

Alert

India – No. 40/2010

Cyclone Jal lashes Tamil Nadu

Geneva, 10 November 2010

Brief Description of the Emergency

On 6 November 2010 cyclone 'Jal' passed over the south-west Bay of Bengal about 500 km east northeast of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka), 650 km east-southeast of Chennai and 750 km southeast of Nellore. On 7 November the depression moved northwestwards, crossed north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh coasts close to the north of Chennai. Cyclone 'Jal' was accompanied by heavy rain and thundershowers which affected a few places in north Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and most places in Rayalaseema and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh. Gusts of wind reached up to 70 kmph.

Widespread rainfall continued in Andhra Pradesh as of 9 November as the remnants of cyclone Jal re-emerged into the Arabian Sea and started strengthening again. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) suggested that there could be two more tropical cyclones to hit India by 15 November. According to the news, the cyclone had a bad impact on 59 blocks in seven districts and overall, 199 villages were completely inundated by the surge and flooding.

Impact of Cyclone Jal

Tamil Nadu: North Chennai in Tamil Nadu was the worst hit area. In several fishing colonies sea water entered homes and destroyed houses. Fishermen had to suspend their fishing activity. The breakers along the coast between Kasimedu and Ennore did little to restrict the waves.

Andhra Pradesh: 23 People died across the coastal areas in south Andhra Pradesh. Nearly 700 villages in coastal Andhra Pradesh were evacuated as the Cyclone changed tracks further north into Andhra Pradesh. Over 70,000 people evacuated from four districts of Andhra Pradesh have been provided shelter in relief camps across interior Andhra Pradesh. 127 villages have been affected, 10 other inundated and 300 houses were partially or completely damaged.

It was reported that around 300 thousand hectares of cropland was devastated by the cyclone. The crop loss may be more, as large areas of agriculture lands have been damaged by the cyclone.

National and International Response

Both Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh Governments have been on high alert. The IMD advised Fishermen not to venture into the sea and coastal dwellers to move to safer places.

Over 10,000 families living in low lying areas in the Chennai were accommodated in community halls and schools. A total of 235 relief camps with 56 in Nellore, 108 in Prakasam, 65 in East Godavari, 5 in Krishna and 1 in West Godavari districts have been set up to accommodate residents living in areas which were more vulnerable to the storm. The accommodation, food and sanitation arrangements in the relief camps are not very good and there is no privacy for women and children.

The Indian government has announced that they will provide twenty kilograms of rice and five litres of kerosene to each family in flood-affected areas. They will also give some financial compensation to families of the victims. However, the Dalit and tribal people in the remote villages are not being covered at all by the Government relief programs.

ACTAlliance Members Response

ACT member United Evangelical Lutheran Church, India (UELICI) is assessing the situation with its member churches in Andhra Pradesh. The ACT members have been in contact with each other and are watching the situation closely and will inform the ACT Secretariat within a few days about a possible further response.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jean-Daniel Birmele, ACT Chief Finance Officer (jbi@actalliance.org).

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Thank you for your attention.