



DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

BANGLADESH - Storm FY 1989

Date: April 26, 1989	
Location: Manikanj, Dhaka, and Tangail districts	
No. Dead: 800 to 1,500	
No. Affected: Over 100,000 homeless; 2,000 injured	
Summary of Assistance:	
U.S. Government	\$0
U.S. Voluntary Agencies	None reported
International Community	\$85,000
TOTAL	\$85,000

Action Taken by the Government of Bangladesh (BDG) and Non-Governmental Organizations

The BDG called out military medical units to assist local authorities in search and rescue operations. The injured were treated in local hospitals or transported to medical centers in Dhaka. The External Resources Division of the Ministry of Planning confirmed on April 30 that a disaster existed in the stricken area and that external assistance was desired.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS) was quickly on the scene with a field hospital to render first aid and provide medical treatment to the injured. The BRCS also distributed cooked food to 8,000 victims, rice to 3,500 families, other food from emergency stocks to 4,000 victims, clothing to 5,300 people, and roofing material to 1,800 families.

The Disaster

April is the month when violent thunderstorms are likely to strike Bangladesh. These "nor'westers" produce high winds and hail and frequently spawn tornadoes. On April 26, 1989, tornadoes accompanying such a storm cut a savage swath through five *upazilas* in Manikanj, Dhaka, and Tangail districts, affecting 50 villages in 13 unions.

The strong winds left a tangled debris from thousands of flattened mud and straw houses and downed trees and power lines. Damage to standing crops and livestock was also extensive. The violent storms passing through the country were blamed additionally for the sinking of 300 small boats in the Yamuna River near Shaturia and for the capsizing of a ferryboat near Cox's Bazar with the loss of 200 lives.

The death toll from the twisters was estimated at between 800 and 1,500; some 2,000 people were injured, and at least 100,000 were left homeless. The storm ended a drought of two months, however, allowing seasonal agricultural activities to return to normal.

Assistance Provided by the U.S. Government

Based on a USAID/Dhaka damage assessment, U.S. Ambassador Willard A. DePree made a disaster declaration on May 1, authorizing the release of on-hand disaster relief commodities to CARE/Bangladesh for distribution. The supplies, which had been provided by OFDA after the 1988 flood and stockpiled in Dhaka, consisted of 100 MT of wheat, 40 tents, and 12,500 water purification tablets. (Note: The value of these commodities was reported in the *FY 1988 Annual Report, BANGLADESH-Floods* case report.)

TOTAL \$0

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

CARE - conducted a field assessment and distributed relief items provided by the U.S. Government.

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Pakistan - sent a plane with relief supplies.

United Kingdom - provided \$85,000 worth of assistance.

TOTAL \$85,000