

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

NEPAL: DEMONSTRATIONS

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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 183 countries.

In Brief

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

The seven major political parties of Nepal have been demonstrating against the government since King Gyanendra took power in February 2005. Over the last few months, however, the demonstrations had been of a limited scale, rarely requiring emergency assistance. The situation deteriorated when the seven political parties reached an understanding with the Nepal Communist Party of Nepal – Maoists (CPN-M) and called a nationwide general strike starting 6th April 2006. The government has stated that there has been Maoist infiltration in the

demonstrations and has imposed all security measures including a daytime curfew in the capital and many major cities in other parts of the country. The demonstrators have continuously defied the curfew to continue their street protests. Due to this, six people have already lost their lives and hundreds of demonstrators, journalists and also security personnel have been injured in the clashes between the demonstrators and the security forces. Nepal Medical Council has estimated that about 3,000 people have been injured so far.

The night time curfew that started on 5th April is still continuing in the capital, but the daytime curfew was lifted on the 12th April. Curfew is also in effect in many cities outside Kathmandu. The demonstrators, however, have continuously taken to the streets. This has left hundred of people wounded. For the first few days the injuries were basically due to baton charge and pelting of stones but recently more people have received gun-shot wounds. Hundreds of people are said to have been wounded everyday only in Kathmandu and the adjoining cities. The hospitals have been full of the wounded people, with both minor and major injuries, and demonstrations are still going on. It seems more emergencies will arise in the coming days and need for care and treatment of the wounded may arise both in the capital and other parts of the country.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) has been actively involved in providing first aid to the people wounded in the clashes between the security forces and the demonstrators both in the capital and other parts of the country. The NRCS deployed a mobile team of first aid volunteers on the first day of the general strike, 6th April. The team provided first aid to demonstrators, security forces and journalists. Their prompt service was appreciated by many and the NRCS was requested to provide the service on a bigger scale. As a precautionary measure in view of the potential rise in tensions, the NRCS deployed a total of 60 first aid volunteers in six first aid teams and three mobile teams in the Kathmandu valley.

As of 12th April the NRCS has provided first aid service to 659 wounded persons. They have provided three types of service: on the spot first aid, referral to hospital and transportation for the patients back home, as public transport is not available due to the strike. The trained first aid volunteers have also transported 113 wounded people to hospitals. In addition to this, the NRCS district branches have provided the service in the respective districts during demonstrations. The first aid volunteers have primarily treated patients with head injuries, bleeding, gun-shot wounds, fractures, dislocations and scratches.



First aid volunteers from Nepal Red Cross preparing to help during the demonstrations

Following footprints of blood to treat the wounded

"We followed the footprints of blood and treated the injured people," says Sudarshan Adhikari, one of the first aid volunteers deployed by the NRC in the capital. The clash in Gongabu, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, between the demonstrators and the police left hundreds injured on 11th of April. The patients were rushed to the Red Cross camps in dozens. But that was not all. Many more remained within their houses despite their injuries and needing immediate treatment. They were scared of the police and could not go out to access the health service. Nepal Red Cross volunteers went house-to-house following the footprints made by blood to find and treat these patients. Mr. Adhikari said the memory will stay with him for a long time.

The service of the Nepal Red Cross has been gratefully received. First aid volunteers have received phone calls from those treated, thanking them for their help.

The NRCS has mobilized its first aid volunteers in the major spots likely to witness clashes: Kalanki, Kirtipur, Patan, New Baneshwor, Chabahil and Gongabu in Kathmandu valley, in addition to three mobile teams. The teams are equipped with first aid kits and communication equipment. The district branches of Arghakhachi, Baglung, Banke, Kaski and Rupandehi have also provided the service in the respective districts.

Coordination

The NRCS has been coordinating with the government authorities, the political parties, the Federation and the ICRC for the smooth running of the service. The NRCS has managed to provide the services from its own volunteers and resources. It has been utilizing the first aid kits and

medicines from its own stock. The ICRC has shown interest to replenish the kits used during this operation. Likewise, the other organizations like Swiss Development Agency and CARE have shown interest to support the NRCS to provide the service. The beneficiaries, demonstrators, journalists and even security forces, have appreciated the services of the NRCS and asked them to continue it. The demand for this service is also increasing in the districts.

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