



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

INDIA - Floods

Date: August, September, early October 1982 (FY 82)

Location: Flooding occurred in 12 states; most seriously affected were Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh in northeast India

No. Dead: 932

No. Injured: Not reported

No. Affected: 33.5 million people

Damage: Seven million hectares of standing crops were inundated. Hundreds of thousands of dwellings collapsed or suffered damage. Roads, bridges, irrigation projects, and public buildings were extensively damaged and power and communications lines disrupted. An undetermined number of cattle were lost.

The Disaster

While over half of India was in the grip of drought due to insufficient monsoon rainfall, other areas were experiencing flooding as rain-swollen rivers overflowed their banks; such simultaneously disasters were occurring in the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, and West Bengal. Widespread flooding was reported in those states in early September as heavy rains caused the Ganges and its tributaries and the Mahanadi and other river systems to breach embankments in several locations. Flood waters were beginning to recede in mid-September when renewed rains caused a further deterioration in Uttar Pradesh. By that time, too, a raging Brahmaputra and its tributaries had submerged parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

Bihar - About 652,000 hectares of land, including 238,000 hectares under standing kharif crops, were submerged throughout the state as almost all major rivers rose to dangerous levels. Five million people were affected by the floods; 22 died. Damage to crops was estimated at \$76.6 million, to housing (some 30,000 dwellings destroyed or damaged) at over \$2.8 million, and to public property at \$3.2 million.

INDIA - Floods

Madhya Pradesh - An estimated 75,000 people were affected by the flooding in the western Gangetic tributaries and in the Mahanadi and other rivers in the eastern part of the state. Morena and Bhind were the most seriously affected districts. Forty-one deaths were reported.

Orissa - Flooding occurred in eight of the state's thirteen districts as the Mahanadi and other river systems breached protective embankments. Several hundred villages in the coastal districts of Cuttack and Puri were marooned; many villages simply disappeared. The state capital of Bhubaneswar was cut off for several days. Over 30,000 houses collapsed or sustained damage, and three million hectares of agricultural land were submerged. A preliminary estimate put damage to roads, bridges, and irrigation projects alone at about \$8.5 million. In all, 10 million people were affected in a 90,000 sq. km area and 170 people died in what was described by some as the state's worst floods in living memory.

Uttar Pradesh - Severe flooding of the Ganges, Jamuna, Ghaghra, and other major rivers caused widespread destruction. A total of 15.5 million people in 24,193 villages in 42 districts were affected. The death toll reached 610. The number of dwellings which were destroyed or damaged was about 300,000. Damage to private and public property was estimated at \$600 million, including the loss of 3.5 million hectares of kharif crops. The districts of Janpur, Basti, Lucknow, Ballia, Gonda, Bahraich, and Deoria were among the worst affected.

West Bengal - Eighty villages in Murshidabad District were submerged with about 35,000 people affected.

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh - Flooding in the Brahmaputra and its tributaries inundated large areas of the two states. Landslides and breaches in roads severed communications and transport lines in several places. Nearly 86,000 people in 249 villages were affected in Assam where the districts of Sibsagar and Dibrugar were the hardest hit. In Arunachal Pradesh, Lohit District was the most seriously affected.

Action Taken by the Government of India (GOI), State Governments, and Local Voluntary Agencies

The GOI mobilized the armed services to assist local police and civil authorities in carrying out relief and rescue operations. The Army provided boats and personnel to aid evacuation efforts, and the Air Force airlifted emergency rations to people who were marooned. Having been apprised of the gravity of the situation in Orissa, the central government dispatched a disaster assessment team to the state to ascertain immediate and longer term relief requirements. In mid-September, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made an aerial survey of flood-stricken areas in Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, and Bihar.

The GOI released relief supplies from central stockpiles to the flood-ravaged states and provided rehabilitation assistance to the most seriously affected. Orissa received \$1.78 million for the purchase of food commodities, 10,000 tons of foodgrains, and a temporary cash advance

INDIA - Floods

of \$15.8 million for continued relief and rehabilitation. Uttar Pradesh was given a housing reconstruction grant of \$2.31 million, state relief funds of \$1.05 million, a temporary cash advance of \$10.5 million, and 10,000 tons of foodgrains. In addition, the GOI distributed the sum of \$119.47 million among flood-affected states as a loan to provide farmers with agricultural inputs during the autumn planting season.

With relief and rescue operations under the supervision of the state's chief minister, the Government of Bihar (GOB) pressed into service 5,280 boats to evacuate over 80,000 people from inundated villages. The GOB opened 551 relief centers, 517 health centers, and 405 cattle relief centers and distributed foodgrains and cooked food to flood victims.

The Government of Orissa (GOO) carried out round-the-clock relief operations and set up camps to shelter the displaced people. The GOO distributed a total of 1,486 MT of foodstuffs to flood victims during the month of September and requested additional funds from the State Revenue Board to continue the emergency feeding program.

A total of 957 flood posts and 526 relief centers had been set up by the Government of Uttar Pradesh (GOUP) as of September 17. Forty-two motor-boats, eight motor launches, and 7,334 country boats were used in rescue operations. The GOUP committed a total of \$120 million to relief and rehabilitation efforts between mid-August and September 30. This amount included the purchase of food for emergency distribution.

Approximately 890 families were temporarily housed in camps set up by the Government of Assam (GOA) as part of the state's relief effort.

State branches of the Indian Red Cross (IRC) distributed relief stocks which had been pre-positioned near the flood-prone areas. At the same time, replenishments were sent from national headquarters depots in Calcutta and Delhi. The supplies consisted of rice, milk powder, edible oil, roofing material, clothing, and other relief articles. As of September 13, the IRC contribution in cash and kind totaled about \$360,000. The Red Cross also set up mobile medical units and assisted in the cleaning and disinfecting of wells. To assist relief and rehabilitation efforts in Uttar Pradesh, the IRC provided a loan of \$1.36 million to the state government.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

The U.S. Mission began monitoring the worsening flood situation in northeastern India during the last two weeks of August. When it became apparent that the disaster was of proportions warranting USG assistance, the U.S. Charge d'Affaires, Marion V. Creekmore, made a disaster determination on September 1. A check in the amount of \$25,000 was donated to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund by U.S. Ambassador Harry G. Barnes, Jr. on September 10.....\$25,000

INDIA - Floods

Although the GOI did not appeal directly to the international community for disaster assistance, the central government agreed to a proposal by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for an emergency relief and short-term rehabilitation program for 2,100 families in the Banki subdivision of Cuttack District, Orissa. In response to a CRS request for funding, A.I.D.'s Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) executed a grant in the amount of \$200,300 to provide the following: clothing materials; basic utensils; locally purchased building materials for the reconstruction or repair of the 500 most seriously affected dwellings; food for work rations (locally procured rice to supplement Title II bulgur and oil) for families participating in the housing construction; and transportation and administrative costs of CRS.....\$200,300
Total in International Disaster Assistance (IDA) funds.....\$225,300

The USG shipped a total of 28,422 MT of P.L. 480 Title II commodities to India to replace those diverted for the flood disaster from regular PVO programs. A shipment of 11,857 MT of food to CARE in FY 82 consisted of bulgur (4,445 MT), corn (4,500 MT), CSM (1,012 MT), and wheat (1,900 MT) and was valued at \$2,288,000. Ocean freight charges were approximately \$1,185,700.....\$3,473,700
Total USG Assistance (FY 82).....\$3,699,000

A further shipment of 16,565 MT of P.L. 480 Title II foodstuffs in FY 83 to replace CRS stocks consisted of vegoil (765 MT) and wheat (15,800 MT). The shipment had a commodity value of \$3,307,000 and ocean freight charges of \$1,656,500.....\$4,963,500
Total USG Assistance (FY 83).....\$4,963,500
Grand Total USG Assistance.....\$8,662,500

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies*

American Baptists - gave \$10,000 in cash through Church World Service (CWS)

Cooperatives for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) - diverted P.L. 480 Title II stocks from regular programs to emergency feeding programs in Orissa, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. (See USG Assistance.)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - initiated emergency relief activities in Orissa at the request of the state government, diverting some 635 MT of P.L. 480 Title II bulgur and oil from regular programs on a non-replacement basis and committing \$7,653 of its own funds for the purchase and distribution of medical and other supplies. CRS also

INDIA - Floods

implemented an OFDA grant, funding a 90-day emergency and reconstruction program for 2,100 families in Banki subdivision of Orissa's Cuttack District. A food for work project using P.L. 480 Title II commodities and locally purchased rice was carried out in conjunction with the program. (See USG Assistance.)

Church World Service (CWS) - issued an appeal for \$100,000 in support of the appeal of the World Council of Churches/Commission on Interchurch Aid, Refugees, and World Service (WCC/CICARWS) for flood relief in India; forwarded \$5,000 to WCC/CICARWS from the Executive Director's Emergency Fund and \$962 from an earlier appeal. (Contributions channeled through CWS are credited to the individual donors.) The Church's Auxiliary for Social Action, CWS' counterpart in India, sent disaster survey teams to affected areas in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa. With its own funds and personnel along with emergency funds from the WCC, CASA assisted approximately 20,000 families in Orissa's Cuttack and Bhubaneswar Districts. Standard emergency kits (each containing one sari, one dhoti, one blanket, and one set of cooking utensils) were distributed to about 6,000 families; an inoculation program was carried out; and temporary shelters were provided to marooned people. CASA also distributed emergency kits in several towns in Uttar Pradesh and in Bhind and Morena Districts in Madhya Pradesh.

The Episcopal Church in the U.S. - donated \$5,000 in cash through CWS.

UCBWM - forwarded \$4,000 in cash directly to CASA.

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) - contributed \$25,000 in cash to CASA.

World Vision International - gave \$100,000 in cash for the local purchase, transport, and distribution of garments and blankets.

TOTAL \$157,615

Assistance Provided by International Community*

International Organizations

League of Red Cross Societies (LORCS)** - reported on the Indian Red Cross's need for cash and specific in-kind contributions (milk powder, rice, and edible oil) to replenish stocks and maintain services.

UNICEF - provided \$250,000 worth of plastic sheeting material for temporary shelters.

INDIA - Floods

World Council of Churches (WCC) - appealed for \$400,000 to support the relief work of the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action in India; advanced \$100,000 from the standing flood appeal.

Governments

Australia - gave \$19,550 in cash to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

Denmark - donated \$104,651 in cash for flood victims in Orissa.

United Kingdom - contributed \$20,683 in cash to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

Voluntary Agencies

Danish Church Aid - provided \$69,767 in cash and 35 tons of polyethylene rolls, value not reported.

Das Diakonishes Werk (DDW) (Germany, Federal Republic) - airlifted 12 tons of baby food, 50 tents supplied by DDW and 35 tons of plastic rolls supplied by Danish Church Aid for flood victims in Orissa; value not reported.

Norway Red Cross - donated \$41,792 to the Indian Red Cross.

Norwegian Church Aid - airlifted 31 tons of food and 6.2 tons of polyethylene rolls (for shelter); value not reported.

Oxfam (U.K.) - contributed \$17,241 in cash for relief work in Orissa.

TOTAL \$623,684

* Please note: the listings of assistance provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies and the International Community are compiled from reports submitted voluntarily to OFDA. It is not always possible to verify the accuracy of these reports, nor the dollar value of in-kind contributions. As a result, the total dollar values indicated in these sections should be taken as representative figures.

** LORCS had not launched an official appeal as of September 13. Reports on gifts to the League for India floods (spontaneous or in response to a later appeal) are unavailable as of this writing (March 1983).