



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **EU funds relief for victims of Assam violence**

The European Union has released over ₹14 million (€ 200 000) for the immediate needs of people displaced following inter-communal clashes in the Northeastern state of Assam. The funds will provide hygiene and sanitation facilities as well as clean drinking water to over 45,000 people living in 40 camps in Kokrajhar and Chirang districts – those most affected by the violence.

"People displaced from their villages are living in cramped and unhygienic conditions in makeshift camps, where piles of scattered waste along with stagnant water pose serious health risks", said Dr João Cravinho, the European Union's Ambassador to India. "In accordance with the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality, EU funds will be used to help the most vulnerable people, irrespective of their religious or ethnic background".

The EU-funded relief efforts will include installation of hand pumps, construction of flush latrines and bathing cubicles, distribution of chlorine tablets for water purification, and provision of hygiene and women's sanitary kits. In order to prevent the spread of diseases in the camps, waste management activities such as cleaning of drainage systems will also be organised, and health education sessions undertaken on a regular basis.

The project is being funded by the Small Scale Response mechanism of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO). It will be implemented by ECHO's partner Oxfam, which has already carried out several relief and disaster preparedness activities in Assam.

In August, the EU had already provided €2 million to assist people most affected by the floods in Assam.

### **Background**

Tensions have long simmered between the Bodos and the Bengali-speaking Muslim community of Assam, over land rights. The latest outbreak of violence erupted at the end of July 2012, resulting in a series of clashes which have left over 90 people dead and tens of thousands displaced.

ECHO's Small Scale Response fund is a global mechanism totaling €5 million for 2012, which allows ECHO to provide rapid funding of up to €200,000 for humanitarian aid in countries affected by natural and man-made disasters.

Contacts :

[Pierre Prakash](#) (+91 11 49 19 53 16)

[Gunjan Chanana](#) (+91 11 49 49 65 56)

### **For more information**

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO):

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm)

The European Union's Delegation to India:

[http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/index_en.htm)