

**No. 2**

**22 February 1996**

## **INDONESIA : EARTHQUAKE IN IRIAN JAYA**

### **THE DISASTER**

The epicentre of the earthquake that struck northern Irian Jaya and the off-shore island of Biak on 17 February was about 63 kilometres under the Pacific Ocean and 110 km east of Biak. The tidal waves, or tsunami, that followed the quake were 5 to 10 metres high in coastal areas and swept scores of houses away in the mainland coastal town of Manokwari and on Biak island.

The tower of Frans Kaisepo International Airport was hit hard, damaging its navigation equipment, radar and other instruments. Since there are still after-shocks of smaller intensity, some boats carrying relief supplies are not able to unload. Transportation can be effected only by plane or ship.

### **CASUALTIES**

According to the latest figures issued by the Local Authority/Bakornas, casualties are as follows : 96 killed, 54 missing, 44 seriously injured. Most of the deaths and injuries were caused by collapsing buildings. Material damage includes: 2,025 houses destroyed (10,000 people or approximately 2,000 families lost their homes); 41 churches and mosques, 63 villages halls, 87 school buildings, 11 health service posts and 10 hectares of plantation damaged or destroyed. One electricity unit and 2 local ports were put out of action.

### **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

The armed forces, assisted by 25 local Red Cross volunteers, were deployed to help with the evacuation and distribute whatever relief aid was available locally. The evacuees were quickly accommodated in safer places. The local government organised a mass kitchen to feed more than 1,000 coastal residents. The IRCS has instructed its local branch to supply medicines to a value of 1 million rupiah and one ton of rice during the emergency relief operation.

## **OUTSTANDING NEEDS**

According to the local government assessment, tents medicines and blankets are still needed. Food is also in short supply, since continuing tremors prevented boats carrying food from unloading.

A national team, consisting of representatives of Bakornas, BMG, Social Welfare Dept, Health Dept and others will leave for the disaster site to survey the situation tomorrow, 23 February.

## **RED CROSS ACTION PLAN**

IRCS HQ remains in touch with its local branch at Biak and the Irian Chapter. It plans to draw up an action plan, particularly for the rehabilitation phase, as soon as it gets the results of the national team survey, predicted for early next week .

This week, the National Society has arranged for the deployment of 60 volunteers from Javapura and Sorong. It is planning to organise a co-ordination meeting for interested organisations on Monday next week.

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