UNITED STATES CONSULATE GENERAL CHENNAI, INDIA

Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Heavy Rains and Flooding in Chennai, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry

December 2, 2015

The city of Chennai and surrounding areas in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu as well as the adjacent Union Territory of Pondicherry (Puducherry) have experienced very heavy rains in recent weeks resulting in localized flooding, which has been severe in some areas. The Adyar River has overflowed its banks and rains are expected to continue for several days. U.S. citizens visiting and residing in the area should exercise caution. All flights into and out of Chennai International Airport have been temporarily suspended until at least Thursday morning. Power has been cut throughout Chennai, though some hotels and businesses continue to operate with back-up generators. Most hotels that remain open report that they are at capacity. The U.S. Consulate General in Chennai remains open with minimal staffing but has temporarily suspended visa services and non-emergency services for U.S. citizens. Travelers should consider deferring non-essential travel to the area.

Many roads and bridges have been closed in Chennai. Walking and driving in flooded areas can be extremely dangerous and should be avoided. Manhole covers may be missing and invisible. Flooding is often deeper than is apparent and currents may be swift. Flash floods are possible and happen quickly and without warning. Several deaths associated with flooding have been reported.

U.S. citizens remaining in flood affected areas are encouraged to take stock of food and water supplies and ensure that they have adequate food and drinking water to last several days. Remember that during flooding and its immediate aftermath there is an elevated risk from many water-borne diseases.

The Chennai International Airport is closed and no flights are currently operating. Travelers should consult airlines for updated information on airport operations and status of flights.

Key Emergency Phone Numbers in Tamil Nadu:

Emergency Toll Free No: 1913

State Emergency: 1070

District Emergency: 1077

Electricity: 1912

Fire & Rescue: 101

Ambulance: 108

Key Emergency Phone Numbers in Pondicherry:

Police: 100

Ambulance: 102

Natural Disaster Control Room: 1096

Fire: 101

U.S. citizens living and traveling in Tamil Nadu are strongly encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) and update their contact information with the U.S. Consulate General Chennai. Enrolling facilitates the U.S. Mission's contact with U.S. citizens in emergencies, and may be done online and in advance of travel. Information on enrolling with STEP can be found at the U.S. Department of State's Consular Affairs website at http://step.state.gov.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's Consular Affairs website at http://travel.state.gov, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings and health-information resources can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada, or for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Consulate Chennai is located at Gemini Circle, Chennai 600 006. The 24-hour switchboard telephone for U.S. Consulate General Chennai number is +91-044-2857-4000.