

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

EAST & SOUTHEAST ASIA: TYPHOON AERE AND TYPHOON CHABA

26 August 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This Information Bulletin (no. 01/2004) is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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The Situation

Over the past 48 hours over a million people have had to be evacuated as two powerful typhoons, Typhoon Aere and Typhoon Chaba have been adversely affecting parts of East Asia and the Philippines.

East Asia

Some 516,000 people were evacuated earlier this week in response to the approach of Typhoon Aere which struck Taiwan with winds measuring as high as 165 kilometres per hour on Tuesday 24 August, triggering flooding and landslides throughout central and northern Taiwan. Thousands of homes were damaged in northern Taiwan, and thousands of people in the mountainous area of Hsinchu were stranded due to blocked roads. The typhoon also hit areas in Taichung and Nantou counties that were damaged in early July by typhoon Mindulle. According to representatives from the Taiwan Red Cross Organisation (TRCO) many mountainous areas where the typhoon triggered mudslides were less dangerous because they have been uninhabited since Mindulle. However 80 townships and rural areas throughout the island are said to still be under the threat of further landslides triggered by the heavy rainfall which in some areas was recorded to be as high as 2,000 mm. On Thursday 26 August, eight people were confirmed dead and 24 missing by rescue teams who were working in Tochang village were as many as 15 people are feared to be dead following mudslides following over 24 hours of severe storm conditions.

On Wednesday 25 August, Typhoon Aere, the 18th typhoon this year, also destroyed 8,270 houses and 46,800 hectares of farmland in eastern China's Fujian Province. According to the Fujian Water Resources Department six reservoirs have been badly damaged and 50 dams had been breached. The local government's swift evacuation of over one million people in Fujian and Zhejiang Provinces in advance of the typhoon's arrival limited the death toll and number of injuries, however, some people are still missing and there have been a few typhoon related deaths due to accidents at sea. Fujian and Zhejiang Provinces, eastern Jiangxi Province and northern and eastern

East and Southeast Asia: Typhoon Aere and Typhoon Chaba

Guangdong Province were also affected by heavy torrential rains which have increased the threat of further deadly landslides. The typhoon has arrived only two weeks after typhoon Rananim which destroyed 42,400 homes and killed 164 people.

Elsewhere in East Asia, Typhoon Aere battered Japan's southern Okinawan islands, leaving two girls dead and injuring at least two more, while cutting off electricity to about 7,200 households. Japan, as with the rest of East Asia, has also suffered due to the series of typhoons including Typhoon Megi which struck western Japan and the Republic of Korea slightly over one week ago.

Philippines

In the Philippines, four people were killed and three were missing due to heavy rains that triggered landslides and flooding caused by Typhoon Aere and by Typhoon Chaba. There was heavy flooding in metropolitan Manila caused by the typhoons' heavy rains. Most of the flooding occurred in Quezon City and Rizal Province, affecting an estimated 650 families. The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) chapters in the affected areas deployed their disaster response teams to help the government to conduct assessments. As of 10h00 am on 26 August a total of 4,094 families have been affected comprising 24,564 persons. 327 of these families have been evacuated to the evacuation centres and two people were confirmed dead due to drowning.

Typhoon Chaba is now reported to be moving toward the islands of Okinawa Prefecture and the Kyushu region in Japan.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

East Asia

The Secretary General and the Head of the Red Cross Society of China's relief division are currently with representatives of the Macao Red Cross in Zhejiang Province to distribute relief items where Typhoon Rananim caused billions of RMB in damage. Already affected communities in Zhejiang are particularly vulnerable to the possible consequences of further typhoons striking the province.

In Taiwan, the TRCO is focusing on assisting flood victims from Sanchung and Miaoli and the organisation has also set up a telephone hotline to provide further support to the affected communities. Most recently a major landslide hit one small village, with a significant increase in the number of casualties (the number of dead has increased to 23, with 5 missing and 35 injured). Two TRCO branches have been involved in action and have distributed 100 coats, 100 sleeping bags, and 100 blankets from their DP centres.

The Philippines

PNRC Chapter Disaster Response Teams from different chapters in metro Manila (Manila, Quezon City, Caloocan City, Pasay City, Valenzuela City and Rizal) had been deployed in the affected areas to conduct rapid assessment and to provide assistance in terms of rescue, evacuation, psychological support and first aid treatment to the affected families.

PNRC Chapters are also providing local relief assistance and two disaster relief teams have been placed on-stand by in case the need arises.

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