



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

INDIA - Cyclone

Date: October 3, 1983

Location: 12 districts of Andhra Pradesh

No. Dead: At least 100

No. Injured: Not reported

No. Affected: At least 700,000

Damage: Over 140,000 dwellings and 1,500 irrigation tanks as well as some 300,000 hectares of standing crops were destroyed or damaged; communications and air/ground transportation links were severely disrupted. According to one estimate, the value of lost crops (mostly rice paddy and sugar cane) was about \$196 million. State officials assessed total damages at approximately \$510 million.

The Disaster

The first cyclonic storm of the 1983 season in the Bay of Bengal crossed the northern coast of Andhra Pradesh between Bheemunipatnam and Vishakhapatnam on October 3. Twelve of the state's 23 districts were affected as heavy rains accompanying the storm caused severe flooding in the Godavari and other rivers. About 15,000 people in 18 villages on the banks of the Yeleru River in East Godavari District were marooned by the rising waters. Another 4,000 people were evacuated from low-lying areas in Vishakhapatnam.

The cyclone and flooding left at least 100 persons dead and thousands of others homeless. Major road and railway lines were severed, including the vital rail link between Vijayawada and Vishakhapatnam. Agricultural losses were especially heavy since the storm occurred only one month before the start of the rice harvest season. Approximately 4,000 hectares of choice farmland in West Godavari District were rendered useless because of sand accumulation. Irrigation canals were also clogged with sand and debris.

The cyclone was the second calamity to hit Andhra Pradesh in a matter of months, as severe monsoon flooding in August had resulted in at least 100 deaths and extensive crop and property damage.

Action Taken by the Government of India (GOI) and the Government of Andhra Pradesh (GOAP)

The GOAP mobilized civil administrative and medical personnel to conduct relief and rehabilitation activities and to vaccinate people at risk. At the request of the state government, the Indian Defense Services assisted in the rescue operation. Naval helicopters dropped approximately 10,000 food packets to marooned villages in West Godavari District and low-lying areas of Vishakhapatnam during the emergency phase.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited the stricken area on October 11. She announced immediate central government assistance of \$9.8 million and the release of \$147,000 from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund to the families of the dead and injured. As of November 21, the GOI had released the \$9.8 million promised in relief and rehabilitation assistance, and the GOAP had made some \$29.4 million available. These funds were used primarily to provide food, clothing, and lump sum payments to flood victims whose homes and land had been destroyed or damaged.

The GOAP announced subsidies for land reclamation, reduced rates for seeds, and low interest loans for affected farmers. District level cyclone relief advisory committees were formed to distribute funds to repair local water storage tanks and water pumps as well as to provide other services.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government

U.S. Ambassador Harry Barnes determined on October 24 that a disaster situation warranting USG assistance existed in Andhra Pradesh. He exercised his disaster assistance authority to make use of USG resources available in India and coordinate them with relief activities of GOI agencies and U.S. voluntary organizations. He also donated \$25,000 to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. The USAID Mission approved a request from Catholic Relief Services to make 63 MT of P.L. 480 Title II wheat available on a non-replacement basis. This was to be used for emergency distribution to 14,000 cyclone/flood victims in Vijayawada and Eluru.

TOTAL \$25,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

CRS - distributed 63 MT of P.L. 480 Title II commodities from its regular stocks for emergency feeding (see USG Assistance).

Assistance Provided by the International Community

None reported.