

# Alert

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## India

# Flooding in North-Eastern State of Assam, India

Bangkok, 12 July 2017

### 1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

There have been heavy torrential rains since 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 in the North-Eastern state of Assam in India. The rains have continued and the floods have intensified in the last 24 hours. 23 districts of Assam have been affected during this current phase of floods. A population of 1,518,3651 have been badly affected by current floods and are struggling with the worsening flood situation in the state.

According to a report by the Assam Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), lately, 7 people were killed in various flood-related incidents in Goalpara, Jorhat and Lakhimpur districts. In Lakhimpur, 3 people were killed by drowning and landslides. With this, the total number of deaths caused by this flood has gone up to 33. Large scale destruction of infrastructure, cropland and wildlife has been reported from different areas. 2,498 villages with more than 140,837 hectares of standing crops have been badly affected due to floods. The flood water has caused widespread destruction in the world-famous Kaziranga National Park, where more than 560 animals, including 14 rhinos, were killed. Road services have been affected at 2,847 places while railway tracks, damaged by landslides in the Lumding-Badarpur Railway division, were yet to be restored. The situation is likely to worsen in coming days as the water level in major rivers is continually rising above the danger level and more rainfall has been predicted by the Meteorological Department of India.

### 2. Why is an ACT response needed?

Over 48,483<sup>2</sup> people affected by floods are living in 208 relief camps. The affected population depends on government assistance for survival. They are in dire need of relief assistance such as dry food, drinking water, shelter and sanitation materials. The government has initiated some relief programs but these remain inadequate to meet the required needs particularly in the remote and inaccessible villages.

### 3. National and international response

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams are involved with rescue and relief operation with the revenue department of the state government. More than 100,000 people have been rescued. 150 medical teams are deployed to provide medical aid while 30 camps have set up for cattle. The Prime Minister of India spoke to the Chief Minister on the flood situation in Assam and has assured support. The State Government has set up 208 relief camps where thousands of people are taking shelter during this current flood. In those relief camps, state government is providing some food, drinking water and medical care.

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA)

<sup>2</sup>Source: ASDMA

#### 4. ACT Alliance response

ACT Alliance India Forum Members such as United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India (UELCI), Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT) and Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) along with their partners have their presences in the flood affected areas and are now assessing the flood situation very closely. The UELCI member church Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church (NELC), Bongaigon Diocese has presence in the flood affected areas and requested UELCI to extend support with relief assistance. LWSIT and CASA being members of Inter-Agency Group, Assam and Sphere India at national level would like to respond with immediate emergency needs for which it is collecting the flood related information. As the flood situation impact continues and is making difficult the survival of the poorer sections of the people in Assam, the ACT India Forum members will come up with an ACT Rapid Response Fund (RRF) request to serve the most vulnerable people in the flood affected areas.

#### 5. Planned activities

UELCI, LWSIT and CASA, all national members of ACT, are planning to respond to the flood situation in Assam through the ACT RRF mechanism. As of now, assessments are ongoing and the primary emerging needs are food, clothing, non-food items and temporary shelter materials which will be of immense help for the flood affected families in Assam.

#### 6. Constraints

Since roads and bridges have been cut-off due to the rising of flood water at several places, transportation of relief materials to the flood affected villages would be the primary challenge for relief distribution. The situation may further be aggravated if rains continue in coming days and if there is an increase of flood water in the major rivers overflowed. Therefore, it is also assumed that this may cause breaches of weak river embankments and cause damage to national and state highways in Assam and make access further challenging.

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