In northern India, ADRA distributes supplies in wake of widespread flooding

Posted: 03 Oct 2011 09:00 PM PDT

The humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is responding in the wake of monsoon rains that have flooded wide stretches of northern India, killing at least 80 people since August.

Possible Annual Council vote would change church

Posted: 02 Oct 2011 09:00 PM PDT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's top officials next week are expected to vote on a slew of business items, including a possible structural change for operations in the Middle East, as well as the location for the 2020 General Conference Session.
In northern India, ADRA distributes supplies in wake of widespread flooding

The humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is responding in the wake of monsoon rains that have flooded wide stretches of northern India, killing at least 80 people since August.

Flood waters collapsed mud huts and stranded hundreds of thousands of people in recent days.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency is providing clean water, sanitation and hygiene supplies, focusing on two districts in the state of Orissa, which has seen the most damage. While the water is beginning to recede, rains continue in these districts and the threat of water-born diseases and malaria outbreaks remains high, ADRA India reported.

While ADRA India's initial response was hampered by heavy rains and muddy conditions, officials were able to distribute supplies before access was affected by a second round of flooding.

ADRA India reported that hundreds of thousands of people have been evacuated to higher ground to escape the floodwaters in low-lying areas. More than 2,700 villages have been affected, with more than 300 square miles of cultivated land submerged. Reports indicate that schools in severely affected areas are closed until floodwaters recede.

Meanwhile, Adventists in northeast India said members were affected when a 6.9-magnitude earthquake struck the northern state of Sikkim near the border with Nepal last month.

Landslides blocking roads and electricity interruptions have made it impossible to contact many members, said Gordon Christo, secretary for the church's Southern Asia Division. Reports so far indicate that many homes and at least one church incurred damage, he said.

Adventist world church President Ted N. C. Wilson offered words of encouragement to members in India.

"May God guide each of you and your colleagues during this difficult time as the church and its agencies assess how best to help those in this situation," Wilson said in an email response to Christo.

For information on ADRA's continuing response in India, visit adra.org.
The Seventh-day Adventist Church's top officials next week are expected to vote on a slew of business items, including a possible structural change for operations in the Middle East, as well as the location for the 2020 General Conference Session.

The committee is scheduled to conduct business meetings starting Sunday at Annual Council, which is set for October 7 through October 12. Meetings will be held at the denomination's headquarters building in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

The committee is comprised of more than 300 world church executives, pastors and lay members.

An advance copy of the meeting agenda is not made public because it is not finalized until it is approved by the committee at the beginning of business.

Church officers confirmed that these items are set on the agenda, but specific details are not being released yet because of a need for committee members to hear of and vote on the items first, they said. Other potential agenda items include:


- A half-day of leadership development training.

- A demonstration of how some regions may require further membership analysis due to membership mortality rates being vastly different from local mortality rates of the general population.

- An announcement of research recently launched to guide future strategic planning. Studies will examine church employees, members and former members. Researchers will study their personal spiritual life patterns, as well as their views of the church and its operations.

- A discussion of the North American and Trans-European divisions' request for a variance to the requirement that conference presidents be ordained ministers.

- A continued discussion from Spring Meeting in April on how church administration can be more transparent and accountable.