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Special Report: India Quake Media Coverage – 8 February 2001



An aerial picture of destroyed houses in the village of Jawahanagar, in the western corner of India February 8, 2001. At least 30,000 people have died and tens of thousands have been left homeless since the massive earthquake, which recorded 7.7 on the Richter scale, ripped through the western state of Gujarat on the morning of January 26.

REUTERS/Jayanta Shaw

<http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/nm/20010208/wl/imdf08022001073802a.html>

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Special Report: India Quake Media Coverage – 8 February 2001

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Pudabe Hari runs through the rubble in Varsamedi, India, Thursday Feb. 8, 2001. With relief now reaching much of the earthquake affected areas of western India, the focus has shifted to rebuilding using a combination of traditional and modern methods to help prevent a repeat of the destruction incurred during the Jan 26 earthquake which killed at least 17,000 people and left more than a million homeless. (AP Photo/John McConnico) http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/ap/20010208/wl/india_beyond_quake_relief.html

Ukshana Saleem lines up with fellow earthquake survivors for food and water Wednesday Feb. 7, 2001 outside a tent camp in Bhuj, India. More than 17,000 people were killed in the massive earthquake which struck western India on Jan. 26. (AP Photo/John McConnico) http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/ap/20010207/wl/india_earthquake_p49.html



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Japan's ambassador to India Hiroshi Hirabayashi salutes Indian officials in Bhuj, India Wednesday Feb. 7, 2001, upon arrival with a C-130 aircraft full of supplies for the earthquake affected areas in western India. 5, C-130's from Japan were loaded with tents and blankets for victims of the Jan. 26 earthquake which killed more than 17,000 people. (AP Photo/John McConnico)

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/ap/20010207/wl/india_earthquake_4e9.html



Indian police watch as members of the Japanese Self Defense Force demonstrate how to build one of their donated tents in Bhuj, India Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2001. The Japanese government will deliver 450 tents and 4,500 blankets Wednesday to Bhuj to aid the thousands of people left homeless from the Jan. 26 earthquake that destroyed much of the western Indian state of Gujarat.(AP Photo/John Moore)

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http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/ap/20010206/wl/india_earthquake_em3.html



Relief workers call out for possible survivors before demolishing a damaged apartment building in the western town of Bhuj February 6, 2001. Rescue operations in the earthquake-savaged western corner of India wound down today as efforts to bring food, shelter and clean drinking water to hundreds of thousands moved into a higher gear. The January 26 earthquake, which measured 7.9 on the Richter scale, is estimated to have killed at least 30,000 people and left hundreds of thousands without homes.

REUTERS/Jayanta Shaw

http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/p/nm/20010206/wl/2001_02_06t054948z_01_bhu09d_rtrid_sp_2_india_quake.html

Situation and Death Toll

India Struggles For Quake Relief

Two weeks after India's deadly 7.9 magnitude earthquake, survivors in some outlying villages complained they were not getting aid fast enough, and government and aid agencies were struggling to undo a bottleneck of supplies that had stacked up at airports for lack of ground transportation or warehouse space. In one case of a failed attempt to send aid, farmers from India's Punjab state sent truckloads of potatoes that rotted on the way.

Rescuers have acknowledged that the possibility of finding more survivors is remote and have focused on pulling bodies from quake-ravaged buildings in towns and villages. Local leaders said the government was slow to dispatch supplies to villages, with many residents still lacking shelter despite an abundance of aid in relief centers. Many local and international aid groups are involved in the effort to feed and shelter survivors. "Though we have got some assistance from private organizations, we are yet to get a single tent from the government," said Chaman Lal Thakar, a leader of Loria village near Bhuj. He told Press Trust of India, a news agency, that many residents, including the elderly and children, endure the nighttime chill by sitting around campfires. Chaman said state officials had failed to inquire about the needs of 1,700 survivors around Loria, located 12

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miles from Bhuj. The Home Ministry says at least 17,000 people died and unofficial estimates say the toll is likely to reach 30,000. Many bodies are believed to still be under the rubble.

Source: AP, By Farid Hossain

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/world/latestap/A43446-2001Feb8.html>

Two Found Alive 10 Days After Quake

BHUJ, India -- Two survivors have been pulled from the rubble of Bhuj, 10 days after India's worst quake but aid agencies say the chances of rescuing more are now considered remote at best. They were rescued after Border Security Force (BSF) troops clearing rubble in the town heard faint cries for help. The troops said the two were "hale and hearty" despite being buried under debris for 10 days.

As reconstruction efforts begin Red Cross officials say the final death-toll from the devastating quake that hit the western state of Gujarat could be as high as 50,000. Hundreds of thousands of survivors are believed to be without shelter and aid agencies say they are working with the Indian authorities to look at ways of providing accommodation to those left homeless. Some agencies say that without adequate provision of accommodation neighboring states could be swamped by a tide of migrant homeless, spreading that fallout from the quake further across the country.

Indian authorities say they plan to erect tent cities for an estimated 500,000 homeless in the quake-shattered state. "They will have medical facilities, schools, shops, markets," Home Minister Haren Pandya said. "We need 150,000 tents at least. We would like the whole world to help," he added.

Source: CNN Asia

<http://asia.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/south/02/05/india.quake/index.html>

Raising Gujarat From The Rubble

AHMEDABAD: They have boxed the problem into four slots. Rescue, relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction. The 4R formula looks neat on paper. But on the ground buried under the rubble, the challenge seems awesome. "The scale is mind-boggling," says K V Bhanujan, pulled out of retirement to head a state government task-force for rebuilding Gujarat's devastated swathe. Soon after the big earthquake, the state government presented a damage estimate of 10,000,000,000 Rupees (about \$500,000,000 US) to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. Now they are asking for 22,000,000,000 more Rupees (about \$1,100,000,000 US), most of it for reconstruction. And like the tectonic plates under Kutch that are yet to settle down - that explains the continuing aftershocks - the property damage figure, it seems, is yet to stabilise.

Much of the cash is needed for rebuilding houses, mostly in Kutch. According to one set of government figures, nearly 75,000 houses have been "completely" damaged, over 1,400,000 "partially" damaged. Some places are so badly hit that the government is considering shifting people into settlements built from scratch. Still occupied with the job of giving short and medium term relief, the state government is yet to come out with a

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reconstruction "policy". But it has promised a ``comprehensive package" for destroyed buildings by February 10. The Gujarat industry itself has taken heavy losses. But they are mostly production losses. The factories went dead because the quake hit the lives of people who work in them. The infrastructure, by and large, is intact. But to rise from the rubble in Kutch, Gujarat may need more help.

Source: Times Of India

<http://www.timesofindia.com/today/05indu6.htm>

Hope is a hospital in death's landscape

The new hospital coming up in the Jubilee grounds of Bhuj could well be the first doddering steps which the city is taking towards rebuilding the destroyed infrastructure. It was in this ground that make-shift OTs were set up within minutes of the quake. Now that the initial trauma is over, what is worrying the residents of Bhuj is that if somebody has fever, there is no hospital to go to. There are not many doctors in the city either -- 90 per cent of them have left the town saying that there is no infrastructure available for them.

One doctor in the city, who stayed back and did crisis management in those crucial hours, has initiated this hospital. He says it is a temporary hospital but it could well be an asset for the city. It will have 20 rooms and amenities of a modern hospital and will be financed by voluntary groups. One room is already ready which is being constructed by Sintex. ``For now, we have the Israeli 70-bed hospital, but once they leave in a week, we need to have some hospital for the residents," said Dr Gyaneshwar Rao, a prominent general surgeon. In a rare show of advance planning, health minister Ashok Bhatt approved the plans for this hospital bypassing all red-tap. For now, the Israeli mobile hospital and the Military Hospital are the only two places which are functioning.

Source: Express India

<http://www.indian-express.com/ie/daily/20010205/ina05020.html>

Relief Worker Finds Fear And Chaos

The first thing that strikes you as you enter Bhuj is the number of people in the town. The place is bustling with aid workers, TV crews and rescue teams - everyone in fact, except the people to whom the town belongs. In the days following the earthquake they gathered up whatever they could from the piles of rubble they once called home and went. Cars, vans and donkey-drawn carriages piled high with everything from wardrobes and chairs, to cooking pots and clothes pass through the centre of the town as people leave to stay with friends and relatives elsewhere. The only ones left are those who are too poor to leave or simply have nowhere else to go.

Others, whose houses survived the quake, are too afraid to go back to them. In the worst hit areas of Bhuj there is not a building left standing. Many parts of the old town are completely inaccessible as the narrow lanes are filled with rubble and debris. As we walked through Bhuj people pointed to the places where their homes had once been. A young boy approached the photographer I was with and showed him where his family's

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apartment had collapsed. Some of his family had survived and were living in a camp. He came back every day to look at the ruins, because his mother was still there. He pointed to the arm and upper half of a woman's body that could be seen among the crushed concrete slabs.

A lorry stops, people shout to others that it has arrived and chaos follows. The younger and fitter ones, generally young men and boys, push to the front and older people and women right at the back get whatever is left. The aid has not been dealt out in any assessed manner, which causes me to wonder about the more vulnerable groups and their levels of access to this kind of 'survival of the fittest' way of aid delivery.

Source: BBC, By Oxfam aid worker Nicola Sutherland in Bhuj

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1160000/1160213.stm

Quake homeless offered food for work

In a bid to avert a mass exodus from India's quake-ravaged state of Gujarat, officials have said that homeless villagers will be offered food in exchange for aiding the reconstruction effort. In the meantime authorities are planning to construct tent cities to accommodate hundreds of thousands of survivors left homeless by the quake. If this does not happen soon, villagers will flee the region, said Gujarat state official P.K. Lahiri. "After one more round of free grain distribution, there will be a food-for-work program," he said. "For now, the people are dazed since their trauma was so enormous." International aid agencies, who have been working with authorities to help the homeless, say that without adequate housing, neighboring states could be swamped by a tide of homeless migrants, spreading the economic burden caused by the quake outside of the immediate disaster zone.

Source: CNN

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/south/02/06/India.quake/index.html>

Children's Quake Nightmares

Shona is an earthquake baby, born about two months prematurely to a badly injured mother in the Indian state of Gujarat. Only about a week old, she had been suffering from severe dehydration. She is still tiny but she and others like her have survived in an emergency pediatric tent set up by the Israeli army hospital. The unit has seen more than 100 children since it arrived last week - most of them with fractures of crush wounds caused by falling buildings. But the head of the hospital, Colonel Yamoda Baruk, said he was most concerned about the large number of orphans. "It's not like getting one boy or two girls, or two more young children in a family of four," he said. "It's like getting suddenly 10 more or 20 more kids into a family of two because that's the magnitude of the disaster here." Family and community ties are strong here and it seems many orphans are being informally adopted. But there is also great confusion and it is hard to establish basic facts, even whether a child really is orphaned or just displaced. Robert McGilvery of Save the Children said one of the charity's jobs may be to trace the parents of apparent orphans and check what really happened to them.

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Children are arriving for medical treatment with chronic symptoms - diarrhea, respiratory problems, infections - and all related to homelessness and bad living conditions. Local pediatrician Dr Shantu Patel has been setting up a crisis centre for children's health. She has already seen evidence of psychological suffering. "Children are getting up and won't sleep under a shed," she said. "Even then they're not sleeping in the tent. They want to go into the open. So, I think they will be claustrophobic. They're not going to stay in a closed space. They fear that something's going to fall on them. They are getting up with nightmares and won't go back to sleep. In small children, hysterical laughter can sound very close to crying. On the surface children seem very resilient, but as the shattered society starts the slow task of recovery it may be the children who bear some of the worst scars."

Source: BBC, By Jill McGivering in Gujarat

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1155000/1155826.stm

Quake Leaves 1.25m Homeless

More than one million people are now homeless in the western Indian state of Gujarat after the massive earthquake, UN officials say. As hopes of finding further survivors fade, aid agencies are scrambling to bring food, shelter and water to the 250,000 families now without a home. A Unicef official says an estimated 2.5 million children have lost their two safe havens - their homes and schools. At least 30,000 people have died in the quake which took place two weeks ago in a region still battling the aftermath of a cyclone in 1998 followed by a drought.

A representative of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team, Joe Barr, said conditions on the ground were still highly unstable. "The aftershocks are still being felt. People are afraid to go inside the buildings as they have developed cracks," Barr told reporters in Delhi. Residents are now mostly living in tents and cars after the quake, which flattened thousands of buildings. About 55,000 people were injured by the quake, which registered 7.9 on the Richter scale. But life is slowly returning back to normal with the first signs of normal business activity. Correspondents say the quake has not dampened the entrepreneurial spirit for which the region is famous, with vegetable sellers back on the streets. A UN official in charge of coordinating relief in Gujarat state said aid was pouring in, but there was still a need for more.

Source: BBC

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1155000/1155984.stm

Cost of Quake

India Quake will not lead to cut in Indian defense budget

The huge financial cost of India's Gujarat earthquake will have no effect on defense allocations in the coming federal budget, Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said Wednesday. There will be "no cut in the defense budget," Fernandes told reporters at the Aero India air show in the southern city of Bangalore. "National defense cannot be held hostage by these problems," Fernandes said, referring to the January 26 quake in Gujarat

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state which claimed around 30,000 lives and wreaked damage estimated at more than 5.4 billion dollars.

The government has already imposed special tax surcharges in the wake of the quake, and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has hinted at further budgetary measures to meet the cost of reconstruction. But Fernandes was confident that his ministry would not be penalized when Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha unveils his budget later this month. "The finance minister will give us whatever we have asked for," he said.

Source: Agence France Presse

http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010207/asia/afp/Quake_will_not_lead_to_cut_in_Indian_defence_budget_minister.html

India: Government Mulls Special Fund For Gujarat

The government is considering setting up a special fund for Gujarat as part of Union Budget 2001-02, in order to mitigate the hardships faced by the people on account of the devastating quake of January 26. Finance minister Yashwant Sinha will meet deputy chairman of the Planning Commission K C Pant on Tuesday to discuss the modalities of setting up such a fund before incorporating it in the budget to be presented on February 28. Official sources said that the two are also expected to review the gross budgetary support (GBS) for the next fiscal in view of the large scale devastation caused by the quake. As opposed to the procedure last year, the Planning Commission has already started the process of finalising annual plans for the Central ministries and the states before the budget.

Source: Times Of India

<http://www.timesofindia.com/today/05indu11.htm>

Domestic Efforts

Relief efforts gather pace

Power supplies are being restored to hundreds of villages in the western corner of the country and food, water and medical supplies continue to pour in from around the world. India's defense Minister George Fernandes visits a hospital in Bhuj. The final toll may 'never be known', he said. But aid workers are concerned that a growing number of survivors are venturing back into cracked and weakened buildings.

"People are still living in places where I wouldn't even send my team because they are so dangerous. Thousands of people are living in such places," said Colin Deiner, leader of the South African Urban Search and Rescue Team in the town of Bhuj. Mukesh Shah was one of many who risked their lives to get back to normal. "When it's time to die, it's time to die. Death is written by God," he said.

Defense Minister George Fernandes, visiting the ruins of the ancient town 135 km (83 miles) from the border with Pakistan, said he doubted a final death toll would ever be known. Last week, Fernandes said the death toll from the quake, which measured 7.9 on the Richter scale, could reach 100,000.

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Source: CNN Asia

<http://asia.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/south/02/05/india.quake/index.html>

Power Restored, Bhuj Begins Its Journey To Recovery

By the time Nalin Bhatt, chairman of Gujarat Electricity Board woke up on the 10th day of the earthquake in his car parked in Bhuj, electricity had been restored to all the nine affected towns and 750 of the 925 villages. With electricity came water, flour mills, security and above all it helped reduce the pall that had descended on Kutch. Bhatt recalls January 26 when he left Baroda and visited all his sub-stations one after the other: "From Ahmedabad, Rajkot to Samaykahali, Bachau and Anjar, everything was gone." To make matters worse, 19 GEB employees were dead and 40 others had lost their relatives. "We decided to immediately bring in men and material from outside," said Bhatt. As many as 800 men landed at Bhuj with their food-packets and water to start work.

Source: Express India

<http://www.indian-express.com/ie/daily/20010205/ina05020.html>

Housing Policy For Quake-Affected Soon

AHMEDABAD: The Gujarat government would soon announce a housing policy for the quake affected people in Kutch, Rajkot and Sundernagar districts and give financial assistance for this purpose from the consolidated earthquake rehabilitation and reconstruction fund. "A policy on the housing front would soon be announced and financial assistance would be provided by the government, which wants the NGOs to take a lead role in this regard," minister of state for home Haren Pandya said.

A team of World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) will visit the devastated villages in the middle of this month and were expected to announce grant of huge soft loans to the state for the reconstruction purpose, he said. "The World Bank and ADB teams would arrive here on March 12 and visit the affected areas of the state to assess the financial assistance needed by the state for the reconstruction purpose," Pandya said. "They have jointly promised to advance \$500 million even before they undertake the preliminary damage assessment of the affected areas," he said.

The state government was creating a consolidated fund from the financial assistance received from the central and state governments, foreign countries and various ngos, which would be utilised to re-build the destroyed villages and towns, the minister said. Terming the work performed by several NGOs in the affected areas as exemplary, Pandya said in the reconstruction activity "the NGOs will be given a primary role while the government will assume a supporting role". "The priority is to build tent cities, where the people could be sheltered," he said adding that the affected areas still needed over 150,000 tents urgently. He also said the government, "will be able to provide tents for all in another 15 days time." (PTI)

Source: Times Of India

<http://www.timesofindia.com/today/06indu9.htm>

Foreign Aid

Japan - SDF planes land in quake-hit India

One of the six aircraft carrying members of a Japanese Self-Defense Forces team to aid survivors of the earthquake that devastated the state of Gujarat was due to arrive in the worst-hit area of Bhuj late Tuesday, an SDF official said. The other five planes had touched down at New Delhi airport to refuel. The six Japanese C-130 aircraft, carrying roughly 100 Ground and Air SDF troops and government officials, have flown to India to deliver quake-relief materials. The SDF will airlift 400 tents and more than 4,000 blankets to Bhuj and will help set up temporary shelters. Defense Agency chief Toshitsugu Saito said in Tokyo the same day that additional SDF forces could be dispatched to areas devastated by the quake if requested. "The debris (in the areas) is terrible and I hope the SDF forces will be able to help the people there in some way," Saito said at a press conference. The Jan. 26 quake was known to have killed more than 16,000 people and injured at least 68,000 as of Monday. The death toll is expected to at least double and more than 200,000 people have been left homeless. The Indian government is asking the international community for support. Foreign Minister Yohei Kono on Tuesday said Japan may receive requests for heavy equipment to remove debris, Foreign Ministry officials said. *(See pictures on page 4 above.)*

Source: The Japan Times

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20010207a9.htm>

World Food Programme helping 300,000 quake victims in India

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has undertaken a four-million-dollar operation in India to feed some 300,000 victims of a massive earthquake over the next four months, officials said Tuesday. The WFP, the world's largest food aid agency, has been distributing high-energy biscuits in Bhuj, in the heavily damaged state of Gujarat, since last week. The area is home to chronically poor and hungry people who struggle daily with drought and economic problems. The WFP said the emergency operation was to prevent a serious deterioration in the health of the most vulnerable victims after the January 26 quake. The agency will give 178,000 people, mostly pregnant women, nursing mothers and children, a supply of biscuits to last two months. After that, they are to receive a nutritious blended food, called Indiamix, for another two months. Additionally, 120,000 people -- families in the earthquake zone with the greatest need for food -- will receive packages of wheat flour and lentils lasting four months.

Source: Agence France Presse

[http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010206/asia/afp/World Food Programme helping 300 000 quake victims in India.html](http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010206/asia/afp/World+Food+Programme+helping+300+000+quake+victims+in+India.html)

UN Pop. Fund Rushes Aid To Mobile Clinics in Quake-Devastated Indian State

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) announced today that it had dispatched emergency resources and additional personnel to support 12 mobile health clinics in the earthquake-devastated Indian state of Gujarat. The mobile clinics are part of UNFPA's

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current integrated population and development programmes in Gujarat, which are now being refocused to help earthquake victims, especially pregnant women and newborn babies. The clinics will provide reproductive health care, including HIV prevention, and help ensure that mothers deliver their babies safely, the agency said.

The projects cover the five districts of Surendranagar, Kutch, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha and Dahod. The earthquake caused the collapse of the district health system in Kutch, and severe damage in Surendranagar and Banaskantha. UNFPA works with governments, the UN system, and non-governmental organizations to provide quality reproductive health care and prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, in conflict and disaster situations.

Source: UN News

<http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/page2.html#23>

Taiwan raises relief fund for India quake victims

Taiwan Vice President Annette Lu on Thursday set up an ad hoc charity group to raise relief funds for victims of the massive January 26 earthquake in India. In response to Lu's appeal, the foreign ministry donated 50,000 US dollars while a pharmacy company donated one million Taiwan dollars (30,960 US) worth of medicines, and a monthly magazine gave one million dollars worth of relief goods, the presidential office said. The relief fund and materials will be sent to India after the charity group ends the first stage fund-raising campaign by the end of February.

Source: Agence France Presse

<http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?>

Sri Lanka Sends Tea And Clothing For Quake Victims

Sri Lanka will send a consignment of tea and clothing to earthquake victims in Gujarat, with a planeload of relief supplies due to leave shortly, officials said. President Chandrika Kumaratunga has offered emergency supplies to Indian High Commissioner Gopalkrishna Gandhi and arrangements are being made to airlift them, they said. "We were told that the people in Gujarat needed warm clothes as they are facing a cold winter. For the same reason, the tea we are sending would also be welcome," an official said. He said details of the quantities were not known yet, but the commodities would be ferried on an Indian Airlines flight that would not be carrying any passengers. The Board of Investment, the country's main agency for foreign investors, was sending an initial consignment of some 60 cartons of winter clothing manufactured in garment factories coming under its purview. The government-to-government aid comes as several organisations of Indians living in Sri Lanka also made plans to collect clothing, dry goods and cash from well wishers. An appeal for donations will be made and relief work will be coordinated by the Sri Lanka-India Friendship Society and the Indian High Commission. Local officials said they were exploring the possibility of having the gifts exempted from taxes. Source: Times Of India

<http://www.timesofindia.com/today/07nbrs10.htm>

China cancels disaster relief teams for Indian earthquake

China said Tuesday it had decided not to go ahead with plans to send teams of doctors and seismologists to India in the wake of last month's devastating earthquake there. The decision came after India informed China the need for assistance in the quake area in Gujarat state was no longer urgent, foreign ministry spokesman Sun Yuxi told a regular briefing. "The Indian side said the situation in the area had changed, and that, in particular, a number of medical teams had already arrived," Sun said. "Therefore the Chinese seismological and medical teams have not gone." After the January 26 quake, officials told state media China should send expert teams -- including nine seismologists - - since India was a friendly neighbor.

Source: Agence France Presse

http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010206/asia/afp/China_cancels_disaster_relief_teams_for_Indian_earthquake.html

Related Stories

Four Americans, three Britons killed in Gujarat earthquake

Four American nationals and three Britons were among the thousands killed in the Gujarat earthquake, and foreign missions were still waiting anxiously Monday for news of other missing nationals. According to the US consulate in India's commercial capital Bombay, four American citizens died in the January 26 quake. The precise number of US nationals missing had yet to be determined. "We had 2,336 registered American citizens and an estimated 3,000 to 3,500 unregistered US nationals in the area when the quake struck," a consulate spokesperson said. In many cases, the registered nationals would have left India without notifying the consulate. The British High Commission in New Delhi told AFP there were 400 registered British citizens in Gujarat on January 26, of which three were confirmed dead. According to information released by the High Commission's press office, there could have been "a few thousand" British nationals in the state at the time of the quake. There were no reports of any Australians, Japanese, Germans or Dutch casualties in Gujarat, according to information given by their respective diplomatic missions in New Delhi, although there was still concern over nationals on the missing list.

Source: Agence France Presse

http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010205/asia/afp/Four_Americans_three_Britons_killed_in_Gujarat_earthquake.html

Major tremor hits quake-ravaged Indian state

A major tremor measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale rocked the quake-ravaged Indian state of Gujarat late Thursday (February 8), sparking panic among residents. A seismological official in New Delhi said the quake struck at 10.25 pm (1655 GMT) and lasted for thirty seconds. Its epicentre was located at 23.6 degrees latitude and 70.1 degrees longitude, 25 kilometres (15 miles) northwest of Bacha -- one of the town's worst hit by the 7.9 magnitude quake which struck on January 26. The tremor was felt all over the state, "but so far we have no reports of any fresh damage or casualties," the official said. The tremor

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was the third-strongest aftershock to hit Gujarat since the main quake. A tremor measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale was recorded on January 28. The tremor was felt in Bhuj, where residents, fearful of another major disaster, ran from their houses in panic.

Source: Agence France Presse

<http://asia.dailynews.yahoo.com/headlines/asia/article.html?s=asia/headlines/010209/asia/afp/Major+tremor+hits+quake-ravaged+Indian+state.html>

13 Cases Registered Against Builders

AHMEDABAD, FEB 3: The Ahmedabad police today registered 13 cases against a number of city builders, licensed engineers and officials of both Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) and Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA). Nine cases had been registered earlier. Forensic experts, meanwhile, have collected specimens from more than 60 houses in the city which collapsed on January 26 morning and also of buildings which have been damaged. Police officials say they will not initiate action against builders till reports of forensic experts about the quality of construction materials used were received. "We will initiate action only when the forensic report, indicts builders for using substandard materials. Till then there is no point in arresting them," Deputy Commissioner P B Upadhyay said on Saturday. He also said that "arrest in such cases is not very important, important is detailed investigation and gathering of evidence against the accused."

Source: Express India

<http://www.indian-express.com/newsline/daily/20010204/ige04102.htm>

Nepal: Quake Fear Grips Kathmandu

KATHMANDU: Fearing the possibility of an earthquake in the Kathmandu valley, Nepali geologists have cautioned the government and the people about the need to take preventive measures to limit damage and casualty. "Nepal can learn a very good lesson from the Bhuj (Gujarat) earthquake and take preventive measures. We must construct earthquake-resistant houses and ensure preventive measures are taken in all houses," said Mahesh Nakarmi, senior geologist at the department of mines. Kathmandu valley experienced a devastating earthquake in 1934 measuring 8 on the Richter scale that had left 4,000 dead and countless houses damaged. "The population of the valley then was small, but now it is large and buildings have not been constructed keeping earthquakes in mind," says Nakarmi. "On soft soil like the Kathmandu valley, earthquakes can cause slip movements and buildings need special foundations and construction techniques as they can get shaken violently, which may double the amplitude of seismic waves and lengthen their duration," Nakarmi said adding, "We must train people so that immediate rescue is always at hand." Like Gujarat buildings, modern Kathmandu has tall buildings with concrete frames and brick walls, built on soft soil, a poor foundation for large, tall buildings in earthquake prone regions. An earthquake of same magnitude as Bhuj, near Kathmandu, would cause incalculable damage." (IANS)

Source: Times Of India

<http://www.timesofindia.com/today/06nbrs3.htm>