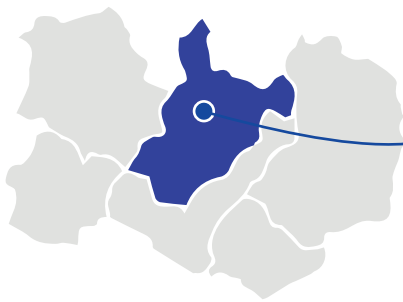


Welcome to the seventh issue of **OPEN MIC NEPAL** bulletin. The Open Mic project captures rumours and perceptions on the ground to eliminate information gaps between the media, humanitarian agencies and local people. By providing local media and outreach workers with facts, Open Mic aims to create a better understanding of the needs of the earthquake-affected communities and to debunk rumours before they can do any harm.

RUMOURS



• **BABARE, DOLAKHA**

"People say that the houses made of CGI sheets and iron are not safe because there is a risk of being struck by lightning."

FACTS

Lightning occurs when electrically charged particles in clouds discharge into the ground. The path taken for this dissipation is often the shortest way possible; therefore, lightning often strikes tall trees and towers.

Lightning strikes can be fatal to humans and damaging to houses only if they strike them directly.

Houses made of CGI sheets and other metals do not necessarily attract lightning any more than houses made of concrete or other material. In fact, CGI sheets are conductors and can act as earthing components themselves by transferring electrical energy to the ground in case of lightning.

If lightning strikes a house made of CGI sheets directly, it is not safe to be in direct contact with the metal. You can insulate such houses with wood, bamboo or other non-conducting materials to protect yourself.

If you live in an area prone to thunderstorms, it is better to install a lightning protection system in your house by installing an earthing circuitry.

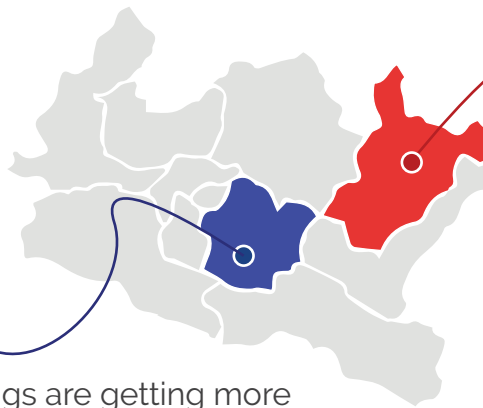
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CONCERNS



MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOK

"I am blind in both eyes. Things are getting more difficult for me after the earthquake. I haven't yet received any help from the government. People already discriminate against me because I am blind. Isn't the government providing special relief to disabled people?"

NAMDU, DOLAKHA

"People are saying that houses will be built for for the poor and people with disability. Is this true? "

ANSWERS

The government has not announced special relief or rehabilitation package focused only on people with disability.

However, with support from the UNICEF, the government is implementing an emergency cash transfer programme to top up the existing social security allowance by additional Rs 3000 (one time only). This programme includes people living with disability who have enrolled into the social security assistance programme.

If you have not received the additional amount, you should contact your VDC or municipality office.

Non-governmental organisations such as the National Federation of the Disabled-Nepal and Handicap International-Nepal, are providing support to disabled people in some districts through relief and rehabilitation programs.

The Federation has a volunteer focal person in each of the 14 most affected districts as well as Tanahun and Solukhumbhu. Handicap International works in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sindhupalchok and Nuwakot.

People with disability who need special equipment such as a wheelchair or a white cane can contact these organisations.

The applicant does not need to have been disabled because of the earthquake.

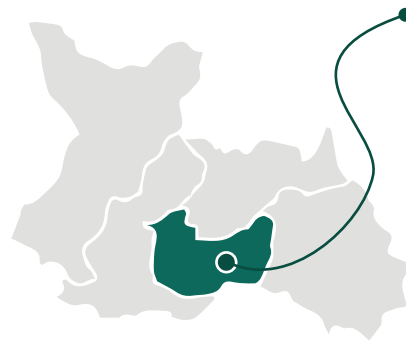
Sudharshan Subedi

Chairperson
The National Federation of
the Disabled-Nepal
9851059360

Pramila Tamrakar

Handicap International
16600178482 (NTC),
9801571100 (NCell)

CONCERNS



BIDUR, NUWAKOT

"The government will compensate the victims who lost their cattle to the earthquake. The government will distribute goats for free to earthquake victims."

ANSWERS

The government has apportioned a budget to assist those who lost their livestock to the quake. The Directorate of Livestock Production will finalise the details of the programme by 20 August. The programme might subsidise purchase of new goats and cattle.

The District Livestock Service Offices, which have recorded details of the dead livestock in the earthquake, will implement the programme.

In the meantime, non-government organisations are providing support to those who lost their livestock to the quake.

In 90 VDCs of 5 districts--Sindhupalchok, Dhading, Nuwakot, Kavrepalanchok and Gorkha--Heifer International plans to distribute one male buffalo to each VDC in the next three months. The organisation also plans to distribute an ox to every household that lost oxen, which were used to plough the fields, in the earthquake. It will also distribute medicine to kill parasitic worms in goats and pigs in these VDCs.

Dr. Lok Nath Poudel

Directorate of Livestock
Production
01-5542914

Dr. Keshav Shah

Senior Program Manager
Heifer International
9801182921

CONCERNS

LAPRAK, GORKHA

"A lot of children here have jaundice. After people were told that sugarcane, fruits and other water-rich food should be consumed by jaundice patients, infected children are fed corn stalks which look like sugarcane."

DHADING BESI, DHADING

"Children are developing rashes and pustules."

LAMIDANDA, DOLAKHA

"We're tired from taking our children to the hospital. They suffer from diarrhoea."

KABRE, DOLAKHA

"Children's health seems to be highly affected. What should we do?"

MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOK

"Increasingly, more children are getting sick."

MAHADEVSTHAN, KAVREPALANCHOK

"Children's health seems to be highly affected. What should we do?"

ANSWERS

Water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, fever, jaundice and dysentery, are common during the rainy season.

It is possible to prevent these diseases by treating water properly before consuming by boiling or by using water purifiers. It is important to pay attention to cleanliness around your house and to defecate in latrines only.

If children develop symptoms of rash and fever, they should be taken to the nearest health facilities, as these can be chicken pox, rubella or measles. These diseases transfer easily among children who have not received rubella and measles immunisation.

A measles, rubella and polio vaccination campaign has been launched in earthquake-affected districts since 15 August. Contact health facilities to immunise children.

If children show signs of jaundice, it should be confirmed before starting the treatment. They should be referred to health facilities where a laboratory diagnosis for jaundice is available. They should be given plenty of water, fruits and nutritional diet but not oil, ghee and fats. Corn stalk is not appropriate for feeding.

If children show any of the following symptoms, they should be taken to the nearest health facility immediately: fast breathing or difficulty in breathing, inability to drink or breastfeed, lethargy or loss of consciousness, high fever or low body temperature and if there is blood in stool.

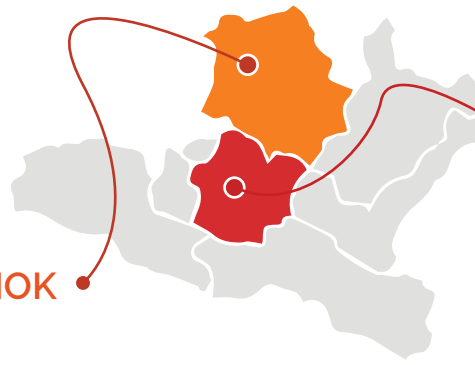
Dr Babu Ram Marasini

Director, Epidemiology and
Disease Control Division,
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01-4262862

CONCERNS

SANGACHOK, SINDHUPALCHOK

"We've heard that we have to publish a notice stating the loss of the passport if the passport got buried in the earthquake."



PANCHKHAAL, KAVRE

"My passport got buried in the earthquake rubble. I looked for it but couldn't find it. It's not really lost, just buried under the rubble. What should I do to get a new passport?"

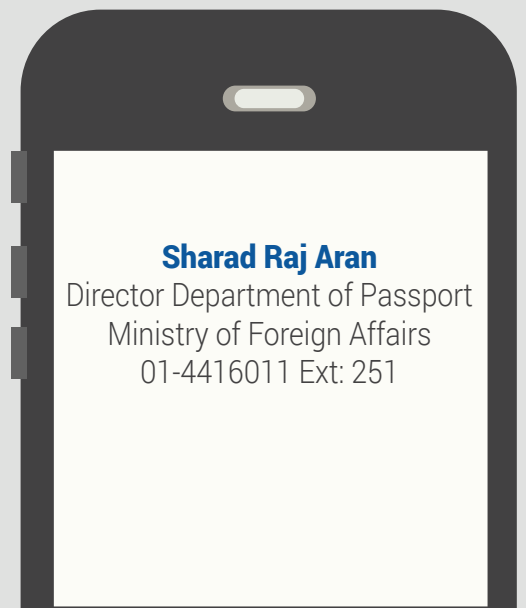
ANSWERS

If your passport is buried in the earthquake rubble, you do not have to publish a notice in a newspaper or pay the additional Rs 5,000 to get a new one, as is required in normal cases of passport loss.

If you cannot retrieve your passport from the rubble, you will need three witnesses to write a letter verifying the incident. This letter should be taken to your Village Development Committee Secretary and local police chief, both of whom will need to certify it.

This letter should be attached with your application for the new passport. You will still need to pay the usual fee of Rs 5,000 to get a new passport and the additional Rs 5,000 for expedited service.

If the District Administration Office does not accept your application with this letter, you can contact the Department of Passport at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The rumours and issues presented here were collected by frontline workers from partner organisations and #quakehelpdesk volunteers based on their face-to-face conversation with around 540 people in 10 districts between 7 - 13 August. The selection was done on the basis of prevalence and relevance.

Open Mic Nepal presented by: