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Survivors must not be forgotten

Warning that the humanitarian crisis in South Asia could worsen, the United Nations and leading relief agencies are calling for increased resources and attention to the plight of the millions in need of assistance after this summer's devastating floods.

"Overall, the floods which have struck with devastating effect in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan have now killed more than 4,000 people, and disrupted the lives of more than 66 million - a number larger than the population of France," according to a joint statement issued in Geneva by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and international organizations CARE, World Vision, Save the Children, Oxfam and Mercy Corps.

A new wave of floods in the past few weeks has submerged vast areas that were just beginning to recover from earlier flooding, stranding another 100,000 people in Bangladesh and leaving millions homeless in India.

In addition to the loss of life, the severe weather that occurred during this year's monsoon season has led to the death of livestock and the destruction of agricultural lands and livelihoods. Stagnant flood water, food shortages and the lack of drinking water are contributing to the outbreak of disease.

While the organizations have been carrying out relief efforts over the past several months, they stressed the need for greater resources in order to provide the assistance planned. "A more forceful international response is necessary to prevent an even greater catastrophe that will have debilitating social consequences for the affected population."

UN Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes emphasized that the international aid community has been a "steadfast partner" in the efforts of the affected Governments to assist their people.

"We need to reinforce those efforts, and to look to the protracted process of recovery for those affected this year and above all to improve disaster risk reduction and preparedness for those who will be affected in the years to come," he said.

(Posted on 4th October)

Communities still struggling with monsoon aftermath

Three months after one of the worst monsoon seasons in memory, millions of people across South Asia continue to struggle with the aftermath of flooding and landslides. The United Nation's children's fund UNICEF says humanitarian and aid agencies are still assisting with health needs in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Recently, Gillian Mellisop, UNICEF's country representative in Nepal talked with Sen Lam, presenter of Radio Australia about disaster related issues of Nepal. Here are the excerpts :

MELLSOP: Because the geology is very fragile, these torrential monsoon rains have caused landslides in the hilly parts of the country, and then severe flooding

Loss of lives this monsoon

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Baglung | 29 |
| Banke | 28 |
| Gulmi | 19 |
| Rautahat | 12 |
| Bajura | 11 |
| Bardia | 10 |
| Darchula | 9 |
| Ramechhap | 9 |
| Sindhuli | 8 |
| Baitadi | 8 |
| Dang | 8 |
| Pyuthan | 7 |
| Salyan | 7 |
| Mahottari | 7 |
| Siraha | 7 |
| Kailali | 6 |
| Kaski | 6 |
| Makwanpur | 6 |
| Udayapur | 5 |
| Jajarkot | 5 |
| Kalikot | 5 |
| Arghakhachi | 5 |
| Saptari | 5 |
| Jumla | 4 |
| Surkhet | 4 |
| Jhapa | 4 |
| Chitwan | 4 |
| Morang | 4 |
| Sunsari | 4 |
| Nawalparasi | 3 |
| Rukum | 3 |
| Dhanusha | 3 |
| Khotang | 2 |
| Bhojpur | 2 |
| Panchthar | 2 |
| Sarlahi | 2 |
| Parsa | 2 |
| Palpa | 2 |
| Bara | 2 |
| Dhading | 2 |
| Rupendehi | 2 |
| Bajhang | 1 |
| Tanahun | 1 |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Sindhupalchowk | 1 |
| Lalitpur | 1 |
| Dadeldhura | 1 |
| Kavre | 1 |
| Mustang | 1 |
| Myagdi | 1 |

(As of 4th October, 2007)

Major Displacements

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| Saptari | 10000 family |
| Siraha | 6000 family |
| Mahottari | 3700 family |
| Bardiya | 2500 family |
| Dhanusha | 2050 family |
| Parsa | 2000 family |
| Rupendehi | 2000 family |
| Sunsari | 1000 family |
| Banke | 750 family |

Total displacement: 48000 family

Total affected population:

Around 4 lakh 72 thousand (as of 4th October, 2007)

Sources : NRCS, Media reports/MCN

Disaster Related Reports

[Situation Report NRCS, 10th Sep](#)

[NRCS Bulletin 21st Aug, 2007](#)

[WHO SITREP \(5-19th Aug, 2007\)](#)

[OCHA Situation Report, 13th Aug](#)

[WHO SITREP \(4-12 Aug, 2007\)](#)

[Sink or Swim \(Oxfam Int\)](#)

[DM Report \(MCN\) 2006](#)

[NRCS Bulletin 29th July, 2007](#)

[Baglung Landslides Report, 2007](#)

[Flood scenario of Saptari, 2007](#)

[Report on relief, Mahottari, 2007](#)

Snapshots



Schoolchildren use a bamboo bridge to cross floodwater at the village of Gopongoi in Assam. (Photo: Prashant Panjiar)

in the southern plains which border onto India. So you get the mix of the landslides, which unfortunately have killed many people and caused a lot of damage to infrastructure and roads and then the flooding in the south, which has destroyed many, many homes and schools and livelihoods, because of the sand casting and the mud that's left behind in the fields and a lot of paddies will not be able to be harvested. So we've got real poverty issues as a result of these drastic floods in Nepal this year.

LAM: One of the challenges after the flooding is getting children to return to school. What are some of the problems there?

MELLSOP: Well, what happens, particularly in Nepal, is that many of the houses and the schools are just built of mud and thatch and so they either get carried away with the strong floodwaters or once the waters are stagnant and remaining, basically the mud just collapses. We have a lot of early childhood development centres and schools that need to be rebuilt and so for those children, they're actually having to share classrooms with others, or have makeshift classrooms outside under trees. So what UNICEF has been able to assist with is school kits, so that a classroom can be set up again with blackboards and textbooks and chalk, so the teacher can actually start teaching. And then along with Save the Children Fund and Plan, we've been able to give children kits to go back to school. Because a lot of the children where their houses have been destroyed, they have lost their uniforms, they've lost their stationery, their pens, we need to assist them in getting back to a routine and hopefully helping them get over the trauma of having lost their homes and having to flee often in the middle of the night as the floodwaters came through.

LAM: And, tell us more about the child protection teams. Who are they and what do they do?

MELLSOP: We mainly have focused on getting children back to school, but in terms of child protection, another issue that we're dealing with currently is that we are regrettably seeing ongoing violence between ethnic communities in the south of Nepal, where we have a lot of displaced families. We think about 5,000 people are displaced. And we are currently providing psycho-social support for some of those children that have experienced really severe trauma, witnessing violence within their communities and also having to flee. A lot of houses have been burnt and destroyed. So what we do is we work very closely with an NGO that is particularly well versed in providing psycho-social support for children and they are currently doing an assessment with children in the displaced camps and finding those children that have been particularly traumatised and working with them with some emergency counselling.

LAM: And of course during periods of upheaval, children and women are vulnerable. Do you find that local communities are also helping themselves?

MELLSOP: Yes, I think what we've found in Nepal during both this very bad flooding season and also this recent spate of violence is that surrounding communities have been very, very helpful, taking families in. There have been a lot of families that were affected by the recent violence who have actually moved in with neighbours, moved in with extended families. Some of them have gone down to India, but they are now returning. And in terms of the flooding, again I was out in the west and there was one community which had been very badly affected, because they live right on the edge of the river, where they're very poor. They had been affected by the floods last year and this year, but they had been welcomed into a community back from the river and we had distributed tarpaulins, cooking utensils, water purification and buckets, and hygiene kits to them. And they were able to share the water supply and establish a displaced encampment near a village. And they had been assisted by those villages. So I think the communities have been very supportive of the flood-affected people.

Our Words

The monsoon rage is not over yet. Incidents of flood and landslides are still taking lives, dislodging people and rendering thousands into terrible ordeal. Despite of several appeals by national and international humanitarian organizations, relief supply activities are being obstructed. Intermittent protests and strikes by dissident groups throughout the country and political, ethnic interest induced unrest in Terai, are continually appeared to be the main stumbling blocks for the relief activities.

Thus, the disaster response of Nepal sound serious as the victims are deprived of basic requirements and delay in rescue operations. For instance, five hundred displaced flood victims of Kailali district are downcast with governmental and non governmental agencies as they are being deprived of water (Disaster Watch- 30th August report). Emergency relief materials are inadequate comparing with multitude of disaster victims in several districts, as media reports. The UN World Health Organization (WHO) has also stressed on increasing risk of diarrhoeal and vector borne diseases after flood situation.

The discrepancy between flood and landslides victims in terms of response and recovery can be easily noticed. Apparently, landslides areas are geographical far and remote. Moreover, the institutional strength of related organizations such as NRCS in those districts are not well enough to furnish adequate support. Thus, the landslides victims are being overlooked there. The scourge of disaster is not less for them, instead its tougher due to the irrecoverable property demolition. The magnitude of the affected population from landslide may not be as that of flood but victimized are utterly ravaged.

Nepal is on the eve of festive season. Teej, festival of Nepalese women has already knocked the

(Posted on 3rd October)

ICIMOD workshop on rainfall forecasting underway

With the objective to improve the estimation of rainfall in this region for purposes of improved forecasting of floods and monitoring of droughts using advanced remote sensing tools, the technical experts of national hydrological and meteorological services in Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan have begun a five-day workshop on the 'Application of Satellite Rainfall Estimation in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region'.

The workshop that began in the capital on Monday will run for five days. According to the organizer, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), technical experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and US Geological Survey (USGS) are being brought in as key resource persons for the workshop.

The workshop is a part of a project on Application of Satellite Rainfall Estimation in the HKH region, which aims to develop a satellite rainfall estimate (SRE) model specifically for the Himalayan region by refining a system developed by NOAA Climate Prediction Centre, and to test a stream-flow model developed by USGS to stem the effects of chronic flooding in the Greater Himalayan region.

The five-day workshop aims to review and discuss work on SRE, particularly the validation of rainfall estimates, testing of the USGS stream-flow model in pilot catchments, further strengthen the SRE capability of member countries and transfer the NOAA/USGS technology to the partners.

This workshop will also review the work done so far, provide inputs for finalising the SRE country reports, and plan for the Phase II of the Project. The organizers expressed hope that improved rainfall estimates will further enable reliable and timely flood forecasts and warning and contribute to minimising loss of life and property in the region.

(Posted on 3rd October)

Incessant rain claims four lives

Four persons have died in Banke, Bardia and Nawalparasi districts due to the continuous rainfall. People are starting to suffer again from flooding and landslides as incessant rainfall once more lashed several parts of the country.

Body of 40-year-old Kailash Chaudhari of Sanoshree-5 in Bardiya, who was swept away by the flood was found Saturday. In Banke, flood in Rapti River swept away Bararu Tharu, 62 of Phattepur at 7 pm on Friday. Tharu's body was found at Sindhiyaghat. A body Parsuram Karki, 56, of Manikapur VDC-8 was also found in a stream at Ranjha of Manikapur on Friday, DSP at Banke District Police Office Krishna Hari Sharma said. People of Holiya VDC who were displaced due to the flood in Rapti River were taking shelter by setting up camps.

In Nawalparasi, Maya Mahato, 24, of Kolhuwa VDC-7 drowned in the flooded Ulti River, Saturday. According to police, Mahato was returning from a nearby forest after collecting fodder when she was swept away by the river. She died shortly after some fishermen rescued her from the river.

(Posted on 30th September)

2500 households at risk in Dhading

door, which will be followed by Dashain and Tihar. On one hand, disaster victims are starving for two square meal but on other hand rest are making merry on festivals. Disaster victims will be not in festive mood this year, but at least they should be ensured on having basic requirements: appropriate food, safe drinking water and shelter before they will be transferred into resilience mode.

Highlights

Flood hit five thousand family of Mahottari district will soon get food aid worth NRs 20 million from World Food Program. Food aid will be provided for severely ravaged 5758 family which will carry them for one month. (23rd Sep)

Transport service in Jhaukhel VDC-3 of the Changunarayan road section in Sallaghari of Bhaktapur has been closed since 15 days after landslide swept away the road. Following the halt in transport service locals of Changunarayan, Pikhel, Jhaukhel, Duwakot are forced to walk. (22nd Sep)

Advertising Association of Nepal (AAN) and Nepal Telecom (NTC) has extended the time for SMS donation for flood victims to October 17. NTC customers have to SMS 1410 to donate Rs 10 and 1450 to donate Rs 50. In the past one month 37,145 SMS were sent for Rs 10 and 10,262 SMS for Rs 50. (18th Sep)

In a bid to support disaster victims of Nepal, students of Budanilkantha School have organized an art exhibition at Nafa Gallery Kathmandu. Two hundred pictures are being exhibited with the price range NRs 200 to NRS 5000. (16th Sep)

A policeman at the Kirne Post, Surke Majhi, has gone missing in the Tamakoshi river of Sindhupalchowk district. Majhi had gone to the river to take bath at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, but never returned, DSP Surendra Mainali said. (12th Sep)

Around 2,500 households in Mahadevsthan VDC here are under threat of being swept away by the Khani river. The river flows through Wards 2 and 3 of the VDC. A landslide on the river banks in Hattigoda has led to the formation of a lake in the VDC. Incessant rainfall in the area has made matters worse.

Heavy rains triggered a landslide Friday at Tencherangdando, altering the course of the river and creating a vast lake around the VDC, locals said. The police administration has alerted locals of the danger and urged them to shift to safer places. A local, Ravindra Chepang, said that if the lake bursts its banks, Wards 2, 4, 5 and 7 of Mahadevsthan VDC, Wards 1, 2 and 5 of Benighat VDC and Wards 2, 4 and 8 of Gajuri VDC would be affected.

(Posted on 30th September)

Rainfall affects several districts

Torrential rainfall over last three days has inundated and affected various parts of the country. More than 500 houses of Rampurkhadaina and Bhujahawa VDCs of Nawalparasi district are affected by inundation caused by incessant rain from Friday night. Former Chairman of Rampurkhadaina VDC, Suvan Ali said the inundation was caused by flood in Jharahi and Dhanewa rivers. He added that families affected by the flood took shelters in neighboring villages. He said this is the fourth time this year that these villages have been swamped.

Similarly, Rupalaiya, Pratapur, Guthi Suryapura and Somani VDCs have turned into islands as flood waters from the Narayani encircled them. Locals in Khadauna, Nawadihawa and Madhawaliya areas of Rampur Khadauna VDC are already looking for temporary refuge. According to locals in Bhujwaha VDC, villages were completely swamped with flood water from the Little Gandak canal and the Indian-built Laxmanpur dam meandering in.

Meanwhile, farmers have informed that paddy crops of more than one dozen VDCs, situated in southern part of the Nawalparasi district, were affected by the inundation.

Life has been affected in Bharatpur municipality due to the rain and water level in Narayani River has risen. Rain inundated some wards of Jagatpur VDC. People living on the banks of Narayani river are edgy, fearing flood.

Meanwhile in Saptari, villages have once again become swamped, as the Khado River started swelling over the last two days. Sakarpura, Rampura Malhaniya, Koilado, Barsain and other VDCs in the district are frequently flooded by the river.

Floods started impacting the villages after torrential rain wrecked the Bhim Dam in Bishhariya area in mid-July. Locals of Portaha, Bhardaha, Mainakaderi and Dhiwan villages are also suffering as flood water meandered in through a wrecked dam at Portaha VDC-8. Flood victims have expressed anger at government apathy, accusing the latter of not taking measures to curb the floods that have been troubling them for the last two months.

In Myagdi, landslides triggered by unceasing rainfall have disrupted transport and also cut off local trails over the last two days. Dozens of landslides have occurred along the Farse and Beni-Galeshwor road sections, as well as on the Chutreni, Faparkhet, Dhadkharka and Beni-Jomsom trails. Vehicles remain stranded in Nangliwang of Parbat district.

(Posted on 30th September)

Landslide buries six houses, 30 families displaced

Tribhuvan Highway, one of the major roads linking capital with other parts of the country had damaged at the Naubise-Simbhanjyang stretch due to the landslide since Thursday. (7th Sep)

The Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers has received Rs. 500,000 from Employees' Provident Fund, for the victims of disaster. (6th Sep)

Landslides occurred at Laghuwa of Tansen-Tamghas road section has disrupted vehicular movement since Tuesday. Passengers bound for Gulmi are left stranded. (5th Sep)

74-year-old Bhim Bahadur Pakhrin of Padampokhari VDC drowned in the flooded Rapti river, Monday. The elderly man was swept away by the current while trying to cross the river. (4th Sep)

In Banke district 2,500 flood-hit locals of Holiya VDC have started coming down with many diseases as they have not been provided any relief material as yet. Locals complained that the foodstuff provided by the Red Cross Society was also inadequate. (4th Sep)

As a post flood consequence, fever patients are crammed in district hospital of Syangja. At least 60 patients of fever used to come for the checkup daily. (3rd Sep)

A landslide triggered by three days of heavy rainfall has blocked the Kusma-Baglung section of Pokhara. (1st Sep)

The cases of encephalitis and meningitis viral fever are rapid in Nepalgunj aftermath of flood and inundation. Till now four persons were died of encephalitis and more than 30 were affected. (30th Aug)

As a consequence of flood triggered circumstances, at least 60 persons are affected from viral influenza in Narayan Khola VDC-3 of Sarlahi district. (30th Aug)

Six houses of Phosreko Kholisa in Nagliwang VDC-9 of Parbat district in the border with Baglung have been buried in the landslide on Friday afternoon because of incessant rains for three days, in which 30 families have been displaced.

The landslide has affected the Beni-Maldhunga road. But there was no human loss as the landslide occurred in the day time. The houses of Jit Bahadur GC, Prabin Subedi and Dhruba KC have been buried. The families are now living in Dhodeni of Baglung. Other 30 houses are in the risk of landslide.

As the landslide occurred in the day time we survived, said Jitbahadur GC. The landslide has caused largest loss to Prabin Subedi. His four houses are buried and ten ropanis of land has been destroyed. His mental condition has been disturbed because of the loss of paddy when it was nearing harvest time. "I spent Rs. 200,000, but all went on waste, neither the paddy was protected", he said.

A large forest is on the verge of destruction and an irrigation canal for 800 ropanis of land has also been destroyed from the landslide. It also caused damage to the suspension bridge linking Parbat and Dhodeni of Myagdi.

(Posted on 30th September)

Rain expected till first week of October

The Department of Hydrology and Meteorology has forecast rain to occur till the end of the first week of October due to the influence of the low pressure area of the monsoon winds. The low pressure area of the monsoon wind will have influence especially from the Central region up to Far-western region.

According to the Department, heavy rainfall is occurring presently in Nepalgunj, Pokhara, Bhairahawa, among other places. It said that although the weather has appeared to have gradually improved, rain is still expected to occur for nearly a week. The Department has forecast rain to occur in Kathmandu tonight and tomorrow also.

(Posted on 30th September)

Farmers incur loss of 100 million in Siraha

The incessant rains and floods from the second week of July in the central Terai which is the granary of the country, has destroyed paddy and vegetable crops worth Rs. 100 million in Siraha district alone.

At a time when economic development is hampered because of frequent bandhs and strikes, 75 percent farmers are directly hit when the rains and floods caused losses to paddy and vegetable crops, said the victim farmers.

The District Agriculture Development Office Siraha said 6,336 bighas of paddy was submerged in water and 541 bighas was buried by sands and paddy in 116 bighas was swept away. Crop Conservation Officer Ram Prakash Singh said farmers incurred losses of Rs. 99,869,000 from their crops. Farmers had to repeat the plantation in 3,075 bighas of land and 3,618 bighas remained barren because of various reasons.

The replantation has raised hope and three metric tonnes of paddy per hectare is expected, said Agriculture Publicity Officer Ramesh Prasad. Flood-hit farmers demand compensation from the government and subsidies in fertilizers.

(Posted on 30th September)

Seven thousand residents of Kusma, district headquarter of Parwat, are suffering from water scarcity as the pipe line of main supply center was swept away by the landslide. (25th Aug)

The Thai government has extended an assistance of Rs 3.9 million for flood victims on Friday. (25th Aug)

The Women Foundation (WF) on Thursday provided shelter boxes worth Rs 10 million to 129 flood victim families of Balaha Sabhara VDC at Dahanusha. (24th Aug)

Marwadi Service Trust, Birgunj handed over relief materials worth NRs. Five lakh Rupees to NRCS Parsa chapter. (23rd Aug)

NRCS Makwanpur distributed relief materials to 16 flood displaced family of Dhiynal VDC. (23rd Aug)

All Banks and financial institutions of Chitwan together ventured to solace disaster victims and collected NRs Sixty Thousand Five Hundred. Money was handedover to NRCS Chitwan. (23rd Aug)

Five thousand houses were damaged in Bardia due to the flood of Babai and Karnali river. Out of them 144 houses were fully damaged. (22nd Aug)

Janapriya Campus of Pokhara announced free education in all faculties to the flood and landslides victims of Guaulichaur and Jaljala of Baglung district. (21st Aug)

Eighty percent of the farms in Dhanusha and Mahottari districts have been washed off by flood. (20th Aug)

Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) has provided Rs.225,525 to flood victims through Kantipur Flood victim Relief Fund. (18th Aug)

Road links between rural areas and district headquarters Gaur, Birgunj have been respectively severed in Rautahat and Parsa district. (18th Aug)

700 people are displaced from Rajapur Tapu in Bardia, fearing of flood. (17th Aug)

Paddy crop destroyed, transportation halted

Paddy crops ready to harvest have been destroyed in the paddy fields because of incessant rains for the past three days in Dadeldhura district and roads in various places have been disrupted throwing the transportation to standstill.

Transportation is halted for the past three days in the hilly districts of Dadeldhura, Doti, Achham, Bajura, Baitadi, Darchula and Bajhang because of landslides in various paces of the far west. This has stranded many passengers in various places.

The people are also worried for possible foodgrains crisis in the district. "We used to sustain only for three months with any crops grown, but now we are in problem as our sweat goes on waste", said Belapur Musmuda farmer, Narendra Bista. Farmers even with their toil face frequent foodgrains crisis because of climatic adversities in the region.

(Posted on 30th September)

Landslide blocks entry road to Kamathanka

Transport service has been disrupted as the entry road of Kamathanka (Sankhuwasabha district) bordering China has remained blocked by landslide. The main road leading to Kamathanka 5 and 7 Chemtanga was totally damaged by the landslide causing people to move to and fro.

According to Secretary of Chepuwa VDC, Kalashmani Gautam, local people are facing problem as the main road has not been rebuilt although local administration and local bodies have been approached many times.

(Posted on 28th September)

Caritas Nepal distributes relief aid amid adversity

Caritas workers have endured stress and physical danger to bring food aid to thousands of flood-affected families. "We are completing one of our biggest disaster relief operations amid the worst ethnic violence and rivalry in Nepal's history," Father Silas Bogati, director of Caritas Nepal, told UCA News. "This year's rains brought about the worst-ever flood situation."

Father Bogati led first-phase relief in the eastern districts of Dhanusha and Mahottari, where more than 30 percent of farmlands were inundated since early August. Monsoon rains washed out roads and bridges, the priest said, and the problem was further complicated by ethnic rioting between Madhises, the dark-skinned people of the flatlands, and Pahades, light-skinned hill people. He said Pahades Caritas staff, especially women, endured extensive verbal abuse.

Floodwaters are now receding, so disease and hunger have become the pressing concerns. Father Bogati said some displaced people stranded on either side of still-raging Himalayan rivers are almost impossible to reach. The Himalayas run the breadth of Nepal, which is shaped roughly like a rectangle with a thin strip of flat land along the southern border. Nonetheless, the priest went on, "a dozen staffers worked in the field for almost two months," and Caritas distributed relief in 12 flatland districts.

Mukti Suvedi, a Hindu Caritas team leader who returned to Kathmandu from eastern Nepal, told UCA News on Sept. 19 about the distribution challenge. Our team finished distributing relief to 1,922 families in Saptari district and 866 in

Flood of Susta river, Nawalparasi forced to displace one hundred family. (17th Aug)

Flood victims in Bardiya demonstrated in front of the Red Cross Society Thursday alleging that it was biased in distributing relief materials. (16th Aug)

Thirty thousand villagers of six villages in Rautahat are at risk due to the swollen water of Bagmati, LalBakiya and Jhanj river. (17th Aug)

Flood victims in Bardiya demonstrated in front of the Red Cross Society Thursday alleging that it was biased in distributing relief materials. (16th Aug)

Landslides induced by the continuous rainfall for two days obstructed Baitadi–Darchula stretch of Dashrath Chandra highway (15th Aug)

An engine steamer of Geruwa river of Bardia fell into the flooded water Monday. A conductor of steamer, Rajesh, went missing whereas 10 passengers were rescued. (15th Aug)

For the demand of relief materials, flood victims of Mahottari are regularly demonstrating in district head quarter Jaleswor.

32 districts of Nepal, out of 75, are affected by flood and inundation, according to the Home Ministry.

The lawmakers of Banke and Bardia, worst flood hit districts, asked the government to think about the impact of dams and barrages constructed by India along the border.

Staffers and the management of Spice Nepal Private Ltd, provider of Mero Mobile, have dispatched relief materials worth NRs. 426000 for flood victims.

Rainfall and flood destroyed seventy five percent of vegetable crops in Rupandehi.

in Mahottari, Madhesi Maitri Kendra, a civil society in the district working for the welfare of flood victims, postponed providing free-of-cost meals to victims, citing fatigues of their volunteers and lack of funds.

Siraha district, but other NGOs have withdrawn because of the high level of ethnic tension." "When we arrived there," Suvedi recalled, "government and police officials asked why we were distributing relief in such a dangerous place." He explained that truckloads of rice and foodstuffs had to be brought in from other districts because supplies could be not bought locally. "Trucks refused to move during daytime, fearing attacks from armed groups," he continued, "so police had to escort them at night along the highway."

He said the Caritas workers "were sleepless at night" awaiting the trucks in Duhabi town's only hotel. After they loaded the supplies on tractors, armed police escorted them "across a river to where thousands gathered, after having walked hours."

"It was frightening," Suvedi admitted. "Unruly villagers demanded relief for all. Threats and abuse from angry youths stopped us short of distributing relief to all families on our list." He also noted that Caritas Nepal prepared a list of affected families after consulting local NGOs. Each family was allotted 30 kilograms of rice, five kilograms of lentils, two kilograms of cooking oil and two kilograms of salt.

Other Caritas staff workers also talked with UCA News after returning to Kathmandu. They spoke of families surviving on small packets of junk food and contaminated drinking water as flies and mosquitoes swarmed their leaking plastic sheds set up near muddy river embankments. One staffer recalled a displaced woman about to give birth in a classroom where villagers took refuge after their mud huts were washed away.

Ram Singh, a social activist in Janakpur, eastern Nepal, who mobilized volunteers and coordinated Caritas efforts, told UCA News, "Caritas gave the right kind of flood relief at the right time by taking the trouble to reach the victims directly."

The government has pledged 15,000 rupees (US\$235) for all who lost homes and 5,000 rupees for partially destroyed homes, but Caritas workers say people fear they will never see that money, due to graft and cronyism. Father Bogati said about US\$600,000 in flood relief has been made available via the international Caritas network and the Vatican, but "more than 50,000 people were displaced, so no amount of relief will really be sufficient."

Catholic institutions in Nepal also contributed to flood relief. Jesuit-run St. Xavier's High School in Kathmandu collected more than 100,000 rupees. (UCA News)

(Posted on 28th September)

Rotarians deliver shelter boxes to Nepal

By George Petrena

Branford Rotary Club president, John Lacquey and his wife, Trannie, both Rotarians, delivered shelter boxes to flood distraught Nepal, a very small country between India and China.

They delivered 137 boxes in a three day period to six different villages. They were directed by Pastor Man Baudel and his network of pastors who had obtained a list from the Red Cross which contained every village in Nepal that was affected by the flood. The list included the name of the village and the number of families and children in each village. It also broke down to include the number of men, woman and children. This information proved valuable in planning the disbursements to the most needy.

Armed Police Force (APF), Nepal handover NRs 2.5 million for disaster victims on 2nd August.

55 VDCs of Mahottari is affected from flood. Properties and infrastructures worth NRs 70 million has been lost.

Dharampur VDC of Jhapa suffered a loss of NRS 30 million.

Home minister advised the local administration to form an all sided team to carry out relief and rescue operations.

Danda dam and embankment unilaterally made by the Indian government inundated 6 VDCs of Rupandehi district.

Rainfall is significantly higher this year than 2006, according to Meteorological Forecasting Division.

Lawmakers blamed Indian dams for floods in the contiguous areas of Nepal.

Asia Watch

Drowning leading cause of death in Bangladesh

DHAKA (IRIN) - Hardly a day goes by in Bangladesh in which the media do not report a child's death by drowning, with this year's heavy monsoon rains only driving those numbers higher. In the last week over a dozen deaths - all of them children aged 16 months to 11 years old - were reported. On 28 September alone, five children drowned in Kurigram, Gaibandha and Comilla districts.

But according to experts, this is just the tip of the iceberg in Bangladesh, a river delta nation of over 150 million inhabitants, with the actual number of fatalities several times greater than actually reported.

This year's particularly heavy monsoon rains, which affected over 10.5 million people, saw an alarming increase in drowning deaths. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Bangladesh, there were 946 officially reported flood-related deaths since mid-August, with drowning accounting for 816 of them. Over 86 percent of all the

The truck carrying the boxes got stuck. So John and Trannie and the workers unloaded the boxes, dug the truck out and reloaded the boxes. Trannie said, "It took two and a half hours and then we continued on our way. We waded the river in the dark on the return trip. It rained and we got soaked. We went through the jungle where there were lions, tigers, and elephants, even though we didn't see any," said Trannie.

While on their mission they went through military check points, and met an incredible young man who was a member of the Maoist Army. They also met 19 young men who were members of the Nepal Army.

Speaking at the Rotary Club, Trannie stated, "We met some wonderful people. We ate with these people twice. They prepared a meal in our honor and to not eat would have been an insult to them. It went against all we have been trained for but we ate, and prayed. Afterwards I watched them feed my leftovers to a goat. He licked the plate clean."

John and Trannie saw people waiting on the river bank where the bridge had been washed out. These people's homes had been destroyed. They were waiting to carry shelter boxes across the river and then walk another two miles further to their camp. A line of green boxes on the backs of men and women, some old, some young going down the trail could be seen.

"We watched a young girl struggle to carry a full box on her back knowing it's important for her and all of them to do this for themselves. It's about seeing these families standing around in the pouring rain to get their supplies from shelter box and then in turn helping their neighbors with theirs. Seeing people so poor it's almost incomprehensible and yet seeing beautiful, happy children and incredible smiles on the women. Seeing the sacrifices these people who have so little make, so their children can go to school. I watched John pay special attention to a little boy in a group of kids. A little boy with a deformed hand and a shy smile. It's seeing boxes loaded on a boat to go across the river at sunset to a village across that river," Trannie said.

"It's coming home with memories both good and bad, and memories of the friends we made and the lives that were touched, and with the good impressions you left with them of shelterbox. It's hard to put into words the emotions, high and lows you experience in this situation. I'm grateful John and I were together. He made me strong." (*Suwannee Democrat - Live Oak, FL, USA*)

(Posted on 28th September)

Media houses donate Rs. 7.2 M for flood victims

A total of more than Rs. 7.2 million collected by media houses and other organisations was handed over to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala Wednesday as relief to the flood victims.

Executive chairman of Gorkhapatra Corporation (GC) Om Sharma handed over a check of Rs. 231,479 to Prime Minister Koirala at Baluwatar. Out of the amount, the employees of the GC contributed Rs. 128,796.

Similarly, chairman of Kantipur Publication Pvt. Ltd., Hem Raj Gyawali handed over Rs. 4.56 million that was collected through Kantipur Flood Victim Relief Fund. Advertising Association Nepal (AAN) handed over Rs. 735,468 which was collected through SMS programmes in collaboration with Nepal Telecom.

Image Channel and Nepal Television handed over Rs.1.25 million and Rs.119,000 respectively to the Prime Minister. Regarding the amount collected through SMS, Prime Minister Koirala said the method had great value because it was collected

deaths were due to drowning, and over 90 percent of these cases were children, mostly under five.

"Not all cases of drowning are reported, especially during large-scale emergencies like floods, as the affected areas remain isolated from the rest of the country. Many deaths go unreported," Shumona Shafinaz, a UNICEF project officer, told IRIN in Dhaka, the Bangladeshi capital.

In flood-prone Bangladesh, drowning is the single leading cause of death among children aged 1-17, having overtaken pneumonia and diarrhoea.

This was revealed in a comprehensive study of child deaths from injuries by the Institute of Child and Mother Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and The Alliance for Safe Children (TASC).

The Bangladesh Health and Injury Survey (BHIS), 2003, was the first and most comprehensive effort ever made to gather accurate data on the burden of injury throughout Bangladesh. It is the largest injury survey ever conducted at community level in a developing country - with 171,366 households representing 819,429 infants, children and adults surveyed. The BHIS found that drowning presented by far the greatest danger for those aged 1-9, with the death rate declining as the children grow older.

According to the BHIS, in Bangladesh nearly 17,000 children drown annually, an average of around 46 each day. At the same time, about four times this number nearly drowns - over 68,000 cases of near-drowning a year are being reported.

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At a separate meeting, Nepal Revolutionary Peasants Association, sister organisation of Nepal Workers and Peasants Party gave Rs. 3,78,686 to the Prime Minister.

(Posted on 28th September)

Prolonged monsoon nearing towards end

This year's monsoon, which caused disastrous floods and landslides in various parts of the country is nearing its end, according to meteorological forecasting division. K.B Malla, a senior meteorologist said this year's monsoon, which lasted longer than usual, will end in a couple of days.

"This year's monsoon was longer due to an active depression (low pressure system) toward the northwest part of the Bay of Bengal," he said. Generally, monsoon starts in the first week of June and lasts till September 23. During this time, the country gets 80 percent of the total rainfall in a year.

Due to the extended monsoon, different parts of the country including Kathmandu valley experienced continuous rainfall for the past two days. According to the forecasting division, Dhangadhi saw the highest rainfall measuring 71.7 millimeter on Wednesday. Kathmandu registered 21.1 millimeter rainfall on the same day. "The condition will improve from Thursday," said Malla.

There will be slight rain or thundershowers at some places in the country while other places will see clear atmosphere from tomorrow, he added.

(Posted on 27th September)

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