

Cologne, 9. May 2006

Relief Activity Report No. 5 Indonesia: Earthquake Java

Overall Situation



© 2006 MapQuest, Inc.; © 2006 AND Products B.V.

Source: www.mapquest.de/ www.reliefweb.int

Last Thursday, an eruption of the volcano Mount Merapi triggered fear of a new disaster in the area on Java hit by the earthquake. The Merapi had already been active for weeks, but now threw out enormous clouds of smoke. Known locally as "shaggy goats" because of their shape and colour, the clouds stretched further than before, sending panic-stricken villagers living on or near its slopes scurrying for safety. According to the military, some 18,000 people have been evacuated from villages near the volcano. Many of them returned to

their homes. Volcanologists said the increased emissions were not the massive eruption they have been expecting.

Authorities have placed the areas around Merapi, one of the most dangerous volcanoes in the "Pacific Ring of Fire", on red alert and most villages located up to seven kilometers (four miles) from the peak are considered within the danger zone. In the past days, the authorities updated their evacuation plans, including foreign aid organisations which came into the region after the earthquake.

During its last eruption in 1994, most of the 70 deaths were caused by the hot ash and other material spewed out following the collapse of a lava dome. The volcano killed 1,300 people in 1930.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian authorities reduced the official death toll for the earthquake victims to 5.782. Some of the dead had been counted twice.

The government, Indonesian and foreign organizations have continued their work in the region. Two weeks after the earthquake, rehabilitation measures are becoming more and more important; acute medical help is almost done. However, the local official hospitals are still overcrowded. People have to wait up to four days for treatment.

Malteser International Activity

A medical team of Malteser International is on standby in order to provide medical emergency relief for injured people in case of a further eruption of the volcano Merapi. „We have to reckon with a new and stronger eruption every moment“, Volker Stapke, project coordinator for Malteser International in Java, explains: „In that case, we will immediately send medical staff to an



evacuation point defined by the government, in order to provide first aid for the arriving evacuees.“

A girl treated in Malteser International's emergency hospital, photo: B. Betzelt

The planned deployment at the evacuation point is part of a regional emergency plan of the government in which Malteser International is included. Already during the last eruption and the following aftershock on Thursday, Malteser International had been ready for medical emergency relief.

Since the earthquake of 27 May, Malteser International has been working in Yogyakarta and Bantul, approximately 50 kilometers south of Mount Merapi. In the severely struck district of Bantul, four local medical practitioners and six local nurses attend patients in an emergency hospital run by Malteser International. This emergency hospital, which had also been evacuated during last Thursday's eruption, provides 25 beds for in-patient treatment. Thus, Malteser International supports the local hospitals and healthcare centres, which are still overcrowded even two weeks after the earthquake.

Furthermore, two surgeons – Dr. Julio Vidal from our Tsunami project in Aceh and Dr. Isac from the Singapore association - run difficult operations in the hospital in Bantul. From their healthcare post in Jetis, Malteser International teams with their mobile clinics provide treatment for patients with slight injuries in the surrounding villages. - A nurse who has already worked for Malteser International in Afghanistan as well as a logistics expert will support our team from Wednesday on.

We receive strong signals that the Indonesian authorities appreciate the speed and the quality of the work of Malteser International. On behalf of the local authorities, our team on the spot now is in charge of the coordination of the medical work in the sub-district of Piyungan. In this area, which covers about a fifth of the hardly hit district of Bantul, live about 10,000 people. Malteser International has been integrated into the regional emergency plan for the case of a new eruption of Mount Merapi. Furthermore, Malteser International staff no longer needs a visa to enter the country.

We once more would like to express our sincere gratitude to all help we have obtained in the last weeks by the Order of Malta and the member associations of Malteser International. We are very grateful for the quick and effective coordination with the associations of Singapore and the Philippines, which allows us to send quickly new medical personal into the region. We are also very grateful for the financial support coming from the different associations as well as from several enterprises. ABB Electronics, for example, supports our work with a donation of 25.000 Euro and with several vehicles put at our disposal for our medical work.

We will keep you informed about the ongoing development.

For further inquiries, please contact Mr. Ingo Radtke:

Phone: ++49-221-9822-150

Mobile: ++49-171-3013452

Email: Ingo.Radtke@malteser-international.org

Ingo.Radtke@netcologne.de

Yours sincerely,

Ingo Radtke

Secretary General