



**CATASTROPHIC FLOODS
IN ROMANIA
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PRESENT PROPORTIONS OF INUNDATIONS IN ROMANIA

Since May 12, vast territories in Romania have been devastated by violent and successive tides of inundations with unprecedented proportions and destructive effects in the country's whole history. The torrential rains fallen all along the Carpathian range, especially in the east and north-east of the country, amounted to 200 l/sq.m. being two and even threefold the quantity usually registered in May since almost one century. (The data concerning the atmospheric precipitations - included in Romania's statistical yearbook - show that the average quantity of water from rains in May amounted to 88.6 l in the Someş river basin and 87 l in the Mureş river basin).

As a consequence, highfloods occurred on the inter-Carpathian slopes and on the main inland rivers; overflowing the rivers' banks on large areas, the violent rush of torrents destroyed towns and villages, causing casualties and immense material damages. Most heavily affected have been the counties in Transylvania where, according to preliminary estimations, the material damages amounted to several thousand million lei.

The proportions of the inundations have been suddenly resimplified and extended following a new tide of floods caused by the torrential rainfalls late last week and early this week all over the country, which were accompanied in the mountain area by abundant snows unusual in Romania for the second half of May and so far "the month of flowers". The new tide of floods has stricken for the second time a series of localities not yet recovered from the previous overflows such as the towns of Tîrnăveni, Mediaş, Sighişoara, Alba Iulia, as well as further numerous localities in the Alba, Hunedoara and Arad counties which are still flooded.

The proportions of the second tide of overflows have been still higher than those of the previous tide especially on the Olt Valley, where the water still covers hundreds of kilometres.

All counties of Romania have been afflicted by floods these last two weeks to a greater or smaller extent.

According to the latest centralized data, during the floods occurred in these dramatic weeks of May, some 900,000 ha. were covered by water. As many as 1,467 localities were entirely or partially flooded. 268,000 people were evacuated from the flooded areas or from those threatened by floods. Identified until May 20 were 148 dead and 28 people are missing.

Hundreds of thousands of cattle were evacuated from the areas affected by floods; over 34,000 cattle and 35,000 poultry were drowned.

The floods covered 73,900 houses (of which 38,701 destroyed or damaged), and 98,238 further constructions (of which 11,752 destroyed or damaged). The waters penetrated into 270 productive units, of which 91 were damaged. In face of the threatening floods, further hundreds of industrial combines, factories and mills interrupted their activity and the workers participated in the energetic actions undertaken for halting the overflows, for diminishing as much as possible the destructive effects of the floods.

The floods seriously affected the transport and telecommunication network and the national grid. The high-floods, the overflows and the arthslides, frequently occurred during the inundations, destroyed or damaged 907 bridges, 1,572 small bridges, 529 km. of asphalted highways, 1,797 km of paved roads, 263 km of standard railways, over 1,200 km of narrow railways, 1,859 electric lines, 937 telephons lins, etc.

After the second tide of the inundations, some rivers withdrew on their inferior courses. The level of rivers Mureş, Siret and Prut, although still above the flood-mark, shows, in some areas, a tendency to decrease.

At the same time, the inundations keep extending at the confluence of river Olt with the Danube and generally in the counties along the Danube. In Teleorman county, for instance, the flooded area is of almost 16,000 ha; in Ilfov county, two localities are partially flooded, as well as 10 productive units, the port platforms and 45,000 ha of land; in Brăila county, 6 localities are flooded as well as 4 productive units and 320,000 ha of land, while in Galaţi county - 27,540 ha and, partially, 11 localities.

The fact that in certain localities of Transylvania and Banat, in the North and Centre of Moldova, the waters recede and that the overflows penetrate into further localities in the Romanian Plain and in Dobrogea arises, quite naturally, the question: "What are the present proportions of floods in Romania?"

According to the data supplied by the Commission for protection against floods, the situation in Romania on May 29 (in the morning) is as follows: 385 localities entirely or partially flooded; 14,528 houses and 6,343 further constructions flooded; 457,050 ha under water.

As the water recedes, a sustained activity is going on day and night in all localities for making good the huge damages caused by the calamity, so that the social and economic life should fastest possible resume its normal course. However, 34 productive units are still flooded, of which 25 damaged.

Supported by militarymen, the workers of the transport and telecommunication sectors are making intensive efforts so that normal activity could be resumed fastest possible in these vital sectors of the national economy. As many as

588 bridges are still destroyed or damaged as well as 631 small bridges, 298 km of asphalted highways, 649 km of paved roads, 4,232 km of forest roads, 72 km of standard railways, 101 km of narrow railways, 259 km of forest railways, 213 km of electric lines and 15 km of telephone lines.

The number of flood victims is of 88,522. Evacuated from the flooded areas were 106,150 cattle.

The efforts of the Romanian people continue to be focused in this fight against the vicissitudes of Nature, on the fastest possible recovery from the destructions caused by the overflows of inland rivers and the prevention of further destructions entailed by the threatening rising of the Danube level.

DECISION FOR HELPING THE FLOOD VICTIMS AND THE
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION COOPERATIVES

A Decision of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, of the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Romania and of the National Council of the Socialist Unity Front concerning some measures for helping the population and the agricultural production cooperatives afflicted by the natural calamity of May 1970, was released by the Romanian press on May 29.

The socialist State - the Decision stresses - has granted and grants permanent support to the flood victims. As is known, from the first days, special funds amounting to 400,000,000 lei have been earmarked for the immediate support of the population.

Taking into consideration the heavy losses in the flood-stricken areas and the necessity of a fastest possible solving of the problems related to the re-making of the individual households of those who have suffered from the calamity, and to the support of the afflicted agricultural cooperatives, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, the Council of Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the National Council of the Socialist Unity Front have decided on some measures including:

The citizens of municipalities and towns whose privately-owned dwellings have been completely destroyed, can receive, if they wish, privately-owned flats in the blocks which are being built by the State. 5,000 flats will be built in 1970 over the State Plan provisions, in the flood-stricken areas.

The citizens whose privately-owned homes were destroyed or damaged by the floods will receive help and compensations of between 5,000 and 20,000 lei, according to case.

For the re-making of the household and personal effects destroyed by the calamity, the citizens in towns and villages are granted a relief - consisting of objects and money - to the value of up to 5,000 lei.

For the re-making and restoration of the dwellings destroyed or damaged, the citizens will benefit by some facilities: procurement of building materials at delivery prices without taxes on goods turnover, exemption from taxes for getting the construction licence and the registering of the proprietor's right.

Support will be granted to the agricultural production cooperatives, contingent upon the damages suffered and the economic might of the agricultural production cooperative, to re-make the destroyed buildings and crops, as well as the productive potential diminished following the floods. The cooperative units will benefit by procurement of building materials at delivery price being exempted from taxes on goods turnover and from taxes on getting the construction licence.

The support and facilities granted under the present decision, will enable the flood victims to make up soonest possible for the damages, to recover the households and the assets destroyed, to resume a normal course of life, the decision shows in conclusion.

RED CROSS HELPS FLOOD VICTIMS

Since the very first days of the catastrophic floods occurred in Romania, the Romanian Red Cross Society receives daily important amounts of medicines, foodstuff, clothing and sanitary materials, as well as telegrams and messages of sympathy for the Romanian people, so hardly tried these days.

The British Red Cross has sent a relief worth 1,000 pounds.

From Austria received were many first aid kits and clothing.

The Bulgarian Red Cross has sent 40 tons of foodstuff, medicines and blankets.

Besides reliefs consisting of clothing, the Canadian Red Cross deposited on the account of the Romanian Red Cross 35,000 dollars.

From Denmark have arrived two planes with 10,000 kg. of foodstuff and medicines.

The Swiss Red Cross has sent three airplanes with over 25 tons of powder milk and dietetical foodstuff, a big quantity of gammaglobulin, a generating set, and 40 filters for drinking water.

On behalf of the Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic 10 tons of foodstuff, blankets, tents and medicines were sent.

The Red Cross of West Germany has sent 6 transports of foodstuff, medicines, clothing, 2 generator sets, 13 water purification aggregates.

The Red Cross of Greece has sent 1,500 kg. of foodstuffs and medicines.

4,000 bottles with gammaglobulin were received from Finland.

Medicines, blankets and tents were received from

"The Lion and Red Sun" of Iran. The Iranian organization has also donated 10,000 US dollars to the Romanian Red Cross.

1,500 kg. powder milk and half-a-ton of medicines arrived in Romania from the "Sign of David" organization of Israel.

The Yugoslav Red Cross has dispatched medicines directly to the flood victims of Arad county.

The Norwegian Red Cross offered 50,000 kroners to the International Relief Union.

The Dutch Red Cross has sent 10 tons of dietetical foodstuff, medicines and 1,200 blankets.

The Red Cross of the USA has dispatched 5,000 vials of gammaglobulin and further medicines, as well as 10,000 dollars.

A relief worth 450,000 kroners is expected to arrive from Sweden. This country has already sent a great quantity of medicines, clothing, blankets and powder milk.

The Red Crescent of Turkey has sent an airplane with foodstuff, medicines, clothing and blankets.

The Red Cross and the Red Crescent of the USSR have sent an airplane with 12 tons of foodstuff and medicines.

Besides the relief received in Romania until May 29, further relief is announced to be sent by:

The Red Cross Society of Belgium (over two-and-a-half tons of baby foodstuff and medicines);

the Red Crescent of Tunisia (1,500 blankets).

The Red Cross of the Chinese People's Republic has announced a relief consisting of foodstuff and medicines worth 500,000 Yuans, and also the sum of 500,000 yuans.

The League of Red Cross Societies, the Red Crescent and the Lion and Red Sun with headquarters in Geneva, have transferred 200,000 Swiss francs on the account of the Romanian Red Cross.

Proving a high spirit of human solidarity many of the above-mentioned societies intend to send further reliefs for the diminishing of the tragical consequences the floods caused to the population in the affected areas of Romania. These expressions of humaneness won the gratitude of the Romanian people and help to ease the sufferings of scores of thousands of people affected by this calamity without precedent in the country's history.

RELIEF FUND RISES TO 32.6 MILLION LEI

Money deposits on Savings Bank account no. 2,000 is on a steady increase. By May 28, these deposits meant for relief to the flood-stricken population, stood at 32.6 million lei.

In the last two days alone, deposits by citizens in Bucharest totalled 1,817,370 lei, of Arad county 1,075,549 lei, of Cluj 580,000 lei and of Argeş 556,000 lei.

SHORT RETROSPECTIVE OF THE DEVELOPMENTS CONNECTED
WITH THE NATURAL CALAMITIES THAT PLAYED HAVOC IN

ROMANIA

George Radu Chirovici signs an article with the above headline in newspaper Scinteia of May 29.

The whole country still lives under the strong impression produced by the natural calamities, by the staunch battle with the ravaging waters. In some areas this battle is still going strong.

Recalling the conditions under which a natural calamity, of absolutely unexpected proportions - unforeseen by meteorologists and hydrologists - suddenly and devastatingly swept Romania at the beginning of the second decade of the month of May, a calamity that has no precedent as regards scale and gravity in the history of this country, Scinteia writes:

From the very first hours of the outbreak of this extraordinary situation, in all flooded counties or in those threatened by floods, exceptional measures were taken, measures required by the situation. The Party and State leadership organized and concentrated immediately big forces to stop, as far as was possible, the floodings, to prevent and to limit the material damages. The counties situated downstream of the high flood were constantly kept informed about the water levels and flow. A close cooperation, a continuous information and mutual help was organized among the counties. In this way, many human lives and many material assets were saved. The entire country was mobilized on a scale unprecedented in peace time, due to which it was possible to prevent even greater destructions being caused by the natural elements.

Nicolae Ceaușescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, went on the spot; other Party and State leaders were present in the counties. The set of measures taken were finally conducive to the fact, that, where time permitted, the heroic efforts of the people in the threatened areas were crowned with success. Telling in this respect is the town of Arad which was saved by its inhabitants.

Spotlighting that the press and the radio and television in this country kept public opinion abreast with the developments, with the tremendous battle with nature, and that the international press, radio and television stations in Europe and on other continents as well as the international news agencies also sent out news about the events connected with the natural calamities that played havoc in Romania "Scinteia" writes:

After the devastating torrents had swept the banks of the Romanian area, these last few days the waters penetrated into the territory of the neighbour country, the Hungarian People's Republic. Concomitantly, a second tide of floodings befell tens of localities in Romania, some of them for the second time.

At the same time, parallel with the fight against the waters on the national territory, the authorities in the border counties got into touch with the Hungarian authorities in the neighbour counties. In the very first hours of May 14, the Office of Land Funds, Water Administration and Land Melioration in Timișoara town cabled to the Hungarian side the level of Mureș river. Over May 14-17, the office has dispatched to the Hungarian side 14 telegrams on the water level and forecasts for the Mureș river. On May 19, Teodor Has, First Secretary of the Arad County RCP Committee met Mihaly Komocsin, Deputy Secretary of the Csongrad county HSWP Committee at the border locality of Nadlag. They discussed the situation created by the floods. The Hungarian

side was supplied all the time with all the necessary information in connection with the overflow of the rivers that cross both countries and was also informed about all the measures taken by the Romanian authorities. In the first hours of May 14, the similar office in Satu Mare informed the Hungarian side in two cables about the levels of Someş, Crasna and Tur rivers, information which continued also in the following days. Similar actions were undertaken by offices in Arad and Oradea as well as by the central bodies. Thus telephone conversations took place between the General Director of Water Administration within the Ministry of Agriculture and Silviculture and the Vice-Chairman of the Budapest Waters National Office as well as between Engineer Barbu Popescu, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Silviculture, and Feher Lajos, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic. On May 18, the Romanian authorities visited the Hungarian territory and the Hungarian authorities made an air reconnaissance by helicopter over the flooded areas up to Arad.

Mentioned is that the battle with the waters has entered a new stage. The caprices of nature make that the overflowed waters that have passed from the Romanian territory on the Hungarian one return by a real circuit on the Romanian territory, causing further dangers, posing new problems to the Romanian citizens, so heavily tried in this prolonged fight with ravaging nature. Thus, following the big quantities of waters carried by the Tisa, a highflood started on the Danube that will cross the Romanian course of the river over June 2-12. Threatened are the localities on the banks of the river, the ports, the big draining and damming operations undertaken in the last few years, the pools of Brăila and Ialomița, which are reach in grains. Measures imposed by

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mobilization of these forces, the self denial with which the people work day and night, the deeds of valour, heroism and devotion which the press, radion and television bring home to us every day, give us the conviction that the big battle against the fury of waters will be won. The Romanian people, whose will is undefeatable, is determined, that under the leadership of the Communist Party and of the Government, not to give way even an inch in the battle with the onrushing waters, to protect its wealth, its new life, the bright future of the homeland, winds up the article in "Scînteia".

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