

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

CHINA : GANSU EARTHQUAKE

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

The Situation

According to the state media, two earthquakes measuring respectively 6.1 degrees and 5.8 degrees on the Richter scale hit Northwest China's Gansu Province on Saturday evening, October 25. The quake killed nine and injured 43 people, of whom at least six are in serious conditions. The twin earthquakes jolted areas between Mingle and Shandan counties of Zhangye City in Gansu at 20:41 and 20:48. The epicentres were located at about 500 kilometres northwest of Lanzhou, capital of Gansu Province.

The Ministry of Civil Affairs has confirmed that the tremors struck 22 towns in Mingle, Shandan and Sunan counties, affecting more than 137,000 people. The initial damage indicates that nearly 10,000 houses were either damaged or destroyed and 3,000 head of livestock were killed or hurt. Heavy damages have been reported to local infrastructure like roads, bridges, communications, water and power supplies.

The Gansu provincial government and the State Seismological Bureau have jointly sent a task force to assess the situation and organise rescue work. The central government has earmarked RMB 7M (US 843,000) as an initial emergency relief fund for the victims. The Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs sent 2,000 tents to the disaster area where night temperatures drop below zero Celsius degree. The Civil Affairs Provincial Bureau has also dispatched 320 tents. Zhangye local authorities have collected 60,000 packets of instant noodles and 42 additional tents. Food and relief materials are being distributed to the victims.

Zhangye City, with a population of 1.2 million, sits aside the Silk Road, which for centuries was the path of merchants between Europe and China. The last big tremor in the seismic zone was in 1954 when a strong quake measuring 7.25 degrees on the Richter scale struck Shandan County, claiming 50 lives and wounding more than 300.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The Red Cross Society of China's Gansu Provincial branch responded immediately to the earthquake. They sent a team to the affected area to assess the situation and have started distributing needed relief items. The RCSC national headquarters in Beijing released 50 winter tents and 1,607 quilts from their Shaanxi Disaster Preparedness Centre. One third of the wheat flour valued at RMB 300,000 sent earlier as preparedness stocks

to Gansu by the RCSC's headquarters will be distributed to the quake victims. Clothing collected by the RCSC's Shanghai Provincial branch arrived in the affected area on Sunday, October 26.

Federation's DP/DR Delegate will be travelling to Gansu Province tomorrow together with the RCSC Secretary General and two members of the relief department to assess the situation. The team will be accompanied by a camera person from the NS's information department.

The RCSC will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep the international community informed of developments and required assistance.

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

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.