

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

20 February 2007 – The district government receives a "Blue Alert" from the provincial government, warning of the approach of the severe tropical cyclone Favio.

On the afternoon of the same day, the district government of Buzi convenes to take decisions in response to this event. The analysis and forecasting group of the SIDPABB (People-Oriented Inter-District Operational Flood Warning Management System for the Buzi River Basin) is involved, to monitor the catchment area and determine precipitation figures and river water levels.

21 February 2007 – The district government receives a "Yellow Alert" from the provincial government, warning of the approach of the severe tropical cyclone Favio. The district office of the COE (Council of Churches) is called in and working groups formed. Instructions are issued to local council heads, heads of administrative offices and members of local committees of the GRC (World Institute for Disaster Risk Management) over radio systems provided by the SIDPABB and the community, requesting them to raise the alarm and warn the population of Favio's approach.

The local GRC committees of Muchenesse, Inharogue, Munamicua, Grudja, Begaja, Inhanjou, Estaquinha and Mamunje raise the alarm and urgently spread word of the approaching cyclone to the population, employing such traditional means as drums, whistles and megaphones. All administrative offices are informed of Favio's approach. The population responds to the warning and begins to flee the risk zones for previously identified safe zones by its own means.

22 February 2007 – The district government receives a "Red Alert" from the provincial government, warning of the imminent arrival of the severe tropical cyclone Favio. Instructions are issued to close schools and take precautionary measures. At around 7.30 pm, Favio devastates the Buzi district, destroying houses and power plants and wreaking incalculable damage.

23 February 2007 – Torrential rain is registered and the district government monitors the rising water level of the Buzi, Dombe and Grudja Rivers via SIDPABB measuring stations located in Dombe and Grudja.

24 February 2007 – The torrential rains grow ever heavier in the upper reaches of the Buzi River catchment area and river water levels surge, exceeding flood alert levels. The Buzi district government orders the evacuation of the Grudja community and the town districts Mandiri I and Mandiri II, Guara-guara and Zindoga, but the order to leave the risk zones is met with some resistance from the population. The government-owned and private means of transport available in the district are used in the evacuation (five ships, carts¹ and tractors). The GRC committees and Red Cross aid workers play a crucial role in these procedures.

25 February 2007 – All lower-lying, flood-risk zones in the Buzi district are completely inundated, including the town districts of the capital of Buzi. All access roads to the Buzi conurbation are cut off.

The deputy national director of the INGC (National Disaster Management Institute) flies over the catchment area of the Buzi and requests information from the district government. At the CENOU² briefing in Caia, the deputy director of the INGC praises the work done by the Buzi district government and the local GRC committees.

26 February 2007 – The process of compiling preliminary information on affected persons and the damage caused both by Favio and the flooding begins. The damage figures are dramatic, but the situation could have been much worse if measures had not been taken to prepare the flood emergency response management (through simulations, training and sensitisation).

Sérgio Sional Moiane

(Administrator of the Buzi district)

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¹ TN.: In some regions, "carro" can also mean "motorcar".

² TN.: Abbreviation could not be deciphered.