



International NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
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Kumamoto Earthquake: Emergency Response

Date: 21st April 2016, Time: 17:00 (Japan Standard Time)

Executive Summary

On 14th and 16th April 2016, two strong earthquakes (measuring magnitude-6.4 and 7.3 respectively) struck Kumamoto Prefecture, located on the island of Kyushu, Japan. The earthquakes are the biggest to have hit Japan since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

Over 750 aftershocks have been recorded since the initial 6.4-magnitude earthquake struck Kumamoto on 14th April at 21:26 local time. These tremors have caused severe loss of life, resulted in thousands of injuries, and damaged critical infrastructure across the area.

Over 250,000 people sought refuge or were ordered to evacuate their homes, and more than 700 emergency shelters have been activated in and around the area. Many people continue to stay in shelters or sleep in their cars due to the threat of ongoing aftershocks. There are growing concerns over negative health impacts and sickness in emergency shelters, especially for the elderly and other vulnerable evacuees.

Disaster Impacts: In Numbers

Number of fatalities	48
Number of disaster-related fatalities	11
Number of injured	1000+
Number of evacuees (peak number)	250,000+
Number of evacuees (21 st April)	100,000+
Number of emergency shelters (21 st April)	650+
Number of homes damaged/destroyed	2000+

**These figures were sourced from various Japanese and international media reports, including BBC and NHK, as of 21st April 2016. Figures may increase/decrease as more information becomes available.*

Situation Report (21st April)

One week has passed since the first major earthquake struck Kumamoto. PBV's team has spent extensive time on the ground, liaising with survivors and other stakeholders in emergency shelters, government offices, and relief organisations. The following information provides a snapshot of the situation on the ground as of 21st April:

- Over 750 aftershocks have been recorded since the first major quake on 14th April. Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) has warned that these are likely to continue for at least the next few days.
- Heavy rains today in the Kumamoto area. There are concerns that this may cause secondary disasters, including landslides and floods.
- There are still 100,000+ evacuees in 658 shelters, and many evacuees are sleeping in cars as they are afraid to sleep indoors. Several car parks are full at night of people sleeping in cars. Many people leave the shelters during the day, and come back at night to sleep due to ongoing tremors. One shelter PBV visited in the Mashiki area is serving 1,000+ evacuees.
- There are increasing concerns over negative health impacts and sickness in emergency shelters, especially for the elderly and other vulnerable evacuees. Yahoo News reports that in addition to the 48 fatalities from the earthquakes, there have already been 11 disaster-related fatalities in the post-disaster phase.
- There are concerns that people sleeping in cars and in other cramped conditions are at risk of "Economy Class Syndrome" (Deep Vein Thrombosis). Efforts are underway to raise awareness of this and to encourage counter-measures, including regular exercises and stretching.
- Emergency supplies are arriving from around the country, but are still slow to reach survivors in some parts. There are challenges in sorting through and distributing supplies due to overstretched resources and damaged infrastructure. Some government officials said that they are having to throw away bread/onigiri which are being received as they have passed their expiration dates.
- Some survivors were saying that they are receiving mainly bread and onigiri. Self-Defense Forces, local volunteers, and residents are starting to make hot meals at shelters (e.g. curry, yakisoba).
- Emergency baths are open in several shelters, operated by the Self-Defense Forces.
- Some schools being used as shelters will be on break for the rest of the week, as they cannot continue classes in these conditions. Several schools are hoping to return to regular schedule next week, so that children can resume their studies.



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Peace Boat Disaster Relief Volunteer Center (PBV) in Kumamoto

PBV began gathering information and contacting local partners immediately after the first tremor on 14th April. Our advanced team arrived on the ground on 16th April, hours after the second major quake (magnitude-7.3) struck.

Starting with the heavily affected town of Mashiki, PBV's staff began assessing the needs of earthquake-hit communities in and around Kumamoto.

Having exchanged information with local governments, nonprofit organisations, and community members, the team found the situation to be severe, with relief efforts being hampered by heavy traffic, impassable roads, and continuing aftershocks.

PBV's team and partners are taking all necessary precautions to ensure their safety as they move around the affected areas, and are ensuring not to be a burden on affected communities by being self-sufficient and well prepared.

Over the coming days and weeks, PBV will continue to work with community members, local governments, and other organisations to assess the situation and determine the best way to provide assistance going forward.



Planned Relief Activities

Emergency Shelters

PBV will provide vital assistance to evacuees in emergency shelters. As of 19th April, this is estimated to be over 100,000 people. We will support the management and coordination of emergency shelters in partnership with local governments, as well as support equitable distribution of emergency supplies (e.g. food, water, blankets) for all evacuees, including vulnerable groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

Food Distribution

PBV will set up food distribution points near emergency shelters, to a) provide warm and nutritious food, b) bring evacuees together to build a sense of community and provide psychosocial support, and c) offer the chance to take a break from the stressful conditions of the emergency shelters. These spaces will also be used as “safe spaces” for children to play and relieve stress that is built up in the emergency shelters.

Volunteer Recruitment, Dispatch and Coordination

PBV will recruit, mobilize and train volunteers to assist with the above activities, as well as to help with activities including a) removing debris and cleaning damaged homes, b) organising and sorting through emergency supplies that have arrived in affected areas, c) distributing the supplies to survivors, and d) meeting other needs that will undoubtedly arise over the coming weeks. PBV will also support in the management and running of disaster volunteer centers. All volunteers will be given a thorough orientation and will receive training, in order to ensure volunteer safety at all times.

NPO/NGO Coordination

PBV, as part of JVOAD (Japan Voluntary Organisations Active in Disaster), will coordinate relief organisations through regular meetings to ensure that assistance is being provided as effectively as possible. If disaster relief organisations are poorly coordinated, there can be a major imbalance in the distribution of supplies and other critical services. PBV and partners will ensure that information is being shared and resources are utilized so that no one is left behind.

*Note: These plans are subject to change depending on needs of communities, resources available, and other conditions on the ground.



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Daily Updates From PBV Team In Kumamoto
(Chronological Order)

[Kumamoto Earthquake: Update, 17th April]

Aftershocks are still occurring frequently in Kumamoto and surrounding areas. Many people continue to stay in emergency shelters or sleep in their cars due to the threat of these ongoing tremors.

PBV's advanced team spent the day assessing affected communities and connecting with different stakeholders on the ground.

Many shops that line the streets remain closed. In addition, due to stoppages of critical lifelines such as water and electricity, some toilets and traffic lights are not functioning. Several bridges have been damaged or destroyed, and some roads remain impassable. There is also heavy traffic on some of the roads in or around the affected areas.



[Kumamoto Earthquake: Update, 18th April]

These photos are from emergency shelters in and around Kumamoto.

Many of the people managing the emergency shelters have also been affected by the earthquakes themselves, and so despite their best efforts, the collective capacity to manage large numbers of people in this stressful situation is limited.

There are concerns that the conditions in the shelters may impact the evacuees' health over the coming days.

Food, water, and other emergency supplies are being delivered from around the country, and the distribution of these supplies to survivors seems to be starting.

However, many of the food supplies reaching the shelters are cold food items like onigiri and bread. Today, the provision of warm meals (炊き出し) has begun in some of the emergency shelters.





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[Kumamoto Earthquake: Update 19th April]

As of this morning, Kumamoto Airport has reopened. Much of the area's infrastructure has yet to recover, but the reopening of the airport is one major step forward.

We hope that this will help the relief and recovery of earthquake-affected communities across the region.

[Kumamoto Earthquake: Update 20th April]

Today PBV's team visited numerous emergency shelters in and around Kumamoto area.

Evacuees have spent six nights sleeping in shelters, cars, or tents, and tens of thousands of people will seek refuge again tonight as aftershocks continue.

Undoubtedly, one of the challenges ahead will be to continue to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of evacuees.

PBV will work closely with partners to provide much-needed assistance to evacuees affected by the Kumamoto earthquakes.

For More Information

For regular updates in English and Japanese, please see our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/PBVsaigai/>

For additional information, please visit our websites:

<http://pbv.or.jp/en/> [English] <http://pbv.or.jp/> [Japanese]

If you would like to support the survivors of this disaster, our donations pages are live and can be found via the links below.

Donations Page:

http://pbv.or.jp/donate/201604_kumamoto/english.html [English]

http://pbv.or.jp/donate/201604_kumamoto/ [Japanese]

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