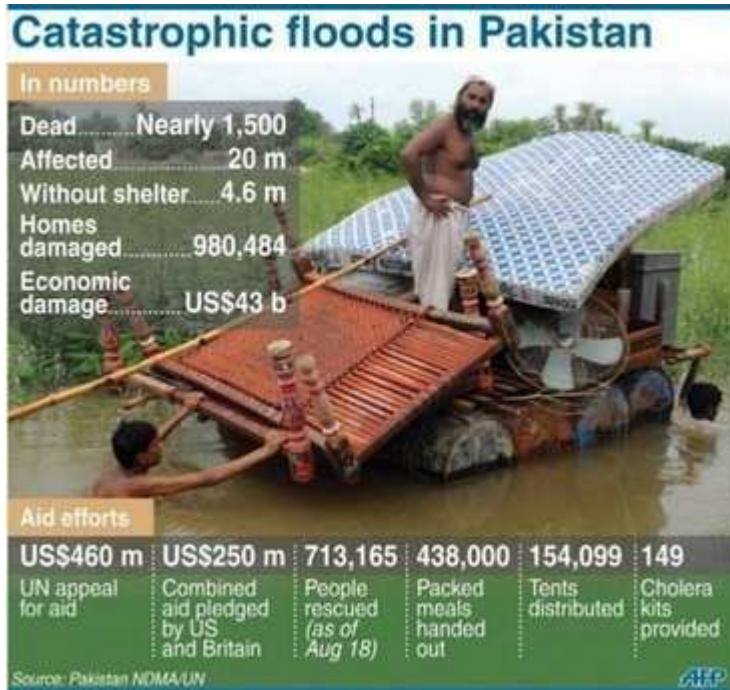


A Cry for Help from Pakistani Christian Flood Victims

This time last year it was a storm of Taliban extremists that forced millions of Pakistanis to flee their homes in search of safe ground. Now it is the elements themselves that have turned against them.



As of this time, there are now 20 million plus people affected by the flooding. The situation is truly unprecedented. The Pakistani media is covering the story 24/7, calling it a "disaster of epic proportions" that is "unrivalled by any other natural catastrophe the country has ever suffered."

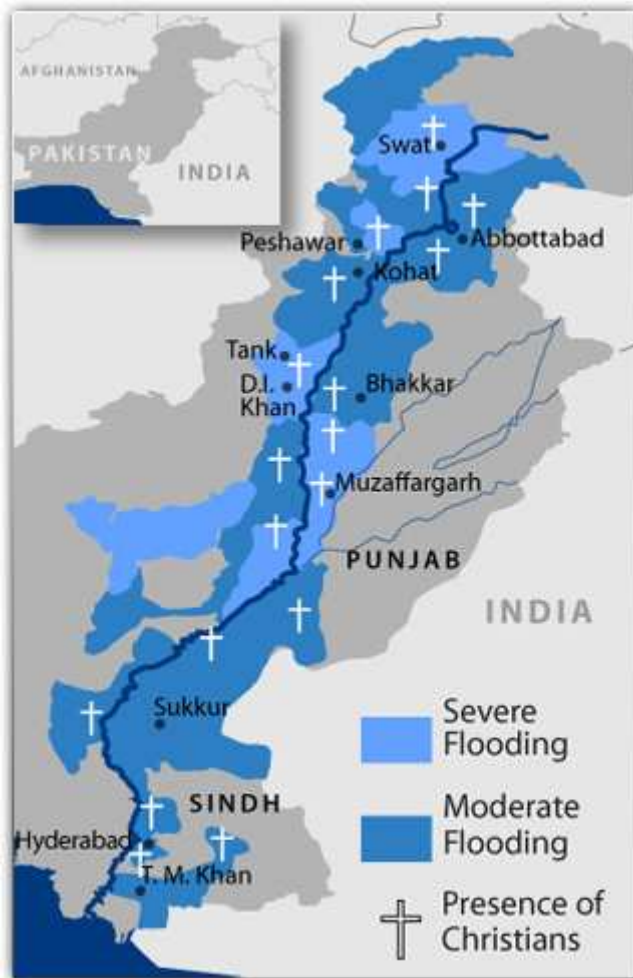
The government of Pakistan has appealed to the international community, NGOs and charity groups to help Pakistan to support the relief and rehabilitation work.

Pakistan prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani says the loss of lives and infrastructure is "colossal". "I would ask the international community to support and help Pakistan alleviate the sufferings of the flood-affected people," he said in a televised address to the nation.

The United Nations on the 9th August rated the floods in Pakistan as the greatest humanitarian crisis in recent history. A spokesman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said:

"It looks like the number of people affected in this crisis is higher than the Haiti earthquake, the tsunami or the Pakistan earthquake, and if the toll is as high as the one given by the government, it's higher than the three of them combined."

The world has seen many emergencies, but this is something on a scale that nobody has ever dealt with before. This is like an iceberg – you only see the top of it. It has not been possible to get access to the communities that have been completely cut off or washed away. And the death toll, which currently ranges from 1,300 to 1,600, will surely rise the longer it takes to reach people and get them support.



Based on the Christian population of the flood affected areas it is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 believers may be affected. Christians make up less than 3 per cent of the population in majority-Muslim Pakistan and are often excluded from anything more than menial employment, meaning that the majority of them already lived in extreme poverty. Many of them have lost almost everything. Bishop Humphrey Peters of Peshawar warns that aid is unlikely to reach these marginalised minority Christians. People are angry, hungry and desperate.

Resilient is a word often used to describe the people of Pakistan, but this cycle of loss and destruction is truly testing this attribute. Thousands of people have been living in pre-fabricated shelters, still trying to regain their lives and livelihoods lost five years ago.

Entire communities began to experience rebirth - but now these very same people must start over again after the floodwaters are gone. Displaced persons, many who have only recently returned home to Swat and other areas, once again find themselves without homes and property. Undoubtedly the floods have caused widespread damage to agricultural and croplands, adding further threats of food insecurity to flood-affected families. As sources of food supply remain underwater, families face the possibility of not being able to harvest and sow their crops.

Worsening the situation are increased prices for essentials like sugar. Compounding the suffering in affected areas is the sharp increase local prices for food and general supplies, and growing shortages of both. Factories in Punjab are closing because of damages and there have been reports of very limited gas supply. Such logistical and systemic breakdowns are the next big hurdle, which cannot begin to be adequately addressed until the end of monsoon season.



All church networks and groups are requested to pray and contribute as much as they can to help the suffering people. It is time to share the love of the Lord with suffering people.

Pray that the long recovery stage gets underway soon and many people are given new life.

Pray for all the flood victims - the bereaved, the injured and those who have lost their homes and livelihoods. Pray that all will find adequate shelter, clean water and food.

Pray for strength and energy for all those assisting in the aid effort, and for rains to cease until the floodwaters are back to normal levels.

Pray for Christians in Pakistan; the majority of whom are desperately poor. Pray for those directly affected by the flooding that they may know the comfort and provision of their heavenly Father.

Our hearts are filled with sorrow for these people who are in urgent need of food, shelter and other provisions. Our team is praying for them and we have been led by the Lord to initiate a relief effort to ease their sufferings.

To make a donation to our Disaster Relief Fund:

Please make your checks payable to

'FBM, Inc,' and memo it **'Pakistan Flood Relief'**

The mailing address is:

PO Box 5687
Rockville, MD 20855
United States

We urge you to help in whatever way you can. Any size donation will go a long way to assisting in this very difficult and situation.

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