



MONSOON MONITORING & EARLY WARNING

Issue 8/ 2008

19 August 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

- The risk of a large scale flood for the coming week is moderate. Relative to last weeks report, risk has increased due to heavy rains both within Bangladesh and upstream in India.
- At sub-national scale; flood risk is higher for the Northeast, Central and Southeast regions.
- Extreme rains in the Southeast (Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and surrounding) have resulted in both flash floods and localized landslides.
- As of this morning, nine FFWC river level monitoring stations were at or above danger level and eighteen were at warning level or higher.
- Out of a total of 73 stations, 52 reported rising trends, 16 falling, and 5 were steady.
- As of mid-day, India's Central Water Commission was reporting twelve river stations upstream and not far from Bangladesh above danger level; eleven in Bihar and one in West Bengal. Nine other stations were at or above warning level; one in Assam and eight in Bihar.
- In comparison to last year (2007), river levels this year in Bangladesh have less frequently reached danger level during the period 1st June thru 18th August.

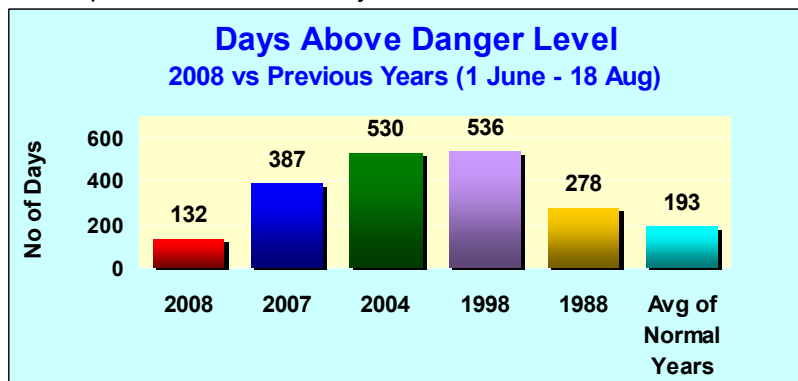
Historical Perspective Analysis: 2008 River Levels vs Previous Years

Each of the river level monitoring stations of Bangladesh's Flood Forecasting and Warning Center/ FFWC has its own designated "danger level". The number of days rivers flow at or above danger level at these stations can serve as a useful indicator for flood monitoring. The following analyses, conducted for the period 1st June thru 18 August for 26 key monitoring stations North of Dhaka, focuses on the following questions:

How many days have water levels been at or *above* danger level for 2008?

How does 2008 compare with the previous "mega flood years" of 2007, 2004, 1998, & 1988?

How does 2008 compare with the "normal years"?



The graph above shows relatively few days (132 during 2008) when rivers reached danger level for the stations considered. In comparison, during last year (2007), there were many more days (387) when these same rivers touched danger level or higher. Readers should be aware that results presented above, represent only a snap-shot in time (i.e., for the period 1 June thru 18 August). Using the FFWC data, WFP will update this analysis weekly through the 2008 Monsoon season. Results will change significantly (i.e., the inter year comparisons) as the season progresses. It is noticeable that the number of days rivers reached danger level in 2008 is much below the average of normal years (193).


Note: 1) Period considered: 1st June thru 18 August, (2) Normal Years: 1986, 1987, 1989-1997, 1999-2003, 2005, 2006
3) Mega Flood Years: 2007, 2004, 1998, 1988, (4) Analysis based on 45,188 (26 x 79 x 22) river level observations during previous years.

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Flood Risk Analysis

	Districts	River Basin	Heavy Rainfall events last 2 days (within zone)	Heavy Rainfall events last 2 days (upstream Basin)	River Levels (within zone)	River Levels (upstream basin)	Rainfall Forecast (next 48 hours)	Overall Flood Risk
Zone 1 North West	Panchagarh Nilphamari Lalmonirhat Rangpur	Tista	L	H	L	L	M	Low
Zone 2 North Central	Kurigram Gaibandha Jamalpur Sherpur Bogra Sirajganj Mymensingh Tangail	Brahmaputra/ Jamuna	L	L	M	L	M	Low
Zone 3 North East	Sylhet Sunamganj Netrokona Kishoreganj Habiganj Moulavibazar Narsingdi Brahmanbaria	Meghna	M	M	H	L	M	High
Zone 4 Central	Dhaka Gazipur Manikganj Munshiganj Narayanganj Faridpur Madaripur Shariatpur Chandpur	Convergence of Brahmaputra, Padma and Meghna	L	M	H	M	M	High
Zone 5 West Central	Rajshahi Nawabganj Natore Pabna Kushtia Meherpur Chuadanga Jhenaidah Magura Rajbari	Padma/ Ganges	L	L	M	H	M	Medium
Zone 6 South East	Comilla Lakshmipur Noakhali Feni Chittagong Khagrachari Rangamati Bandarban Cox's bazar	Lower Meghna	H	M	M	H	H	High
Zone 7 South West	Jessore Narail Gopalganj Satkhira Khulna Bagerhat Pirojpur Barisal Jhalokati Patuakhali Barguna Bhola	Coastal	L	L	L	M	H	Low

Methodology Used for Flood Risk Analysis (see matrix previous page)

Five simple indicators were used to estimate flood risk for seven zones within Bangladesh (see small inset map p-3). The indicators used are :

- (a) Heavy rainfall events during the last 2 days within the zone.
- (b) Heavy rainfall events during the last 2 days upstream from the zone
- (c) River levels within the zone
- (d) River levels upstream from the zone (either outside Bangladesh or inside)
- (e) Rainfall forecast/expected within approximately the next 48 hours.

The threshold used for defining “heavy” rainfall was 70 mms or more within a 24 hour period. Regarding river levels, only those cases where rivers were “at warning level or above”, were considered. The amount of rainfall expected/ forecast varied both across and within zones. Some areas are expected to receive as little as 15-20 mms total in the next 2-3 days, while others are forecast to receive 100-150 mms or more. A value of “low” in the table on page 3 will be closer to the low end of this range, a value of “high” will be closer to the high end.

All 5 indicators were used as inputs to determine “overall flood risk”. In order of importance, more consideration was given to “river levels within the zone”, moderate importance was given to river levels upstream and to recent rainfall upstream. Relatively lower consideration was given to rainfall in the zone and to the rainfall forecast.

Data and Information Sources**Rainfall Recent Past:**

BMD/ Bangladesh Meteorological Department
 FFWC/ Flood Forecasting and Warning Center: <http://www.ffwc.gov.bd/>
 IMD/ Indian Meteorological Department: <http://www.imd.gov.in>
 NASA TRMM/ Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission: http://trmm.gsfc.nasa.gov/publications_dir/potential_flood.html

Rainfall Forecast:

CPC/ Climate Prediction Center: <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>
 IMD/ Indian Meteorological Department: <http://www.imd.gov.in>

River Levels:

FFWC/ Flood Forecasting and Warning Center: <http://www.ffwc.gov.bd/>
 CWC/ Central Water Commission, India: <http://www.india-water.com/ffs/index.htm>

Note: 1. This Bulletin is available at WFP Bangladesh website at www.wfp.org/bangladesh and LCG DER Website at <http://www.lcgbangladesh.org/derweb/index.php>
 2. Comments on this bulletin should be sent to mmew.bangladesh@wfp.org