

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

INDONESIA: MENTAWAI EARTHQUAKE

11 April 2005

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

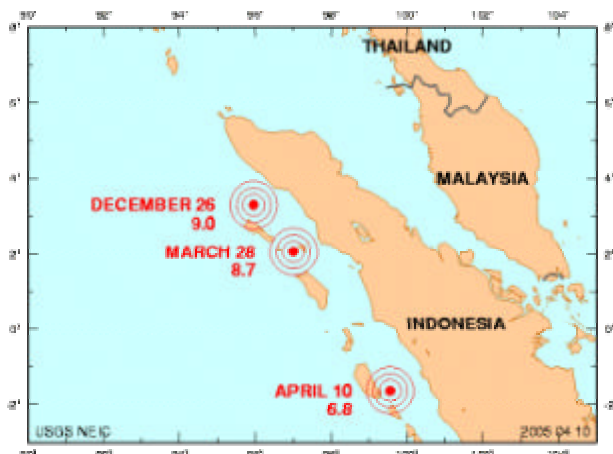
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The Situation



Source: US Geological Survey

An earthquake of magnitude 6.8 on the Richter scale struck the Mentawai islands, off the west coast of Sumatra in Indonesia at 17:29 local time on 10 April. Two weeks earlier, a massive earthquake devastated the island of Nias, situated directly above Mentawai.

Mass panic ensued in Padang and Pekanbaru, provincial capitals on Sumatra, with many people fleeing their homes for higher ground. Local authorities alerted residents to evacuate but they have since returned as the threat of imminent disaster ceased.

No tsunami alerts were issued and despite pleas from the government to remain calm, roving populations from Nias and western coastal areas of Sumatra are rapidly moving

away from the areas of devastation for fear of aftershocks. Prompted by persisting rumours of tsunami threats and

continuing strong tremors in the region, an estimated 34,000 people have abandoned their homes for safer territories.

There are reports that three people were killed as a result of traffic accidents that occurred as people rushed to evacuate.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Indonesian Red Cross (Palang Merah Indonesia/PMI) has mobilized rapid response teams (Satgana teams) through its nearest branches in Padang to be on standby. They are now working to establish communications and work in close coordination with the local district coordinating unit for the management of disaster and internally displaced persons (IDPs)/refugees (SATLAK PB) on damage and needs assessment. A team from this unit left for the Mentawai islands this morning by boat and includes a representative of PMI.

Ongoing relief efforts on Nias are hampered by the constant relocation of populations as affected people try to leave the islands for mainland Sumatra.

The PMI national headquarters continues to monitor the situation in close coordination with the West Sumatra chapter.

This info bulletin will be updated only in the event of new developments or dramatic findings from the assessment team.

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