



## Editorial Team

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## Cold takes toll in Mugu, claimed five lives

Five local people of remote Bhiie VDC of Mugu district have lost their lives of common cold and cough that has been spread throughout the village for a week. The disease has taken lives of 55-year-old Krishnakala Shahi of Bhiie VDC Ward No. 4, 58-year-old Dalbahadur Bahadur Shahi of Ward No. 5, 52-year-old Banchukala Luwar of Ward No. 6, a woman of the age 27 and a child of the age 7.

## Climate Change Corner

Climate Change Campaign in Lamjung

Climate Change, Bali conference and Nepal

Climate Change and Disaster risk

Climate Change & Conservation

Effects of Climate Change on the Ocean

Linking Climate Change, Forestry and Biodiversity

Climate Change Presentation from Co-Action Nepal

Information Paper on Climate Change

Global Warming and GLOF Danger to Nepal

Local people said the disease spread throughout the village because of decreasing temperature and common cold, fever, neck ache, loss of appetite, weakness and death were the symptoms.

Staff at Sub-health Post used to be absent for lack of medicine, the Sub-health Post had remained closed for last three months and local people had to walk for two days to get medicine at district headquarters, local resident Narbahadur Budha said. District Public Health Office has stated that a health team would be sent to the village immediately.

*(Posted on 16th January, 2008)*

## Earthquake Safety Day today Duck, Cover and Hold exercise all over Nepal

The 10th earthquake national safety day is being observed today with the theme of 'reliable measures for earthquake preparedness; responsibility for ensured health and safety'. The Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC) is preparing to celebrate the 10th National Earthquake Safety Day (ESD) today to commemorate Nepal earthquake of 1934.

## Cold Fatalities

Mugu	5
Siraha	4
Bara	3
Sunsari	2
Rautahat	2
Nawalparasi	1

*As of 16th January, 2008*

As many as 17,000 people were killed in Nepal and India in the earthquake that occurred in 1934. Nepalis observe ESD on Magh 2 every year to create awareness about earthquakes and share knowledge and information about safety measures and disaster management.

According to a statement issued by the DUDBC, a rally will go through the thoroughfares of the city and converge into a mass meeting at the Bhugol Park, which was constructed in memory of victims of 1934 quake. This is the culmination of the past seven days of activities across the country, including talk shows, rallies, public interest information dissemination, symposiums, meetings and many such events.

## Disaster Related Reports

An earthquake safety exhibition would be conducted in the office of the Lalitpur Sub-metropolitan City and an earthquake simulation will be organised in different parts of the country, the statement of the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction said, adding that the programmes aim at creating awareness on earthquake and help manage the risk.

[Situation Report NRCS, 10th Sep](#)  
[NRCS Bulletin 21st Aug, 2007](#)  
[WHO SITREP \(5-19th Aug, 2007\)](#)  
[OCHA Situation Report, 13th Aug](#)  
[WHO SITREP \(4-12 Aug, 2007\)](#)  
[Sink or Swim \(Oxfam Int\)](#)  
[DM Report \(MCN\) 2006](#)  
[NRCS Bulletin 29th July, 2007](#)  
[Baglung Landslides Report, 2007](#)  
[Flood scenario of Saptari, 2007](#)  
[Report on relief, Mahottari, 2007](#)  
[Delhi Declaration, Nov, 2007](#)  
[We Know What We Need : Nov.](#)  
[Flood Response Study 2007](#)  
[Global flood lesson 2007](#)

### Snapshots



[Rafters on search operation to retrieve the bodies after the collapse of Bheri Bridge .](#)

### Our Words

Disaster Watch Newsletter is now going to change its pattern. Along with the end of monsoon, daily updates will not be available but new updates will be posted regularly. Disaster Watch Newsletter would be made more interactive henceforth.

We will start regular columns and invite guest, viewers to have their say on different disaster issues. Suggestions and feedbacks would be heartedly appreciated .

### Asia Watch

As a part of the ESD celebrations, related organizations are jointly organizing a Duck, Cover and Hold exercise all over Nepal, followed by human chain. The exercise and human chain symbolizes the need for self protection as well as solidarity in dealing with such future eventualities.

Meanwhile, the National Society for Earthquake Technology - Nepal has warned that any earthquake as powerful as that of 1934 in Kathmandu Valley would result in deaths of 40,000 persons and over 100,000 people may be rendered homeless.

*(Posted on 16th January, 2008)*

## **Awareness, concerted efforts and human spirit to combat disaster : PM Koirala**

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has said people's lives and properties could be protected and effects of the natural disaster could be abated if harmonized relations between nature and human being are maintained and they are made aware of earthquake.

In the message, delivered on Tenth Earthquake Safety Day, today, Prime Minister Koirala has drawn into his memory the picture of disastrous earthquake that took place on Magh 2, 1990 BS, paid tribute to people who lost their lives in the incident and prayed that nobody should face such disaster again.

He has said we should give priority to the activities of creating social awareness, strengthening unity and developing human spirit to help each other at the time of disasters to abate its effect.

On the occasion of 10th earthquake safety day, Home Minister and Earthquake Safety Day National Committee Chairman Krishna Prasad Sitaula has stressed the need to identify earthquake high risk areas, to formulate timely policy, programme and management accordingly and to make disaster mitigation intervention and management effective, as Nepal ranks 11th position among the earthquake high prone countries.

Informing that emphasis has been laid on disaster management related policy, programme and plan in the three-year interim plan, Minister Sitaula said the preparation of formulating country national strategic plan on earthquake preparedness has almost come to final stage and added that a new Disaster Management Act is to be introduced soon.

He also urged all organizations and individuals dedicated to contribute for earthquake preparedness to be remained active in making people aware to prevent possible quake disaster.

*(Posted on 16th January, 2008)*

## **NRCS set to launch training on minimising disaster risk**

Nepal Red Cross Society is all set to launch Community Based Multi-hazards Risk Reduction Programme in Kathmandu valley and Kavre, Udaypur and Sindhuli districts to help reduce risks from natural and man-made disasters. The programme, to be launched on January 18, will focus on reducing the hazards by earthquakes, floods, landslides, fire and epidemics.

The programme includes assessing the probable hazards and their risks to the

## INDONESIA : Disaster-preparedness drive in West Sumatra

There is no mincing words: "West Sumatra is a supermarket for disasters, earthquakes and tsunamis," Gamawan Fauzi, governor of the province, said as he opened a two-day National Exhibition of Disaster Preparedness in Padang, the capital city, in December. "Society must be provided the knowledge to minimise fear," Fauzi said, "and the system of disaster response must be perfect."

There was no more convincing sign that communities in West Sumatra are beginning to take that challenge seriously than a mock disaster drill staged at the Padang event in which 13-year-old Muslim schoolchildren carried stretchers of the dead and wounded, quickly triaged and treated those who had survived, extinguished a small fire and, in under-five-minutes, erected a medical tent to care for and shelter casualties.

One 13-year-old, Athika Irdiyani, told IRIN: "We have practiced for the earthquake and the tsunami repeatedly at school, with the help of Tsunami Alert Community (KOGAMI), a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), as well as LIPI [the Indonesian Institute of Science]. That's where we learned to bring the tent, the stretcher and the medical equipment."

Some 5,000 people attended the third national disaster exhibition - the first was held in Jakarta in 2005 and the second in Bali in 2006 - where they learned through discussions, disaster storytelling, earthquake simulation and a variety of skits, games and drawing competitions about the mechanics of earthquakes and tsunamis and how to prepare for and survive them.

The 2004 tsunami had not just been a wake-up call for Indonesians in general, but for

communities, vulnerability identification and identifying the measures to cope with them.

The package will train the participants on first aid, search and rescue, storage of food and non-food items and operation of early warning system.

Talking to The Himalayan Times daily, executive director of the NRCS Umesh Prasad Dhakal said the organisation is basically focused on disaster relief activities but the new package aims at preparing communities for any kind of disasters so as to minimise the possible risks and number of casualties.

Sanjeev Kafle, director of Disaster Management Department in the NRCS, said five communities each in Kathmandu valley, Kavre, Udaypur and Sindhuli districts have been identified on the basis of need-assessment and that the programmes would be launched there. The focus of the programme would be on the types of hazards the areas are chiefly vulnerable to.

"Kathmandu is highly vulnerable to earthquakes so the main focus of the programme package here would be on earthquakes, with second priority to fire, landslides and epidemics," he said adding that landslide and floods would be the central focus of programmes in Kavre, landslides in Sindhuli and floods in Udaypur.

*(Posted on 16th January, 2008)*

## Nepal loses Rs 2.17 b annually in disasters

Nepal is incurring a loss of over Rs 2.17 billion worth property, in addition to deaths of some 700 people annually on an average due to natural disasters. According to the Home Ministry, natural calamities caused a loss of over Rs 21.7 billion worth property and killed 6,765 people in the last ten years.

The preparedness and risk reduction measures adopted to face calamities are minimal, according to experts.

Home Ministry officials said landslides and flash floods originating in the hills are responsible for a huge chunk of the total loss caused by natural disasters since 1997. Water induced disasters alone triggered loss worth Rs 18.5 billion in the past decade.

Home Ministry statistics showed that a total of 8937.44 hectares of cultivable land was washed away by flash floods, while additional thousands of hectares of fertile land had been turned into river bank with sand and pebble deposits.

Though natural disasters can neither be prevented nor predicted, experts argue that the loss caused by these calamities could be greatly minimized if risk reduction measures are adopted. "Half of the loss caused by floods and landslides can be reduced if concerted efforts are taken by all stakeholders," said Khom Raj Dahal, Deputy Director General at Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention (DWIDP).

DWIDP officials said debris brought by flash floods originating from rivers in Chure and Mahabharat range is raising river surface level in plain areas every year, leaving thousands of hectares of fertile land and even settlements covered by sand, stones and pebbles. Lack of embankment is causing erosion of cultivable land on either side of the Rivers in plain areas.

Dahal said this could be checked by constructing a series of check dams on major rivers that originate from Chure and Mahabharat range and by building

organisations like LIPI as well. LIPI, which is government funded and reports to the president, had for some years produced a series of reports on disasters and translated scientific findings, but Rafliana said, "they were reaching only a limited audience."

"Before 2004, no one had ever had training regarding earth quakes and tsunamis," Rafliana told IRIN. "The community was eager for information." She said: "People were asking LIPI what is an earthquake? How does it happen? How do we prepare for it?" and added: "They simply didn't believe a tsunami was possible."

The LIPI public education coordinator guesses that over 20 percent of the people would probably not be prepared to evacuate in a serious disaster. "Our biggest challenge is how to facilitate the process to get the community to evacuate quickly and safely."

West Sumatra lies in the middle of the western coast of the island of Sumatra and has a population of just over 4.2 million, according to government statistics. The province's low-lying coastline, with mountainous regions rising further in, faces the Indian Ocean and stretches 375km from North Sumatra Province in the northwest to Bengkulu in the southeast. Padang is the capital and largest city in the province with a population of over 750,000. (*IRIN*)

### Loss of lives this monsoon

Baglung	29
Banke	28
Gulmi	19
Rautahat	12
Bajura	11
Bardia	10
Sindhuli	10
Darchula	9
Ramechhap	9
Sindhuli	10
Baitadi	8
Dang	8
Pyuthan	7

embankments in erosion prone segments of such rivers. He said that check dams would prevent deposition of debris in river beds in plain areas, thereby stopping the rise of water level and erosion of fertile land.

Dahal informed that government allocates some Rs 10 million a year for the purpose. "This is far less than what is required," he added. "It is necessary to prioritize a few plans a year so that they can be executed with proper engineering."

Thir Bahadur GC, chief of Natural Disaster Section at Home Ministry, admitted that existing government policies are focused more on post-disaster activities such as search and rescue, relief distribution and reconstruction and rehabilitation. "We are currently working to bring changes in policies to put more emphasis on pre-disaster activities such as risk mitigation," he said.

Under Secretary G C, however, said government efforts alone would hardly be enough to mitigate risks. He said efforts are underway to set up a National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, which comprises both government and non-governmental organizations working in the field of disaster preparedness as well as relief and rescue activities. (*The Kathmandu Post*)

(Posted on 16th January, 2008)

## Devghat learned lesson from Bheri bridge collapse

Learning lesson from the Bheri Bridge collapse, precautionary measures have been undertaken this time in Devghat bridge to avert any disaster during religious fair of Maghe Sakranti.

Big religious fair is being observed today at the confluence of the Kali Gandaki and Trishuli river at Devghat in Tanahu district. Hindu pilgrims from different places of Nepal and India come to visit Devghat in Maghe Sakranti. It is customary to take holy dips at river confluence and perform worship at various shrines in this holy day.

According to the organizing committee, two hundred thousand people have observed the fair this year. Most of the observers pass through the suspension bridge to reach the confluence.

A technical team comprising engineers from Suspension Bridge Division have scrutiny over the bridge and started to maintain it since a week. They have tightened the knot bolt of the bridge and rendered required technical support. Loose knot bolt of the Bheri Bridge has been reckoned as a basic factor for collapse on Dec. 25 in Surkhet where 21 people died.

Several arrangements have been made to reduce the pressure on the bridge. Armed Police Force (APF) and 150 local youth volunteers have been deployed to maintain the row and discipline. Avoiding the crammed situation, unlikely before, only one way crossing has been allowed. Beside this, more than 20 raft boats are being used to ferry towards confluence. Additionally, a rescue team has also been deployed in a boat below the bridge and around the boating areas with red cross flag.

"We have tried to leave no stones unturned for the safety", Shiva Dhakal, secretary of Devghat Area Development Committee said. Earlier, scant attention had been paid for the safety and rescue of the pilgrims during annual religious fair in Devghat.

(Posted on 15th January, 2008)

Salyan	7
Mahottari	7
Siraha	7
Kailali	6
Kaski	6
Makwanpur	6
Achham	6
Udayapur	5
Jajarkot	5
Kalikot	5
Arghakhachi	5
Saptari	5
Jumla	4
Surkhet	4
Jhapa	4
Chitwan	4
Morang	4
Sunsari	4
Nawalparasi	3
Rukum	3
Dhanusha	3
Khotang	2
Bhojpur	2
Panchthar	2
Sarlahi	2
Parsa	2
Palpa	2
Bara	2
Dhading	2
Rupendehi	2
Bajhang	1
Tanahun	1
Sindhupalchowk	1
Lalitpur	1
Dadeldhura	1
Kavre	1
Mustang	1
Myagdi	1

(As of 30th October, 2007)

### Major Displacements

Saptari	10000 family
Siraha	6000 family
Mahottari	3700 family
Bardiya	2500 family
Dhanusha	2050 family
Parsa	2000 family
Rupendehi	2000 family
Sunsari	1000 family
Banke	750 family

**Total displacement: 48000 family**

**Total affected population:**

**Around 4 lakh 72 thousand (as of 30th October, 2007)**

*Sources : NRCS, Media reports/ MCN*

**Supported by**

## Stress to implement laws on earthquake safety

Minister for Physical Planning and Works Hisila Yami has stressed on the need of raising awareness on earthquake safety as Kathmandu is risky in terms of earthquake safety.

Addressing a programme Monday on 'reducing earthquake risk and responsibility' organized by the Department of Rural Development and Building Construction, Lalitpur Sub-Metropolis and National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) and Action Aid Nepal to mark the national earthquake safety day, she called for implementation of laws on its safety.

NSET Director Amod Mani Dixit called for alertness to protect from earthquake risks. Lalitpur Sub-Metropolis Chief Krishna Prasad Devkota informed about the disaster management programme started by the sub-metropolis.

*(Posted on 15th January, 2008)*

## Road in bad shape causes food shortage

People in Lamabagar VDC-1 of Dolkha have been facing the shortage of food as the road leading to Lapchi, from where they bring in food and adjoins the Tibet autonomous region, has remained disrupted for months.

Lapchi has been facing an acute shortage of food after the Chyadokhola river bank was washed away by flood in August. Locals tried to resume their movement by placing timber planks at different points of the Tamakoshi river to and from Lapchi which lies 64 miles far from Charikot. Lapchi was a five-day walk via Kukurraja incline, but it is impossible to cross the route during the winter.

Tirthalapchi Milarebi Santati secretary Milan Samuha Karma Sherpa said the starvation has gripped the area. Earlier, people used to bring food from Tibet's Falak, but later people there banned the entry of Nepalis and their yaks after an outbreak of cattle disease in the western part of Nepal, he said. 30 households, including 17, have moved from Lapchi to Khasa, 10 to Chhwangdi and three to Tasi, while 90 villagers of 16 households are still living in Lapchi.

A recent meeting of the Lamabagar village council has allocated Rs 1,25,000 for proper arrangement of transportation in the area. A survey was also conducted recently at the initiation of locals for construction of the eight-km road from Lamabagar to Lapchi.

*(Posted on 15th January, 2008)*

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