

### RAINSTORMS BRING NORTH ITALY WRACKING FLOODS

Scores of villages were flooded all over Piedmont and Lombardy regions the other night as some of the worst June rainstorms in memory swept the Alpine villages and rich valleys of this North-West Italian area.

Officials said frosts in the past six weeks and now the rains had caused damage to agriculture estimated at 35,000 million lire. Thousands of farmers, grape-growers and peasants face ruin.

Soon convoys of trucks were being loaded with food, clothing and medicines for the people of the Susa Valley, the worst hit spot in the region. Landslides and floods have blocked the whole of the upper Susa Valley and most of the lower part of the valley and the population of many villages have lost their homes.

Floods and landslides have also cut train lines in other parts of the region. Bridges have been washed away, houses crushed. Vineyards, cornfields and orchards have been devastated, and acres of vegetables in Piedmont's market gardens ruined. The crop in the Vercelli rice-fields is seriously threatened and at least 25 percent is already unmarketable.

Engineers were meanwhile anxiously watching the Po River near Turin: the river has swollen to a level 3.7 metres (12 feet) above normal, and in some places it has risen above danger point. If it continues to swell, flooding in the Po delta is feared.