



TARAWA EXPEDITIONARY STRIKE GROUP

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Tarawa Arrives to Aid in Tropical Cyclone Humanitarian Efforts

From USS Tarawa Public Affairs

USS TARAWA, At Sea – The amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1) and its embarked 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) arrived off the coast of Bangladesh Dec. 3 to support on-going Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HA/DR) operations.

Tarawa's arrival is part of a continued response to a request by the Government of Bangladesh for assistance in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Sidr.

“We train for these types of operations to ensure that we're ready to help in a moment's notice. The U.S. military has a history of working with international relief organizations and host nations to reach those affected by disaster,” said Capt. John Miley, Commander Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 1, embarked aboard Tarawa. “We're set up to be flexible; that's how we do things, we're highly-trained and we feel fortunate that we can reassure our friends and allies of our commitment to the region.”

The U.S. military has worked in coordination with Bangladesh government officials, military leaders and international aid organizations in order to ease suffering and provide assistance.

The San Diego-based ship's embarked helicopters and landing craft air cushion (LCAC) can deliver food, medicine and thousands of gallons of fresh water ashore, helping to save lives, lessen suffering, and aid in helping prevent the onset of tropical cyclone-related medical illnesses.

“We provide a unique mix of capabilities including airlift, logistics support and the ability to support the humanitarian relief efforts already in place,” said Col. J.W. Bullard, commanding officer of the 11th MEU (SOC). “We are here to demonstrate our resolve in supporting the Bangladeshi government, its military and non-governmental organizations and more importantly, to assist in alleviating the suffering of those Bangladeshi citizens affected by the disaster.”

Last week, Tarawa was directed to make best speed towards Bangladesh from the Western Pacific where they were underway on a routine deployment in support of maritime security operations. Tarawa left its home port of San Diego Nov. 5.