

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

INDIA: MAHARASHTRA MONSOON FLOODS

3 August 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 8/2005) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. While the Federation is not specifically seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time, discussions are underway with the Indian Red Cross Society and Government authorities to agree an effective response plan and strategy involving joint assessments, water and sanitation assistance, and, depending on the evolving situation and needs, potentially an emergency appeal (or a request for assistance).

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In India: Indian Red Cross Society (Dr S P Agarwal, Secretary-General); email: spagarwalsg@indianredcross.org, phone: +91.11.2371.6441; fax: +91.11.2371.7454
- In India: Jim Dawe, acting Head of Delegation, New Delhi, email: ifrcin165@ifrc.org, phone: +91.11.2332.4203, fax: +91.11.2332.4235
- In Geneva: Jagan Chapagain, Senior Officer, Asia Pacific department; email: jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4316; fax: +41.22.733.0395 or Nelly Khrabrayal; email: nelly.khrabrava@ifrc.org; phone: +41.22.730.4306

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

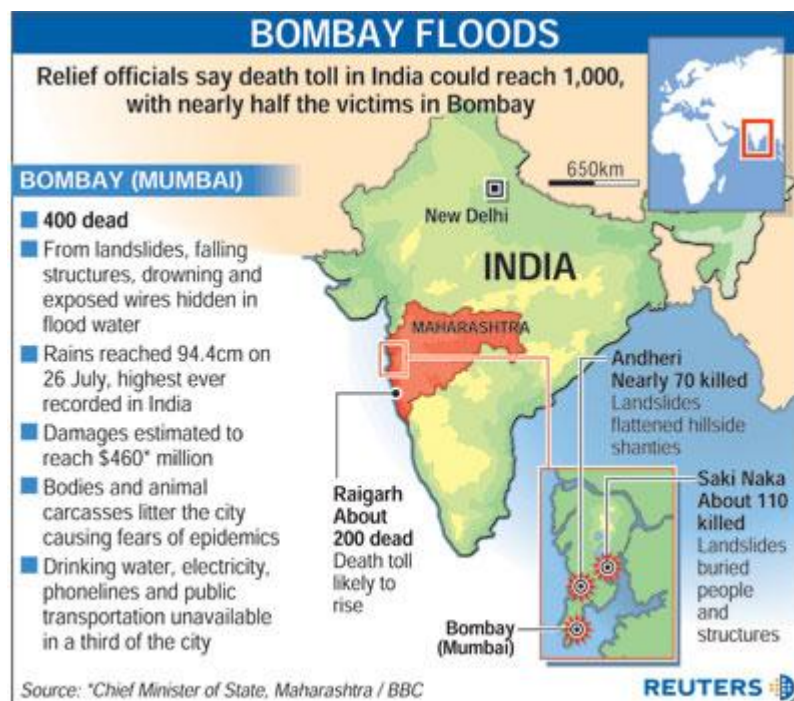
The Situation

Mumbai and surrounding districts in the west Indian state of Maharashtra were deluged with further heavy rain on early Tuesday. Officials issued fresh flood warnings and police advised residents to stay indoors. The forecast through to Wednesday was for "heavy to very heavy rainfall accompanied by strong gusty winds." It is now a week since the deluge began and the death toll is approaching 1000 people.

The Chief Minister of the state said flood alerts were issued in four different regions after reservoir levels touched "danger levels". He said water is being released from various dams in the state and people are being evacuated from low lying regions after receiving a further recent deluge of 20 centimetres (8 inches) of rainfall.

The authorities have evacuated 10,000 people from the banks of Krishna in Satara district (east of Mumbai).

About 800 medical teams consisting of 1 medical officer and 4 para-medical staff in each team have been sent to flood affected areas for providing medical assistance and taking prevention/control measures of any post-flood epidemic situation. 600 medical teams are operating in Mumbai and 200 in other districts.



More than 20 million people have been affected. The official death toll as stated by the Ministry of Home Affairs was 929, but at least a further 100 people were listed as missing. The impact on Mumbai which has suffered around half the deaths has been exacerbated by large areas of slum dwellings with poor infrastructure and the high population density of the city. Sixty per cent of the city's 23 million inhabitants occupy just 6 per cent of its total area – implying an average density of around 2,000 people per hectare (200,000 per square kilometre).¹

As questions are asked about why so many have died and why the city in particular was so severely affected, the Maharashtra state government has already made preliminary recommendations to central government.

Courtesy Reuters Alertnet www.alertnet.org

These are:

- Mumbai needs to replace its drainage system which is more than 100 years old.
- People living in huts in low lying areas are highly vulnerable in cases of excessive rains, floods and during cyclone warnings. It is necessary that these people are provided options for living in safer places by promoting social housing.²

But the city has not been the only area to suffer, with seven rural districts particularly hard hit and tens of thousand of people evacuated. Approximately 250 villages containing 10 million people around Kopergaon about 100 kilometres northeast of Mumbai have been affected.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (national disaster management division) states that 20 relief camps have been established, accommodating 20,000 people in Mumbai and affected districts.

There has been a major impact on agricultural production and industry with 225,000 hectares of crops in 15 districts affected.

The Indian Mumbai Chamber of Commerce estimates that the total damage thus far is 30 billion rupees (USD690 million). Insurance companies have quoted that they have received claims worth 10 billion rupees (USD230 million). Air and train services are still severely restricted.

Several national and international NGOs have mobilised to provide relief materials to affected people in Mumbai and surrounding districts. United Nations agencies are providing through UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) 300,000 packets of oral dehydration salts and one million chlorine tablets and 5,000 units of intravenous solution.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The following distributions were made on Tuesday in three areas of Mumbai by the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Maharashtra state branch;

Item	Kalina	Kurla	Kalyan	Total
Rice (kgs)	2,000	2,500	2,000	6,500 kg

¹ 2004 World Disasters Report

² Ministry of Home Affairs 'South West Monsoon' situation report 1 August 2005

Dal (kgs)	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000 kgs
Phenyl (boxes)	17 (6-10 bottles per box)	-	-	17 boxes
Biscuits (packets)	300	300	3,600	4,200 packets
Sheets	400	400	400	1200
Saris	400	400	-	800
Thelpa (local food – packets)	1,000	1,000	-	2,000 packets

Medicines and bleaching powder were also supplied to people in Kalina. The state branch is operating relief teams and a team of doctors in each of the three areas listed above.

Distributions within Mumbai and in other affected districts in the state have been ongoing for the past week as outlined in previous information bulletins. As outlined yesterday, 5000 family kits have been mobilised from IRCS national headquarters. Furthermore, NHQ has sent 10,000 water purification tablets.

A joint assessment team from the IRCS national headquarters and Federation country delegation has arrived in Mumbai. The assessment team also contains three national disaster response team members. The team will provide a report to be used as the base for possible further action as soon as possible. They will update on a daily basis.

As outlined in information bulletin 7, two water and sanitation units were dispatched from warehouses in Chennai and near Delhi and will have reached Mumbai by today. Each unit is capable of producing 10,000 litres of clean water a day. Two technicians from the Kolkata regional warehouse have also been sent to operate these units. The units were donated by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to the IRCS.

The Federation country delegation office has been liaising with several partner national societies as well as USAID, ECHO and Medecins Sans Frontiers about possible cooperation/coordination on relief efforts.

The IRCS disaster management centre in New Delhi is monitoring the situation. Information is being shared by the IRCS state branch and national headquarters as well with the Federation South Asia Regional Delegation.

[Click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)