

INDIA/GUJARAT: EARTHQUAKE

2 February 2001

appeal no. 04/2001

situation report no. 5

period covered: 1 - 2 February 2001

There are reports of continued aftershocks in the earthquake zone which have created further panic. Assessment teams have carried out evaluations of the area within a 70 km. radius of Bhuj. There are fears of a potential spread of disease, given the deteriorating sanitation situation. The Finnish/Norwegian emergency field hospital has now opened in Bhuj, the water and sanitation component is also functioning, and a number of patients have been treated. The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) has strengthened its contingent of volunteers and is currently carrying out procurement of kitchen sets and clothing.

The context

At 08.50 hours on Friday, 26 January, a series of powerful earthquakes struck Gujarat state in western India, peaking at a massive 7.9 on the Richter scale, with tremors being felt across several states as well as in Delhi and Mumbai (Bombay) and in neighbouring Pakistan. The epicentre of the quake was 20 km north-east of the town of Bhuj (population of 150,000), the district headquarters of Gujarat's Kutch district while, at the same time, seriously affecting all the area within a radius of 100 km from the epicentre including Ahmadabad, the largest city in the state of Gujarat.

Infrastructure has been severely damaged, resulting in large scale collapse of buildings, mine cave-ins, train derailments and power failure, cutting off the water supply. A series of aftershocks has hit the region, with 19 of them registering over 5 on the Richter scale.

It has been reported that some 90 per cent of the buildings in Bhuj were severely damaged and 10 per cent have collapsed completely. A large number of survivors left the town immediately after the quake.

Latest events

The Federation assessment teams report from the interior of the district of Kutch state that reinforced presence and assistance from the government and the Indian Red Cross Society are urgently needed in the affected areas. While some reports from different sources continue to point out the lack of water, others emphasise the psychological trauma of the survivors or lack of shelter and transportation. There is a fear of epidemics, but only a small number of cases of diarrhoea have been reported to date.

The regular charter plane contracted by the Federation in Delhi made a first flight to Bhuj this morning (2 February) carrying supplies for the IRCS and international staff at the Red Cross compound, as well as office equipment. The flights (18 to 20 seats) take 3 hours and 40 minutes from Delhi to Bhuj.

National papers report renewed tremors measuring between 3 and 4.8 on the Richter scale which have caused further panic among the population.

In a letter forwarded to all Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers in the operational area, the Secretary General of the Indian Red Cross Society and the head of the regional delegation in India have pointed out the importance of good co-operation and expressed their strong advice that all Red Cross Red Crescent teams work jointly under the Indian Red Cross/Federation umbrella.

It will take some time to estimate the food security situation in the state which is of concern, particularly since the food insecurity atlas of India identifies Gujarat as the second most vulnerable state in India, after Bihar.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Logistics •

A number of flights from overseas carrying Red Cross Red Crescent relief material and personnel continue to land in Bhuj. There are four flights coming in between today and tomorrow (2 and 3 February) bringing relief supplies from the Red Cross Societies of Belgium, Denmark, Spain and the United Kingdom: tents, blankets, rubhalls, high-protein biscuits (BP5), a forklift and 2 vehicles. However, the airport in Bhuj has limited capacity. Therefore, essential supplies only will continue to be flown to Bhuj. The alternative is for flights to land in Ahmadabad, from where relief supplies are transported by road to Bhuj. Two Iranian Red Crescent flights have already landed in Ahmadabad, bringing 1,069 family tents bound for Bhuj, together with medical supplies for both the operational site in Bhuj and the hospital in Ahmadabad. A flight chartered by the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates with 150 tents, 3,000 blankets, shoes and clothing has also arrived at Ahmadabad. These supplies are being trucked to Bhuj.

Health/Water and Sanitation •

The Japanese Red Cross medical facility is located in the village of Sukhpur, 11 km outside Bhuj and within hours of becoming operational, the Japanese medical team treated 60 patients. A French Red Cross consignment of water and sanitation equipment to supply 50,000 people with drinking water is due to arrive in the coming days and it is planned to install this material at the site of the Belgian and Japanese field hospitals.

A 400 bed Danish government hospital has reached Bhuj. In co-ordination with the IRCS and Federation team leaders in the field, it has been agreed that the hospital will be set up in the town of Gandhidham (south-east of Bhuj and Anjar) where the needs are also great, but where little assistance has been provided to date.

At the Bhuj operational site, the Finnish/Norwegian emergency response referral hospital has opened and although work to set up the hospital continues, a handful of outpatients were treated in the first few hours. The German Red Cross water/sanitation team is operating, but currently faces problems with water supply. Presently, the facilities treat 20,000 litres per day in accordance with supplies of raw water provided. However, the unit has a production capacity of 120,000 litres per day. Once more tankers are available or an alternative solution for distribution of water is found, it is planned that the water and sanitation unit will also provide water to parts of the town of Bhuj.

Assessment teams report that the water supply in a 70 km. radius of Bhuj is adequate. However, the hygiene and sanitation situation is a growing concern, as is vector control.

Telecommunications •

The Federation telecommunications expert completed initial work to improve communications with Bhuj. Approval has been granted by the local authorities for the use of the VHF network for the Federation needs.

Indian Red Cross Society •

Another group of volunteers including doctors from the state of Tamil Nadu has been sent to Gujarat. An Indian Red Cross team left this morning (2 February) for the town of Rapar, 140 km north east of Bhuj, taking 8 doctors from Goa, 50 tents and 2,000 blankets with them.

The Secretary General of the IRCS has suggested that a further joint Indian Red Cross/Federation assessment team should head south, to the town of Jamnagar. Immediate deployment of two water purification units from the Red Cross warehouse in Calcutta has been requested by the National Society headquarters. At the operational site, the Indian Red Cross counterpart is negotiating better security conditions with the local authorities.

The Indian Red Cross Society has already begun procurement for the following non-food items:

Kitchen sets	60,000 pcs
Clothing for men (sweaters)	60,000 pcs
Clothing for women	60,000 pcs
Clothing for children	180,000 PCs

An office is being set up within the Indian Red Cross headquarters for delegates working from Delhi on the earthquake operation in order ensure close co-operation.

Regional Co-operation •

The Nepal Red Cross Society is the second regional member of the Movement, after the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, to extend assistance. A cash contribution directed through the Federation Secretariat is being followed by in-kind contributions to the Indian Red Cross Society.

Outstanding needs

Currently, shelter material, clothes and clean water are the priority. The need for 5,000 litre collapsible water tanks has today been met through a pledge from the Swedish Red Cross. Potential donors are encouraged to contribute cash in order to facilitate an appropriate Federation response in an environment in which the needs may change rapidly.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

In Bhuj, there is a growing presence of MSF, CARE, UNICEF and Mediciens du Monde (Greece) representatives.

There has been great media interest in Red Cross activities in the area. Interviews with all major news agencies, several international radio stations and newspapers have taken place. Several television crews reached the operational site to follow the opening of the emergency response hospital.

The national media have praised the armed forces for their efficient search and rescue operations, but tend to be critical of the government's response which is seen as slow.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details. The appeal coverage currently stands at 46.3 per cent.

The Ambassador of Kuwait made a contribution of USD 250,000 to the Indian Red Cross Society on 2 February.

Conclusion

Work continues around the clock to set up the ICRS/Federation operation in order to meet the overwhelming needs of the earthquake survivors. Shelter, clean water and clothes are the main priority at present. Substantial supplies of relief goods are reaching Ahmadabad and Bhuj and the logistics pipeline continues.

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>

India earthquake						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 04/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			02/02/01	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				25,596,629		TOTAL COVERAGE 46.3%
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 - GVT		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	
IRISH - GOVT		250,000	IEP	488,325	29.01.01	
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
SWEDISH GOVT/RC		16,000,000	SEK	2,779,200	30.01.01	RELIEF ITEMS
SWISS - RC				80,000	29.01.01	
SINGAPORE-RC				10,000	02.02.01	
SINGAPORE-RC				40,000	02.02.01	
SINGAPORE-RC				30,000	02.02.01	
IRISH - RC		50,000	IEP	97,665	02.02.01	
SWISS - OMS				2,500	02.02.01	
HONG KONG RC		15,000	KHD	31,796	02.02.01	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				5,090,782	CHF	19.9%

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
BELGIUM GOVT		8,800,000	BEF	335,588	31.01.01	40 MT BP-5 HIGH PROTEIN BISCUITS, INCL. TRANSPORTATION
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				6,758,485	CHF	26.4%
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						