



Victims of Cyclone Phailin to receive additional €3 million (over ₹25 crore) in assistance from the EU

The European Commission announced today that it is giving €3 million to provide assistance to the victims of Tropical Cyclone Phailin which hit the highly populated Indian states of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh on 12 October. The evacuation of almost a million people to safe shelters before the Cyclone made landfall helped to significantly curtail the loss of human lives.

"While even one death is too many, it is a great relief that despite the size and strength of this latest cyclone, the reported number of fatalities could be counted in the tens rather than thousands," said Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

"Preparedness is key to saving lives and this has proved itself once again thanks to the massive evacuation of threatened populations. However, the cyclone has still disrupted the lives of the most vulnerable members of society because it caused extensive damage to infrastructure, housing and livelihoods. Europeans are committed to helping them overcome this latest blow."

The funding will help the most affected and vulnerable to survive the aftermath and to improve their resilience to future disasters. Food assistance will be provided to help people manage until the next crops can be planted and reaped, as well as shelters with disaster resilient features, basic health care, water and sanitation services and livelihood assistance for marginalised and fishing communities.

This new funding is in addition to €96 748 already channelled through the International Federation of the Red Cross's disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) for this disaster. It will be distributed by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) department through its humanitarian partners, including International Non-Government Organisations, the Red Cross/Red Crescent family and UN agencies.

Background

Cyclone "Phailin" made landfall on 12 October in the proximity of Gopalpur town in Ganjam district, Odisha State. Wind speeds were up to 220 km/h and lasted for three to four hours upon landfall. Phailin subsequently weakened over land before degenerating into a well-marked area of low pressure by 14 October. Heavy to very heavy rainfall was then experienced in central India and subsequently, compounded by high tide and release of dam waters, flooding occurred in Mayurbhanj, Bhadrak and Balasore districts in Odisha.

Overall damages (according to the Government of Odisha as of 16 October) amount to: 21 fatalities due to cyclone and 15 due to flooding; 17 674 villages affected, with a total of 12 149 365 people; 650 184 hectares of cropland and 376 921 houses damaged. 983 553 people were evacuated prior to Phailin's landfall, all of whom have returned to their villages; 171 083 people were evacuated due to flooding.

The most affected districts are: Ganjam, Balasor, Puri and Mayurbhanj, all of which are in Odisha.

DREF Decision

Earlier this week, ECHO allocated €96 748 to the disaster relief emergency fund of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), following a funding appeal by the organisation to urgently respond to the needs of almost 15 000 vulnerable families affected by the Cyclone. These funds, channelled through the Indian Red Cross Society, will be used to provide temporary shelters, clothes, kitchen sets, water buckets and safe drinking water. Health education activities will also be held to curb the spread of water-borne diseases.

For more information

The European Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

& in Arabic : <http://echo-arabic.eu>

Commissioner Georgieva's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm