



FAITH IN ACTION

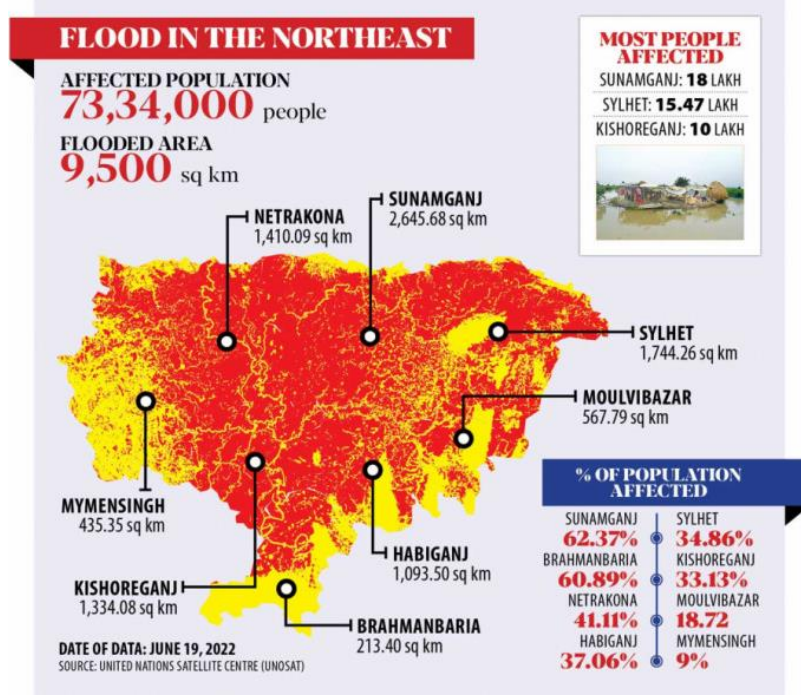
Faith in Action

Update of Flood Situation and Need of the People



Figure 1: 1.6 million children, stranded by flash floods in north-eastern Bangladesh are in urgent need of help, Unicef

Severity and geographical coverage of Flood: More than 72 percent of Sylhet division is under water. Out of four districts in Sylhet



division is under water. Out of four districts in Sylhet division – 89 percent of Sunamganj, 72 percent of Sylhet, 70 percent of Habiganj, and 50 percent of Moulvibazar was submerged. Based on analysis of high-resolution Sentinel-1 radar (SAR) satellite images captured on the afternoon of June 16, 2022, Casual Faculty Palash Basak of the School of Environmental and Life Sciences at the University of Newcastle, Australia made the flood map. However, the downpour has been continuing and the situation

worsened since those satellite images were taken. The flood was triggered on Wednesday (June 15, 2022) due to torrential rainfall in the north-eastern districts, and the flash flood in upstream India's Meghalaya and Assam where record-breaking rainfall was recorded.

Number of People Affected by the Flood: More than 40 lakh people remain



marooned in different upazilas and towns while other areas are on the verge of being inundated in the Sylhet division. The local administration is conducting rescue operations with the help of army and local council representatives to save all stranded people in the remote flooded areas. As days pass, the cry for rescue

and relief is intensifying in the flood-affected areas. Many parts remain unreachable due to the high tide of floodwater and the shortages of vessels. Prof AKM Saiful Islam of the Institute of Water and Flood Management at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) said, it is a very unusual event. "Sudden flood was triggered by unusually very heavy rainfall. Such events take place once or twice in a hundred years," he said.

Damages of Crops: Ongoing floods have so far damaged 56,000 hectares of the country's Aush paddy, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque said yesterday. Of them, 22,000 hectares were damaged in Sunamganj and Sylhet alone, he told reporters after a meeting with Maldives High Commissioner Shiruzimath Sameer at the secretariat in Dhaka. Other crops such as vegetables, sesame seeds and nuts have also been damaged, he said. "If the flood does not prolong, it will be possible to make up for the damages,"

Deaths and sufferings of the flood Victims: The ongoing flood in the northwest



has so far claimed at least 22 lives in Sylhet and Netrakona, with the death toll expected to go up as information from remote areas is coming to the authorities belatedly. "Due to the power cut-off and mobile network issues, we were not getting any

news of fatalities before. Now, the information is reaching us, so the death toll might be higher," said Himangshu Lal Roy, director of Sylhet Divisional Health Office. The deaths are due to drowning, landslides, electrocution and snake bites. So far, the authorities were informed of 20 deaths and heard the news of two more dead bodies found in Jaintiapur, Roy said. Of the 20 deaths related to the flood situation, 12 are from Sylhet, five from Sunamganj and three from Moulvibazar. Yesterday, the dead bodies of Nazmum Nesa and her son Abdur Rahman were recovered by Police from Sylhet's Jaintiapur upazila. They went missing after being washed away by the strong current on floodwater on Friday. Shamim Ahmed, a young resident of Eklamnagar village in Sunamganj's Chhatak upazila, has been stranded with no relief since the flood hit his village six days ago. "I



have now come to the Bangladesh Army's Coordination Centre here to request them to help the people of my village." He was later escorted back by army officials with some relief materials. Like Eklamnagar, thousands of villages in the flood-affected areas in the north-eastern region are left on their own in these moments of crisis. The administration admitted it was struggling to reach the remote villages and shelter centres, but it claimed it had sufficient relief on hand. The data on the relief allocation shows the government's efforts have yet to be adequate.

Number of Children Affected by the Flood: Four million people, including 1.6 million children, stranded by flash floods in north-eastern Bangladesh are in urgent need of help, Unicef has said. Unicef is on the ground to deliver emergency water and health supplies, it said in a press



release issued yesterday (June 20, 2022). Unicef is urgently seeking \$2.5 million in funding for the emergency response as it provides life-saving supplies and services to children and families, the release

said. "Children need safe drinking water right now. Preventing deadly waterborne diseases is one of several critical concerns," said Sheldon Yett, Unicef Representative to Bangladesh. "Our heart goes out for the children whose lives have been lost. Children are the most vulnerable in this desperate situation. In Sylhet division, 90 percent of health facilities have been inundated, while cases of waterborne diseases continue to rise. Children are at heightened risk of drowning, already one of the major causes of child deaths in the country, according to the release.

Government Initiative: The desperation for relief among the victims is such that a man died after being injured jostling to collect relief materials dropped from an Air Force helicopter yesterday. According to the district administrations of Sylhet division, all 13 upazilas in Sylhet, all 12 in Sunamganj, seven in Moulvibazar and six in Habiganj have been fighting the floods. Around 45 lakh people, in all flood-hit areas combined, have been affected. At least 4.04 lakh of them have taken

refuge at 1,474 shelters. A total of 2.95 crore taka, 1,952 tonnes of rice and around 30,000 packets of dry food were allocated for such a vast number of victims. Data shows that, upon distribution, each victim will receive only 0.44 kg rice and 6.55 taka. If the relief is for only those in the shelters, each person will get 4.88 kg rice and 73.75 taka. The 30,000 packets of dry food can only be distributed to the same number of people.

Victims are starving: However, Md Mosharrof Hossain, divisional commissioner of Sylhet, said relief stocks are not insufficient but it requires collective effort by the



government, different organisations and individuals to ensure the flood victims get them. "More relief will be allotted when needed. We are now working on distributing what we already have." He also added that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, during her visit to Sylhet, sanctioned another 1.2 crore taka from

the PM's funds for the victims of Sylhet and Sunamganj. However, while the administration is relying on private efforts, the cry of those affected is getting louder. Abdullah Al Mamun, a banker in Sunamganj's Shantiganj upazila, said, "Many people are in dire need of relief but the supply is too little compared to the demand. An all-out relief attempt should be initiated." Bina Banu of Sunamganj Sadar upazila's Iqbalnagar village said, "Many of us have taken shelter in a building owned by an expatriate. We survived the first couple of days with the food we brought with us. But since then, we have been starving." Besides, the demand for fresh water is also shooting up, as there have been no substantial efforts from the administration to provide drinking water. An elderly woman in Mahmudnagar of Sunamganj Sadar told our correspondent they have been drinking rainwater and floodwater since taking shelter on the Sylhet-Sunamganj highway. "The relief work must be extended to all the flood-affected people, and every responsible citizen should be involved in the relief work." "We are now in a state of near starvation. We don't know how many days we will survive. "We have not gotten any relief materials either from the government or any private organisation till now," she told one of these correspondents yesterday noon at the local union council office, where she had gone in the hope of getting relief materials.

Northern part of Bangladesh: Gaibandha, of Kurigram and Lalmonirhat is also



Flooded. Over 2.5 lakh people have been affected by the recent flood in the two northern districts of Kurigram and Lalmonirhat. The situation is worsening as the region's three major rivers -- Brahmaputra, Teesta and Dharla -- were flowing above the danger level, said officials of Water Development Board (WDB). Water receded

slightly from some area, but many fresh areas were inundated yesterday. Government officials concerned said they are conducting relief work. Five hundred tonnes of rice and Tk 64.4 lakh cash have so far been allocated for flood-hit people in the two districts. Two other northern districts -- Gaibandha and Bogura -- are also facing deterioration of flood situation. In Gaibandha, around 57,000 people have been affected, according to the office of District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer (DRRO). The Brahmaputra river was flowing 13cm above danger level at Fulchari point yesterday afternoon, while Ghaghot was flowing 42cm above danger level at Gaibandha point. The district administration has allotted 80 tonnes of rice and Tk 6 lakh cash among flood victims. In Bogura, around 80,000 people have been affected by flood. Jamuna was flowing 62cm above danger level at Mathurapara point in Sariakandi upazila yesterday noon. "We have been marooned for the last six days. We cannot cook food. We are in severe crisis of pure water and food," said Rafikul Mollah, a resident of Kuripara char under the upazila. The district administration has allocated 45 tonnes of rice and Tk 10 lakh cash for victims. The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) yesterday warned that the flood situation may remain steady in Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha, while the situation may deteriorate slightly in Bogura.



The Prime Minister Paid Visit in flood Hit areas:

The Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh has paid a visit in the flood affected areas. "After inspecting the flood situation in Sylhet, the prime minister has made special allocations for Sylhet and Sunamganj from her own funds. She has allocated Tk 5 lakh for each flood-hit upazila

of the division."

More Flood yet to hit: Bangladesh is likely to witness more floods this monsoon,



experts warn. They also urged the government to take preparations for both flood and post-flood rehabilitation. AKM Saiful Islam, professor at the Institute of Water and Flood Management of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), said that Bangladesh may endure more floods this monsoon. "As long as the monsoon is active, there is a chance of flooding. Monsoon season has just started, so the country might face more floods," he told The Daily Star today (June 21, 2022). Monsoon season usually continues till September but in recent years it stretches till mid-October at times. Bangladesh is already witnessing severe flood in Sylhet and northern region. Experts say in the coming days, the northern and central areas of the country will face

flood but situation will improve soon.

Kamal predicted that there is a big probability of flood in the country in second and third week of July due to the active Madden-Julian oscillation. Professor Saiful said the flood situation in Sylhet has already started improving but the flood situation in the middle part of the country will deteriorate in the coming days but it wouldn't be that disastrous like it was in the Sylhet division. He said the government must take preparations for the upcoming floods and at the same time it should take steps for rehabilitation. "As water will recede from the flood affected areas, special attention should be given on road repairs and other post disaster issues," he said. Asked whether the frequency and intensity of flood is increasing in Bangladesh, he said

the climate events have been changing across the world and Bangladesh is no exception.

The immediate and long term need of the people are;

The flood will stop shortly but the damage is huge. To come back to the normal life recovering their losses people will need immediate and long-term support right after the flood is over. Immediate needs are:

1. Food including nutritional support for the children, pregnant and lactating mothers
2. Hygiene (Soap, detergent, sanitary napkin)
3. Temporary houses and latrines Repair
4. Repair roads for temporary and immediate communication

Long-Term Needs:

1. House repairing and build new house
2. Agriculture inputs (Seeds, fertilizers and cash)
3. Cash for Work for repairing damaged roads to establish communication and create short-term employment
4. Livelihood skill training and business grant
5. Build Flood Shelter
6. Tree plantation and awareness on creation care
7. Disaster Risk reduction Training and measures (Community Resilience Building)
8. Strengthen capacity of the local government

Inclusion: After end of emergency and recovery phase this will turn to community development following the integrated community development approach focused on DRR. Praying for the recovery and protection of the victims especially to the children.