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Information bulletin

Bangladesh: Cyclone Roanu

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has analysed that the available information points towards significant humanitarian needs. A scaled-up response requiring IFRC support is envisioned.

The situation

Cyclone Roanu in west central Bay of Bengal has moved further north-eastwards and continues to retain its strength as a cyclonic storm. There is a possibility that the cyclone will further strengthen into a severe cyclone. It is currently located near 18.4 N 85.6 E with maximum 1-min sustained winds of 50kts (58 mph).

This is the first cyclone of the season in the Bay and is heading towards Bangladesh and likely to make landfall on the southern coastal areas (Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Dhaka division of Bangladesh) within the next 24 hours. Rain or thunder showers accompanied

by temporary gusty or squally wind are continuing at most places of the country. Heavy and continuous rainfall may cause landslide in the Chittagong hilly region.

The government in consultation with the Bangladesh Meteorological Department has advised to hoist the danger signal number SEVEN for fourteen districts (Chittagong, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Feni, Chadpur, Bhola, Barguna, Patuakhali, Barishal, Pirojpur, Jhalokhati, Bagerhat, Khulna and Shatkhira) and 2 ports (Mongla and Paira), signal number SIX for Cox's Bazar district and signal number FIVE for the remaining three coastal districts.

Considering the previous cyclonic disasters of similar strength and types, it is expected that this may cause tidal surge induced flooding in the coastal belt which may cause sever loss of life and damage of property.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) have activated and mobilized around 55,260 cyclone preparedness program (CPP) volunteers on the ground to disseminate early warning and awareness messages. They have also started to announce the cyclone signals through megaphone at the community



level and are advising to prepare basic necessity items (like dry food, water, personal documentation, etc.) for any potential evacuation to the cyclone safe shelters. The CPP volunteers are supported by 97 Community Disaster Response Team (CDRT) members.

The Red Crescent Youth (RCY) volunteers of different districts are disseminating early warning messages together with the government agencies under the guidance of respective units' executive committee. BDRCS district branches are participating in the District Disaster Management Committee meeting in their respective districts. They are actively communicating with the school and college based RYC members to disseminate the early warning and awareness messages to their neighbouring community. BDRCS coastal district branches have been advised to be ready to supply cooked food or dry food immediately for the affected population.

BDRCS has activated an emergency control room in the headquarters in Dhaka, which will remain open 24/7. Twelve National Disaster Response Team/National Disaster Response WatSan Team (NDRT/NDWRT) members of BDRCS are deployed in six districts. BDRCS has mobilized its disaster preparedness (DP) stocks in two strategic locations in Chittagong and Barisal division. Tarpaulins, jerry cans, oral rehydration solution (ORS) and clothing for 2,900 families have been prepositioned near possible affected districts. BDRCS's Response Department is coordinating the resource mobilization (including relief items). A meeting with the movement partners is scheduled at 09:30hr local time on 22 May 2016 to provide latest situation report, actions taken and way forward.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is supporting the BDRCS to coordinate with other humanitarian and UN agencies. In early May, BDRCS had organized a preparedness-for-disaster (pre-disaster) meeting as part of its readiness for the monsoon season. The meeting brought together in-county Movement partners to discuss how they would collectively support BDRCS in its humanitarian action in the event of a new disaster. Representation in meeting included IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), American Red Cross, British Red Cross, German Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross.

In anticipation of the humanitarian impact, IFRC is supporting BDRCS to prepare an emergency plan of action (EPOA) and the possibility of requesting for the IFRC's Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF). The IFRC Country Office has placed its staff on standby for further support to the National Society, if needed. The IFRC Country Office is also liaising with the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur, with the latter supporting in monitoring the situation and sharing information with partners who do not have presence in Bangladesh. At the request of the National Society, an alert for the deployment of one Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member has been issued and the process of identifying a suitable candidate is underway. The RDRT member identified will be on standby for immediate deployment in the event an IFRC-supported response operation is launched.

The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) called an urgent meeting at 15:00hr local time on 21 May to coordinate overall humanitarian response operation. Prior to the HCTT meeting, the Shelter cluster and Early Recovery cluster were activated. The National Needs Assessment Working Group will call for a meeting to discuss the necessary preparation for conducting joint needs assessment. Representatives of IFRC and BDRCS will be attending this meeting.

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.