

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

IRAN: TRAIN BLAST

19 February 2004

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Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: N/A

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.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

In Brief

This document is being issued for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The Situation

On 18 February, a train carrying sulphur, petrol and fertilizer derailed at 4:00 am (local time) caught fire near the city of Neyshabour in the north eastern Iranian province of Khorasan. A huge explosion followed at 9:37am. According to Reuters, nearly 300 people were killed and some 450 others injured. More bodies may be found under the ruins of a devastated Khayam Station, near Neyshabour town.

Reportedly, the explosion claimed a number of lives among local fire crews and relief workers whilst they were rescuing the victims. The blast affected five villages and seriously damaged Dehno, Abdulabad and Hashemabad villages (the three later being the nearest to the Khayam railway station). An estimate number of 380 people have been affected in the neighbouring villages.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The branch in Khorasan province of the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRCS) immediately mobilized its relief teams to assist those affected by the incident. The IRCS teams started to evacuate, shelter the displaced and dispatch the injured to the nearby medical centres and hospitals. The arrival on the spot of the first assessment team from the National Society as well as of additional medical and tracing teams and 13 ambulances will enhance the operational capacity of the IRCS on the site of the disaster.

According to the IRCS Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization, more than 200 relief workers, members of some 30 relief and rescue teams which are fully equipped with relief and rescue materials, have been deployed and are currently providing assistance to the affected people. The Iranian Red Crescent is distributing food and non-food relief goods such as blanket, tuna fish, canned food, biscuits, rice and pulses amongst the sheltered people.

Head of international communications and reporting from the IRCS and Federation ECHO reporting delegate based in Teheran will arrive in Mashad in the evening of 19 February to gather information and backup the teams already on the ground especially in terms of reporting and media coverage.

Country/Region: Disaster; Information Bulletin no. xx

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>