

813 dead, thousands left homeless in violent Turkish earthquake

STANBUL, Turkey (AP) — The death toll from a violent earthquake in eastern Turkey reached 813 today, and Red Cross officials said many of the thousands of homeless survivors could freeze to death unless emergency shelter was provided.

Turkish authorities said the toll was expected to mount as rescue teams reached remote villages.

Both the International Red Cross and its Turkish equivalent — the Red Crescent Society — issued urgent appeals for money to buy tents and blankets.

The Red Cross said the quake Sunday morning left at least 250,000 homeless or injured and devastated at least 22 villages.

"The need for immediate shelter is a life-or-death matter," a Red Cross statement said. "The affected area is on a high plateau and at this time of year, someone who cannot find shelter after nightfall may freeze to death before morning." The Red Crescent Society estimated it needs 5,000 tents, 30,000 heavy blankets and 5,000 heavy sleeping bags.

Rescue efforts, carried out mostly by volunteers, were hampered by darkness late Sunday and officials said they believed there were scores of other victims still buried under debris in hard-to-reach communities.

A rescue coordinator in Erzurum said thousands of survivors were exposed to cold for days after the quake. "By the time enough supplies reach as they (survivors) will have to endure more natural disasters," he said, declining to be identified.

Rain and near-freezing temperatures were reported in the mountainous area hit by the quake near the borders with Iran, Iraq, the Soviet Union and Armenia.

Authorities said the quake was believed to be centered in Erzurum and Kars provinces, where most of the damage occurred. But it also jolted the provinces of Bitlis, Malatya, Bingol and Van and Malatya, according to the Turkish authorities.

About 361 of the dead were found in the far eastern province of Erzurum, including 125 in Kars and 28 in Van. And 100 were found in Kars, Liget and Bayburt. Turkish television showed grim films of survivors, with elderly women weeping over the bodies of their relatives and mosques partially destroyed by the strong jolts.

The U.S. Geological Survey, which monitors tremors around the world, said the quake measured 7.1 on the Richter scale of earthquake movement.

The Richter scale is a gauge of energy released by an earthquake as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph. A quake of magnitude 7.1 is a major earthquake capable of widespread, serious damage.

"I was about to have my regular morning tea when I felt an intense jolting under my bed and the entire roof collapsed on my head," said an unidentified farmer in an interview with a Turkish television crew.

"Then I opened my eyes in the hospital. I have now idea what happened to my wife, my kids, my animals."

Government and rescue teams said reached almost two-thirds of the hamlets of villages in the Erzurum and Kars provinces close to the Soviet border.

Erzurum, one of a Turkish army base, is surrounded by volcanic mountains at an altitude of 2,500 feet.

About three hours before the Turkish tremor struck, a quake hit the Hindukush mountain range, 1,000 miles to the east of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. No casualties or damage were reported.

A strong quake, an affected southeastern Japan Sunday, but it apparently caused no casualties or damage.

In 1989, a quake killed 1,000 in the town of Erzincan, 275 in Malatya, a district of Van province, killed more than 1,500, and injured more than 10,000.

A guarantee was imposed on dozens of devastated villages in eastern Turkey to halt the spread of disease from the carcasses of animals killed in last Sunday's earthquake, which cost the lives of an estimated 1,300 people and left 30,000 homeless. Authorities said an estimated 30,000 animals died in the quake. Survivors of some damaged villages were evacuated as work crews sprayed disinfectants on the ruins in an effort to reduce the threat of disease.

Los Angeles Times Nov 4, 1983.

---

813 dead, thousands left homeless in violent Turkish earthquake

Toll reaches 1,233

as quake survivors endure cold, snow

ERZURUM, Turkey (AP) — Battling frigid weather, rescue teams erected tents today and led tens of thousands of people homeless by an earthquake that killed at least 1,233 people.

President Kenan Evren, after inspecting the disaster area, called for generous donations of money and supplies to help the survivors, many of whom were housed in makeshift shelters in detached areas as long as 114 feet seriously injured and destroyed 10,000 homes, leaving an estimated 7,000 people homeless.

Refuge workers today continued to clear the rubble and villages buried the dead.

Village Affairs Minister Mumit Guney said here to superintend relief work said some of the homes would be sected in public buildings temporarily. He promised to erect prefabricated houses quickly.

The International Red Cross dispatched 12 tons of medical supplies, 20,175 blankets and 4,125 tons to Erzurum, officials said. They said a 37-car train filled with relief supplies left Ankara.

Saud Arabia has contributed $400 million, and contributions from individuals and institutions in Turkey were expected to be above $10 million in the next few days, the officials said.

The problem to be tackled by relief officials was preservation of livestock whose owners were killed by the quake. Cattle and sheep-raising is the main source of income in the region.

Los Angeles Times Nov 4, 1983.
Epidemics feared in quake-torn Turkey

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

BY VICTOR SIMPSON

The Associated Press

ERZURUM, Turkey — Search dogs found 15 more bodies in earthquake-devastated eastern Turkey Tuesday, and the governor of Erzurum province said epidemics were feared because hundreds of corpses were still unburied.

The quake killed at least 1,233 people Sunday and left 78,000 homeless as it rolled through the provinces of Erzurum and Kars, the Soviet border, officials said. In Muratbagi village, the worst-hit settlement, there weren't enough survivors to bury the dead. At least 485 died of a population of about 950.

Women placed planks over a mud-filled field beside a narrow dirt road that is Muratbagi's only connection to the outside world. On the planks lay the bodies of 33 women and children, waiting the arrival of an imam, a Moslem prayer leader, and for more manpower to dig fresh graves on a hillside plot.

Most of the dead in Muratbagi were women and children. When the quake struck at 7:42 a.m., the men were already in the fields to tend their animals or at morning prayer at the village mosque.

A 50-year-old man, limping and with his head bandaged, walked three miles, "— please get them back," as he looked down on the bodies of his children and two sons aged six and seven.

A few yards away a young woman, wearing a white covering on her head, clutched to her bosom framed pictures of her two daughters, aged five and six, both killed. She stared at the pictures and then huddled them.

A Swiss disaster relief team with specially trained dogs searched through the ruins but only came up with more bodies.

"The dogs found 15 bodies. There was nobody alive under the ruins," said a team member, Jean Pierre Racle.

A Turkish colonel directing rescue operations said probably even more were buried under the rubble and that the search would continue.

Army relief units moved in cranes and heavy earth-moving machinery over the main highway to Iran on the way to isolated villages miles down winding dirt roads.

Quake upsets Turk election

ERZURUM, Turkey — Authorities preparing for Turkey's election to return civil rule went through lists of election officials killed in a massive earthquake as medical teams worked today to prevent outbreaks of disease in the devastated area. The quake threw a pill of mourning over an otherwise festive scene among three political parties seeking a majority in a 460-member Parliament to be elected Sunday, Turkey's first vote since the military seized power in 1980. In eastern Turkey, medical teams fearful of outbreaks of disease worked to evacuate tens of thousands of villagers isolated by the rubble. Dozens of the 77 stricken villages were isolated while military crews poured disinfectant into wells and sprinkled lime and powdered lime to check the carcasses of farm animals, thousands of which died in the quake.

Nov. 4, 1983 ~ S.F. EXAMINER

Tremors shake Turkish province as country begins recovering from last week's earthquake

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ERZURUM, Turkey — Strong tremors rocked the western Turkish province of Bursa early today but caused no injuries or damage, Istanbul's Kandilli Observatory reported. Relief agencies sent more food and shelter into the villages hit by Wednesday's major earthquake which was struck by a killer earthquake five days ago.

A U.S. Air Force C-120 transport plane loaded with tents, blankets and other emergency supplies landed in the eastern quake-stricken area and officials said four more U.S. planes were expected by the end of the day. The supply include steel water purification equipment, mobile kitchens and forklift trucks. The earthquakes Sunday destroyed 46 villages in the eastern provinces of Erzurum and Kars, killing 1,330 people and leaving 33,000 homeless.

The aid was flown in from an American base in Italy aboard C-141 cargo planes to the U.S. base at Incirlik in southeastern Turkey. The supplies were then transferred to C-130s, because the larger C-141s could not land at local airport. Relief supplies also have poured in from the International Red Cross, West Germany, Austria, Pakistan, Britain and Jordan.

U.S. Ambassador Robert Strauss-Hope traveled to Erzurum and announced that Washington was sending 1,000 tents, 156,000 blankets, 200 plastic sheets, 600 stoves, 50 gas cans, 3,000 water containers and two water pumps worth a total of $2 million.

In Bonn, the West German Red Cross said it sent medical units and 20 tons of relief supplies, including blankets, sleeping bags, tents and medicine.

Rain and snow began to dig out survivors of Sunday's earthquake, but today was sunny and temperatures were above freezing. Turkey's largest cities, Istanbul and Hurriyet, said hundreds of people nationwide had called to seek adoption of children orphaned by the quake.