

This report is produced by OCHA. It was issued by the Regional Office in Asia Pacific with input from the UNDAC team in Tokyo. It covers the period from 14-15 March. The next report will be issued on the 16 March.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- There has been a third explosion at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant
- Radiation from the nuclear plant has reached harmful levels within the evacuation zone
- Emergency relief operations enter into their fifth day with some areas still inaccessible
- Food, water and fuel are reported to be running short in some parts of Japan
- Significant areas of the country remain without power and water

II. Situation Overview

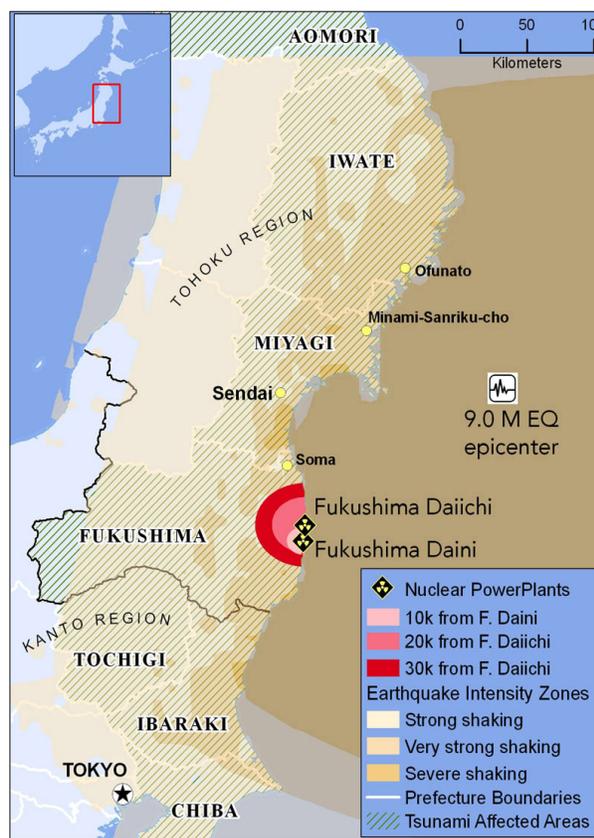
It has been five days since the north east coast of Japan was devastated by a powerful tsunami triggered by one of the world's strongest earthquakes on record. As a result of these two emergencies a third emergency, the threat of nuclear radiation emerged, which is proving to be the most difficult to deal with.

Despite the deteriorating nuclear emergency, humanitarian operations continue unaffected. Today Prime Minister Naoto Kan ordered a shift of focus in humanitarian operations from rescue activities to provision of essential items to the affected areas.

Nearly 416,300 people have been evacuated from the earthquake and tsunami affected provinces, half of which are from Miyagi (203,953 people). Others are from Fukushima (131,665 people), Iwate (46,405 people), Ibaraki (22,595 people), Tochigi (9,530) and Aomori (2,143 people).

The Government of Japan has confirmed that 1,990 people have died, 1,885 people are injured and 2,369 people remain missing. National media is reporting that more than 15,000 people are unaccounted for in the affected areas. In Fukushima alone, 1,200 people are unaccounted for. The number will most likely increase further in the coming days. More than 10,000 people are stranded due to inundation from the tsunami waves and are unreachable in Iwate. An additional 1,000 are also stranded in Miyagi and Fukushima.

Around the northern coastal region of Tohoku, the number of damaged buildings continues to increase each day. As of 15 March, 3,385 buildings are destroyed and over 55,000 damaged either by earthquakes, tsunami or fire. Transportation systems still remain paralyzed but the Government is making significant progress to restore key roads, bridges and railways. The National Police Agency says at least 128 roads and 21 bridges damaged by the earthquake and tsunami have been repaired. Essential services such as electricity, gas and water remain disrupted, with more than 843,000 households serviced by Tokyo Electric Power Company and Tohoku Electric Power Company experiencing power shortages. Some 1.4 million households still remain without water. It's important to note that people without water and electricity extend well beyond the four most affected prefectures. This emergency is having an impact on people across the country.



As expected the number of people who have died as a result of the tsunami continues to rise. Incredibly the number of people who lost their lives in the 9.0 earthquake is estimated at less than a hundred which is a testament to the investment the Government of Japan has made in disaster risk reduction. The Government has officially reported that 3,100 people in 12 prefectures have died and another 3,118 people in five different provinces are missing. Another 1,885 are injured. Minami Sanriku town in Miyagi prefecture and Otsuchi town in Iwate prefectures are the most affected areas with an estimated 20,000 people – half of the population – still out of contact as of 15 March. In addition, more than 1,000 bodies have been found in the coastal area of Onagawa town in Miyagi. More than 550,000 people are living in temporary shelters.

The threat of continued aftershocks and tsunami continues to affect emergency operations in northeast Japan. Friday's earthquake shifted the entire island of Honshu two and a half metres. The ground also sunk by about 72 centimetres along the coastal areas of Iwate and Fukushima prefectures, and seawalls sustained extensive damage. With the National Meteorological Agency predicting a 70-percent chance of another 7-magnitude earthquake by the end of the week, the concern is that many buildings are already weakened and coastal areas are most vulnerable with no sea walls to protect them against another tsunami. Snow and rain is also forecast from the evening of 15 March until the 17 March in the earthquake and tsunami affected areas and is likely to impact road conditions and affect humanitarian access to the disaster-hit areas. Cold conditions in Tokyo are also expected to increase demand for heating energy at a time that there are electricity shortages due to power rationing.

Meanwhile, the nuclear reactor emergency further south has deteriorated significantly. A third explosion occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on the morning of 15 March exposing nuclear fuel rods for several hours. Within three hours the amount of radiation at the plant rose to 163 times the previously recorded level, according to Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency. Elsewhere radiation levels were said to have reached 400 times the "annual legal limit" at reactor No. 3. Subsequently, a fire erupted at reactor No. 4 of the Fukushima Daini plant and a hydrogen explosion occurred at No. 4 reactor as well. The Government has ordered a no-fly zone 30 km around the plant, and Prime Minister Naoto Kan has expanded to 30 km the range within which people should remain indoors and warned that further leaks are possible. The Government has asked the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to send a technical support team to affected area. The IAEA is coordinating international nuclear response support to Japan through Response and Assistance Network (RANET). A US expert team is supporting Japanese counterparts in dealing with the nuclear crisis.

Government Response

The Government has deployed 100,000 troops to lead the relief effort. With the help of 9,500 fire-fighters and 920 police they have together rescued 22,184 people to date. In Miyagi, one of the most affected prefectures, which sustained the largest number of casualties and the largest number of evacuees, the National Police Agency and Japan Self-Defence Force have rescued more than 2,200 people to date. It has rescued stranded people and sick patients. In addition, the Japan Coast Guard, and Fire and Disaster Management Agency have rescued nearly 3,000 people, including about 970 affected people stranded in isolated villages. Various national agencies have provided personnel mobilised from prefectures mostly outside of the Tohoku region for this relief operation. The National Police Agency has mobilised 1,115 police officers and 7 helicopters. The Fire and Disaster Management Agency has provided 2,588 personnel including 19 air units. 31 Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT) have been operating at the Sendai Medical Centre.

The main humanitarian needs continue to be food, drinking water, blankets, latrines, fuel and medical items which the Government and private sector in Japan are urgently mobilizing to the affected areas. More than a quarter of the planned food delivery has now reached the affected areas (more than 550,140 meals of bread, instant noodles and rice balls). Nearly 119,000 water bottles, 117,000 blankets and 130 latrines and 288,000 litres of fuel have been transported as well.

The Japanese Red Cross has also deployed 95 medical teams, with a total of 735 people, including doctors and nurses. The National Society set up field clinics and is operating mobile health clinics, providing first aid, medical, health and psychosocial support. The Red Cross has almost 2,400 nurses trained to give psychosocial support. Volunteers continue to distribute relief items, ensuring displaced people are offered hot meals, clearing debris and providing medical transportation. The IFRC maintains a pre-positioned stock of relief items for up to 20,000 families in the region which can be dispatched if requested.

All of the Japanese Red Cross branches are equipped with special equipment to deal with nuclear, biological or chemical disasters. In addition, there is a specialist team at Nagasaki Red Cross hospital, which remains on standby and ready to receive patients if required, as part of the Government's nuclear accident plan

III. International Assistance

The Government of Japan has received offers for assistance from more than 102 countries and 14 international organizations. It has accepted assistance from about 15 countries based on assessed needs, which is mostly specialized international urban search and rescue (USAR) teams and medical teams. There are now more than 605 international specialists conducting assessments, search and rescue, and medical assistance in Japan accompanied by 50 dogs. A 12-member Mongolian team has also been deployed.

USAR Team	Personnel	Rescue Dogs	Area of Action
Australia	72	2	Miyagi (Minami-Sanriku-cho)
Germany	43	3	Miyagi (Minami-Sanriku-cho)
France	134	-	Miyagi (Sendai City)
Mexico	9	6	Miyagi
New Zealand	65	-	Miyagi (Minami-Sanriku-cho)
People's Republic of China	15	-	Iwate (Ofunato-cho)
Taiwan Province of China	30	-	Miyagi (Sendai City)
Republic of Korea	105	2	Miyagi (Sendai City)
Russian Federation	54	3 vehicles	Miyagi (Sendai City)
Singapore	5	5	Fukushima (Soma City)
Switzerland	27 + 2	9	Miyagi (Minami-Sanriku-cho)
United Kingdom	64	2	Iwate (Ofunato-cho)
USA (2 teams from LA and Fairfax)	148	12	Iwate (Ofunato-cho)
USA-Hungary Baptist Aid Rescue24	4	-	
International Rescue Dogs	12	9	
Turkey	8		
International Medical Corp	14		

The US Military is providing considerable support to the Government of Japan's response operations with military assets that include air, sea and ground capability. Two Seahawk helicopters have already delivered food to Shiroishi, one of the worst affected areas. In total nine ships will make up the US relief efforts. The US Government has allocated US \$35 million to the operation 'Tomodachi' which translates as 'friendship' in Japanese.

An IFRC high level support / liaison team supporting the Japan Red Cross Society travelled to Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures and saw a number of devastated small villages in at least five bays on the eastern coast of Japan.

WFP has deployed a logistics team to help the Japanese Red Cross in procurement and supply chain activities.

IV. Coordination

The Government of Japan's Emergency Management agencies are leading the response through the Emergency Response Team, headed by Prime Minister Naoto Kan. Information from the Government of Japan, including situation reports can be found at <http://www.kantei.go.jp>. The Government in cooperation with the Japan Red Cross is compiling a list of goods that countries keen to provide some assistance can donate.

The UNDAC Team is supporting the Government with information management for an international audience, as well as working with the Government on matters related to the deployed of international USAR teams, and on international offers of assistance received by the Government. The UNDAC team has been established at JICA Tokyo International Centre. Regular updates on USAR teams are posted on the Virtual

OSOCC. UNDAC will send a reconnaissance mission to Fukushima and Miyagi Prefectures on the 16 March.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) posts official updates on the nuclear power plants: <http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/tsunamiupdate01.html>. The World Health Organisation is issuing daily situation reports and FAQs on Japan Nuclear concerns: <http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/faqs/en/index.html>

The US Pacific Command has established a website http://community.apan.org/hard/japan_earthquake/ that is posting sitreps from the PACOM Joint Operations Centre.

V. Funding

Maltesar International has provided \$35,000 from its emergency relief fund for emergency aid to the Government of Japan. Mongolia and Sri Lanka are both providing \$1 million each bilaterally to the Government.

All humanitarian partners including donors and recipient agencies are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions by sending an e-mail to: fts@un.org.

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