

SEYCHELLES IS THE FIRST VICTIM OF TROPICAL CYCLONE 'FELLENG'

Highlights

Seychelles became the first victim to be affected by Tropical Cyclone "Felleng" between 27th to 29th January 2013 prompting the government to declare a state of emergency over three main districts along the east coast of Mahe. The total cost of losses and damages to property, agricultural losses and other infrastructures amounted to approximately **9 Million US Dollars**.

Situation Overview

Heavy rains battered the whole of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, prompting the government to declare the three districts along the east coast of Mahe as an emergency disaster zone on Monday 27th January.. Flash flooding, landslides and falling trees and boulders have inundated houses, blocked roads and caused significant losses and damages to property and other infrastructures amounting to approximately **9 Million US Dollars**

Many trees have been downed causing electricity outage across some parts of the country. The emergency services have been working hard to keep the situation under control and the roads clear. The four schools in the region were closed for three days

Warning and Rainfall Amount

Storm and flood warnings started on 26th January and remain in force till 29th January. Total rainfall recorded for 27th and 28th January amounted to 263mm representing 66% of the long term average of 400mm. The heavy rain started to fall on Sunday morning causing havoc in three districts in the east coast of Mahe, namely Pointe Larue, Aux Cap and Anse Aux Pins. Emergency broadcasts were sent just before mid-day to warn people of the ongoing bad weather and of places that were seen as dangerous. The Command Center within the Ministry of Environment and Energy raised the alert code to red; the alert applies for the whole of Mahe. Members of the public were advised to remain in their homes and refrained from making any trips except those that were essential. That was to avoid unnecessary road blockage or accidents that could have hampered the assistance being provided by the Emergency services. Members of the public were advised to use the La Misere route as there was a lot of congestion on the east coast road. Additional staff and volunteers were also mobilized to assess cases on the whole of Mahe, aside from the resources being given to the three districts in the east that had been mostly affected.

Damages

The rain caused severe flooding in places like Pointe Larue, Anse Aux Pins, and Au Cap, while all along the roads terraces had fallen onto the road to the point of causing blockades in some places. In some areas, roads were blocked momentarily by a small landslide of red earth. At Pointe Larue and Anse Aux Pins, roads were so flooded that ditches could not be seen and there were reports of vehicles driving into ditches. In some areas, water was up to waist-level or higher, flooding houses, properties and

damaging infrastructures. Hillsides eroded causing mudslide that pushed houses off their foundations, filled houses or even destroyed some completely. Heavy rainfall and runoffs also caused small streams and big rivers to overflow, resulting in flooding of low lying areas and roads. Cars even stalled and the police had to stop motorists from using the flooded roads on the east coast of Mahé. Over 400 houses were damaged and some people were forced to evacuate their homes.

Extraordinary Cabinet meeting

President James Michel convened an extraordinary Cabinet meeting the next morning in order to review the situation on the ground. He informed the cabinet of Ministers that the situation is so alarming taking into account the damages to over 400 households and infrastructures and forced some inhabitants to be evacuated. This has forced him to set up a Task Force to address the emerging issues concerning the disaster.

National Disaster Relief Fund

President James Michel set up a National Disaster Relief Fund imminently in order to raise local and international financial assistance for the families who were left without a home during the floods, as well as those who will need to repair their homes, as well as the surrounding infrastructure.

Cost of the losses and damages

The total cost of losses and damages to property and other infrastructures amounted to approximately **9 Million US Dollars**.