



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

Brussels, 22 October 2013

## **European Commission allocates €96 748 to bring relief to Cyclone Phailin survivors**

New Delhi, 22 October 2013 – A powerful tropical cyclone, bringing winds of more than 200 km per hour from the Bay of Bengal, hit the east coast of India on 12 October, leaving behind a trail of destruction as it made its way inland. The coastal areas of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh bore the brunt of the Cyclone's fury, which disrupted the lives of millions of people and caused extensive damage to infrastructure, housing and livelihoods. The evacuation of almost a million people to safe shelters before the Cyclone made landfall, helped to significantly curtail the loss of human lives.

In the cyclone's aftermath, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their homes and need emergency shelter and essential household items. Moreover, people living in overcrowded shelters as well as those who have returned to their villages urgently require safe drinking water because of heightened health risks arising from contaminated water.

Farming and fishing communities have been worst hit: large swathes of farmland remain submerged, and many boats and as well as fishing equipment have been damaged.

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has 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 Cyclone Phailin. The 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.

### **Background**

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has signed a €3 million humanitarian contribution agreement with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Funds from the DREF are mainly allocated to "small-scale" disasters – those that do not give rise to a formal international appeal.

The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund was established in 1985 and is supported by contributions from donors. Each time a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society needs immediate financial support to respond to a disaster, it can request funds from the DREF. For small-scale disasters, the IFRC allocates grants from the Fund, which can then be replenished by the donors. The contribution agreement between the IFRC and the European Commission enables the latter to replenish the DREF for agreed operations.