

Climate hero

My name is Mohir Uddin Hariapa.

I am 99 years old. I live near the Brahmaputra River in the North East of India.

The river has always flooded. When I was a boy the floods made us happy. The waters entered the villages slowly. They brought fish and helped things to grow.

Now the floods are changing. They are much worse than in my childhood. Then the rain was slow and drizzly. Now it's huge downpours.

I have seen children and old people swept away by floods and houses destroyed. The flood water has silt (mud) in it and it takes out the nutrition from the land. These are times of starvation for us.

Huge snakes come out during the floods. They can be up to 12 feet long. They come into our houses while we are sleeping. Their bite can be deadly.

I teach the children about the warning signs of floods. You can tell if a flood is coming by looking at the sky. Colours or cloud patterns might look different from usual.

Animals and birds give lots of clues too. "Dub! Dub!" is the emergency call of the Kora bird. When you hear this call at sunset it means floods are on their way.

Then the children prepare by climbing onto the bamboo platforms in their houses. These are raised high above the ground and keep them safe from the raging waters.

