no. 04/2001

situation report no. 3; special focus on Bhuj operational site

period covered: 30 - 31 January 2001

The Federation's operational site in Bhuj is being established, as the contingent of delegates and Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) personnel on the spot spare no effort to set up the infrastructure to meet the relief needs of hundreds of thousands of destitute earthquake survivors. A Red Cross 350 bed referral hospital, including a water and sanitation unit and a mobile clinic, form the nucleus of the site. The hospital is expected to be operational today (31 January) and will begin treating patients at the earliest opportunity.

Latest events

The devastating impact of the earthquake disaster in Gujarat, now considered as the worst in living memory in India, continues to unfold. Search and rescue operations are ongoing and teams in the field have succeeded in pulling a few more survivors from the rubble, five days after the occurrence of the quake. However, the focus is shifting to the provision of assistance to hundreds of thousands of homeless survivors who are left totally destitute.

The town of Bhuj presents a scene of chaos and there are widespread incidents of looting. Those who have the possibility of moving to stay with family elsewhere in the country have fled and parts of the city are deserted, particularly the old town which had a population of between 60,000 and 70,000 people. Small local organisations have rallied to provide what they can and are distributing limited amounts of food and non-food items. The entire town is dependent on soup kitchens set up by such organisations, as food is extremely scarce. The power supply has been resumed in certain parts of the town, although there is no water supply and the government continues to truck in water.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Since the launch of the preliminary appeal on 26 January, the Indian Red Cross Society/Federation have been working tirelessly to mount an operation in order to respond to the overwhelming relief and medical needs.

Some 64 Red Cross Red Crescent delegates, both Federation and bilateral staff, have now been deployed to the field: New Delhi, Ahmadabad and Bhuj and structures are being put into place. A logistics base is being set up in Ahmadabad and an operational site is being established in Bhuj. The Federation is the first international organisation to begin implementation of a major operation in Bhuj.

Operational site in Bhuj

The location of the operational site is some 1 km. outside the devastated town of Bhuj at the Lallan college and has been selected in coordination with the local authorities. The site is to be composed of the emergency response (ERU) referral hospital, including the water and sanitation component, together with office and accommodation facilities and rubhalls for warehousing. The IRCS Chairman is coordinating with the Minister of Health in Gujarat state, who is also Chairman of the Red Cross branch, with a view to supporting the field hospital with diesel, raw water, volunteers, vehicles and security. Site planning, internal coordination and site construction are the focus of the work at present. Delegates will now set up camp at the operational site.

Logistics

Yesterday, 30 January, flights reached Bhuj bringing in the German Red Cross water and sanitation team and equipment for the hospital water supply, the Finnish Red Cross component of the ERU hospital, a British Red Cross/DFID team and supplies, together with the mobile clinic and its staff provided by the Japanese Red Cross. All delegates in Bhuj (some 40 persons in total) were mobilised to assist with the off-loading of supplies. This posed considerable difficulties since off-loading has to be done manually and there is a lack of manpower. A further six flights are expected to land today, bringing in more personnel and supplies, stretching the capacity of the military airport which has limited facilities.

A further constraint is the lack of vehicles. It is difficult to obtain vehicles in Ahmadabad and the delegates are relying on one vehicle sent by the neighbouring district branch and the branch secretary's vehicle. However, there are a number of young volunteers who have motorcycles and three newly-purchased vehicles have been ordered from Ahmadabad. An additional four trucks are en route from the Indian Red Cross Society's headquarters in New Delhi.

To date, over 245,000 blankets, over 29 mt of high protein biscuits, more than 2,000 jerry cans, 12 rubhalls, 4,750 family tents, 36,500 tarpaulins, together with a forklift truck and food and medical supplies are in the logistics pipeline to Bhuj.

IRCS Volunteers

The Bhuj district branch has made every effort to mobilise volunteers to assist with transferring cargo from the airport to the selected site for the operational base; volunteers are scarce since a majority have been affected by the earthquake. Nevertheless, the Chairman of the Gujarat state branch succeeded in identifying 50 volunteers who worked until the late evening in order to move supplies to the Red Cross site. A team of 18 volunteers arrived this morning (31 January) from a small district branch in Rajasthan, after a 30 hour drive. In addition to volunteers, the IRCS health coordinator has reached Bhuj and two branch secretaries from Punjab and Rajasthan, together with ten ICRC headquarters staff are on their way to Gujarat.

Relief initiatives

A truck carrying non-food relief items has been received from Rajasthan. A first distribution of blankets and plastic sheeting provided by the Swiss Red Cross was carried out by the district branch staff on 30 January to areas on the periphery of Bhuj.

It is expected that the hospital will become operational today with the Finnish, Norwegian and German ERU teams in place; treatment of injured patients will begin as soon as possible.

Needs Assessments

A team of two delegates will begin to survey towns and villages outside Bhuj in order to assess the scale of damage, numbers of affected people and major needs. According to results of aerial surveys, the surrounding towns and villages appear to have suffered extensive damage and the majority have been reduced to rubble.

Outstanding needs

Appeal coverage stands at 31.4 per cent.

Adequate supplies of blankets have now been pledged. Donors are strongly encouraged to commit contributions in cash in order to facilitate local procurement.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details. A number of contributions and pledges are currently being processed.

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

India earthquake						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 04/2001						PLEDGES RECEIVED
						01/31/01
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				25,596,629		TOTAL COVERAGE 31.4%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
INCOME FEDERATION						ERU LOGISTIC
AUSTRIAN - RC		500,000	ATS	55,899	28.01.01	
CANADIAN - RC		100,000	CAD	108,250	29.01.01	
CANADIAN - GOVT		200,000	CAD	216,500	28.01.01	
DANISH - RC		185,000	DKK	38,110	29.01.01	
DANISH - GOVT		1,187,500	DKK	244,625	30.01.01	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				50,000	29.01.01	MATERIALS FOR SHELTER
KOREA, REPUBLIC - PRIVATE		10,000,000	WON	12,650	29.01.01	
MONACO - RC		400,000	FRF	93,800	28.01.01	
NETHERLANDS - RC		100,000	NLG	69,808	26.01.01	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT/RC		500,000	NLG	349,041	26.01.01	PURCHASE OR RELIEF ITEMS & TRANSPORTATION
NEW ZEALAND - RC		100,000	NZD	72,140	28.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - RC		250,000	NOK	46,773	29.01.01	
SWEDISH - GOVT		1,000,000	SEK	173,700	28.01.01	RELIEF ITEMS
SWISS - RC				80,000	29.01.01	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,611,296	CHF	6.3%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
BELGIUM - GOVT		600,000	BEF	22,881	30.01.01	3 WHO KITS, TRANSPORT/INSURANCE
FINNISH - RC		1,500,000	EUR	2,307,600	27.01.01	EQUIPMENT AND 15 PERSONS FOR 2 MONTHS
GERMAN - RC		1,620,000	DEM	1,274,292	27.01.01	WATER & SANITATION EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL
NORWEGIAN - RC		14,700,000	NOK	2,750,252	27.01.01	EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL
SWISS - GOVT/SDR				67,872	29.01.01	3'280 BLANKETS, 50 ROLLS PLASTIC SHEETINGS, TRANSPORT/INSURANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				6,422,897	CHF	25.1%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PIN514						