

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Myanmar: Earthquake

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This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not presently required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time. [<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

The Situation

A series of earthquakes, up to a scale of 7.0 magnitude on the Richter scale, struck the region of Shan State in north-eastern part of Myanmar on 24 March 2011, around 20:35 local time, at a depth of about 10 km. The epicentre was Shan-East, some 113 km away from Tacheleik, an area located close to the border of Thailand and China. The centre of the quake was 589 km northeast of Yangon, the former capital of Myanmar, and 772 km north of Bangkok, Thailand. The nearest populated places are Hsentong (11 km away), Wan Hsenhkampeng (15 km), Wan Munnanta (15 km), Wan Ra-sa-hkankiao (4 km), Wan Pai (19 km), Mng Hai (15 km), Wan Ai-hsam (9 km), Wan Hw_-sai-kao (18 km), Wan Tong (19km). It is a mountainous region with a maximum altitude of 2,464 m.

Initial information indicates that around 73 people have been killed and 125 injured. A total of 390 houses in this area have been damaged. Up to 49 of the fatalities are from Tarli township alone and two others from Tacheleik township. It is estimated that around 2,000 people were affected by the earthquake in Tacheleik township. In the town of Talay near the Myanmar-Thailand border, over 60 houses have reportedly collapsed. In terms of infrastructure, reports reveal that the hospital in the Tarli sub-township was severely damaged, and as a result the Myanmar government has established a temporary hospital camp to treat injured people. Those seriously injured have been referred to the Tacheleik township and Kengtong district hospital. In general, this is a developed area and most infrastructure is made of concrete. However, due to the scale of the quake, it is expected that these reported figures may go up.

Presently on the ground are local authorities, Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and other humanitarian organizations. MRCS has mobilized 20 volunteers and coordinated the distribution of food, non-food relief items and first aid services. The national society continues to work in close coordination with local authorities. The MRCS has made the decision to deploy the deputy head of disaster management, and a disaster management officer to assist with local Red Cross branches and to carry out initial field assessments. They are expected to arrive in Tacheleik on Sunday due to current flight schedules. MRCS also expects a clearer picture of the existing needs to be determined in coordination with local authorities and working partners over the next few days.

The earthquake has also affected parts of northern Thailand. The Earthquake Emergency Centre has been activated in their northernmost Chiang Rai province by the Thai government. Police officials in Mae Sai, situated in the said province, reported the death of one woman caused by the collapse of the wall of her house. Hospital officials have reported no other deaths or injuries in the province. In neighboring China, no casualties have been reported, though some damage to buildings in prefecture of Xisheungbana, Lincang, and Pu'er of Yunnan province was sustained and reported on the local news.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), Thai Red Cross Society (TRCS), Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) and IFRC have been in regular communication from the beginning and are continuously monitoring the situation. TRC is closely monitoring the situation with Chiang Mai Health Station.

MRCS has some 1,000 packages of disaster preparedness stocks located in Shan (East), Shan (North), and Shan (South) in the region. Also at hand are several volunteers trained on field assessment, relief, first aid and psychosocial support. MRCS has mobilized assessment teams to collect information and provide initial assistance. MRCS, with support from the IFRC team in-country, is presently analyzing the situation. Access to the affected area does not appear to be a problem, though travel authorization must be obtained from the relevant authorities to enter the area. The estimated travel times include four days by road; there are domestic flights twice a week to Tacheleik's airport.

The IFRC country office in Myanmar supports MRCS in field assessments, data collection, and operational planning in various sectors. Its office in Yangon is currently focusing on coordination among the various humanitarian actors, and support for the national society in assessments and other components of relief. The IFRC's Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur and its Southeast Asia regional office in Bangkok are also assisting the situation with technical support, and liaising with the media.

The IFRC regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur has available stock of emergency items such as blankets, hygiene kits, and kitchen sets, which can be dispatched to the affected areas immediately, upon request.

How we work

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 \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation, please contact:

- Myanmar Red Cross Society
 - Prof Dr Tha Hla Shwe, President, e-mail: mailto:mrccs-pres@redcross.org.mm, phone: +951 383 681, fax: +951 383 685.
- IFRC country office, Myanmar
 - Alasdair Gordon Gibson, head of operations, phone: +95 1 383 682, email: ifrcmm10@redcross.org.mm
 - Chang Hun Choe, programme coordinator, email: ifrcmm12@redcross.org.mm, phone and fax: +951 383 686, 383 682; mobile: +959 512 6221.
- IFRC Southeast Asia regional office, Bangkok (phone: +662 661 8201; fax: +662 661 9322)
 - Anne Leclerc, head of regional office; email: anne.leclerc@ifrc.org ; phone +66 85 661 7464
 - Patrick Fox, regional disaster management coordinator, email: patrick.fox@ifrc.org ; phone + 668 18557683
- IFRC Asia Pacific zone office, Kuala Lumpur (phone: +603 92075700, fax +603 21610670):
 - Al Panico, acting head of operations; email: al.panico@ifrc.org , phone ++60 12 230 8532
 - Enkas Chau, operations coordinator, email: enkas.chau@ifrc.org ; phone: +60 12 3058332
 - Alan Bradbury, head of resource mobilization and PMER; email: alan.bradbury@ifrc.org , phone - 9207 5775

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