

JAPAN TSUNAMI & CHRISTCHURCH QUAKE NEWS

14 March 2011

We are witness yet again, and all too soon, to horrific devastation from the tsunami and earthquake in Japan that occurred on Friday, March 11th. Now it seems there will be terrible long-term effects from nuclear power plant breakdowns. The films are shocking; how can we comprehend the destruction, the lives lost; and how life in Japan may cope.

The International Helpers suggest a latihan – to ask The One Almighty before starting: "May we please be allowed to surrender the situation in Japan into the Loving Care of the One Almighty God".

JAPAN'S TSUMANI AND EARTHQUAKE

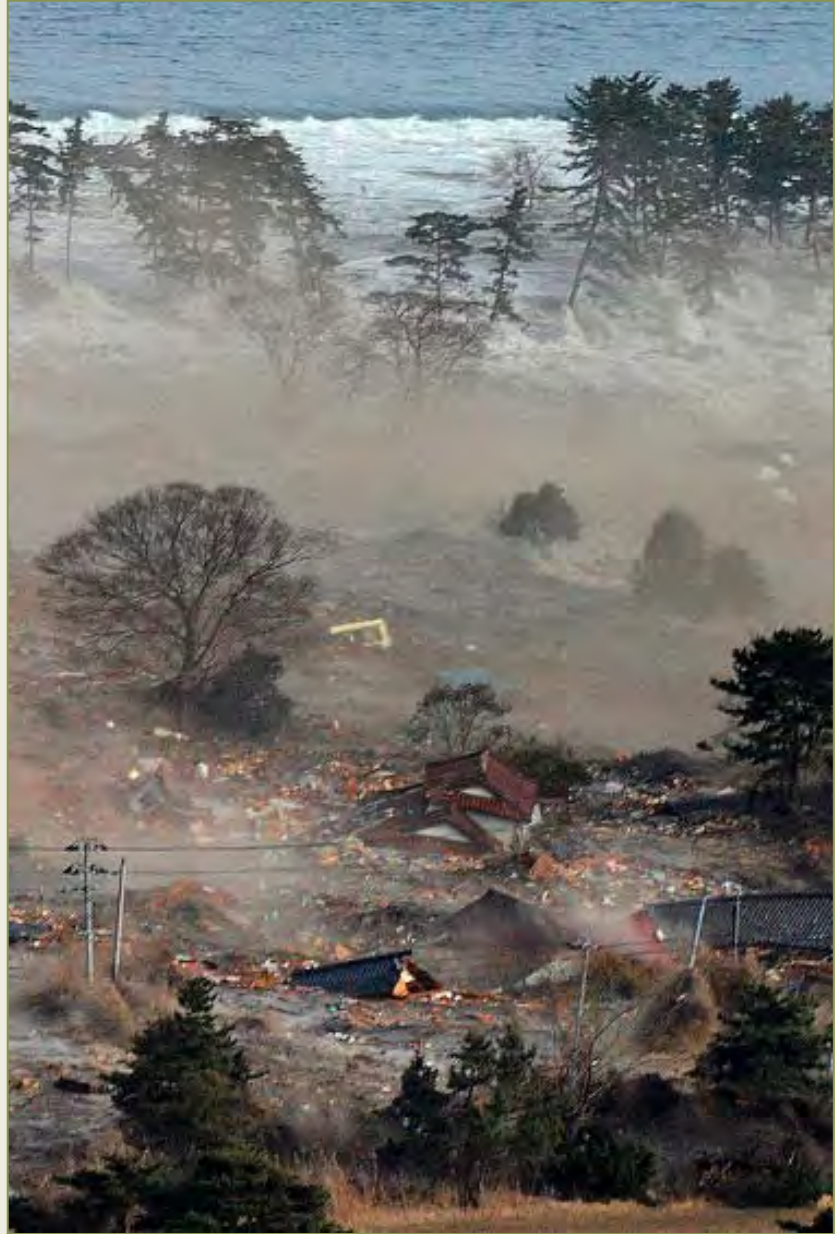
Masayuki Nagamine, Chairman of Subud Japan writes:

The water supply was stopped and I had to carry buckets of water for daily use and I may have to do it several times more, I really noticed an importance of water. The quake was the biggest one I have ever experienced; even though the epicenter was very far away.

As far as I know, no Subud members had serious damage, but I feel very sorry for many victims and people who lost their family. I hope if you could pray for the people affected by the big quakes, tsunami and also explosions at the nuclear power plants in Japan.

Arisa Ooi, Vice Committee Councilor of Subud Japan shares what the earthquake was like:

I was in a classroom with my students when the quake struck. The shaking lasted several minutes, but for me it seemed very long with some of kids crying from fear. I was just saying 'Allah, Allah' in my heart. Thanks to God, none of us were injured and we evacuated safely. After the earthquake, many people are stuck where they were as public transit across Tokyo the transit was shut down. I stayed overnight at school with some colleagues.



And then two days later...

On behalf of Subud Japan, I would like to thank you for all your prayers, warm messages and concern with our national situation.

As Ichiro Nakamura, our Susila Dharma Chair, reported, all Subud members, including two families living near the epicenters, are safe, in spite of material damage. Alhamdulillah.... Alhamdulillah....

However, we are also very shocked as we learn the effects of this disaster reported by means of the media... According to a survey of the National Police Agency, the number of people killed in the earthquake stands at 801 as of Sunday afternoon, while 733 people are unaccounted for. About 1500 people are reported injured. In Sendai, in the quake-hit prefecture, 200 to 300 bodies also have been found. About

three hundred thousand people have been evacuated to shelters. More than 20,000 people are stranded and calling for rescue in Miyagi prefecture, one of the epicenters. [And then there are] the troubles at the nuclear power plants located in Fukushima prefecture...

We have not yet fully discussed how we can support people in the devastated areas, as we are still in uncertain situation. We hope we will be able to do something good for them, even though it may be a small deed.

HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FOR JAPAN:

Funds for Japanese victims of the Earthquake and Tsunami are welcome and will be distributed by SDIA through SD Japan. Visit <http://donations.susiladharma.org/donate> now where you will find all the information needed to donate. If you choose PayPal, donate to the Emergency Fund, specifying Japan Earthquake and Tsunami relief.

Any emergency funds received beyond current needs for both these disasters will go into the SDIA Emergency Fund which allows SDIA to provide humanitarian relief in any future emergency situations.

CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE UPDATE

Maynard MacDonald, Christchurch Chair, wrote three days after the quake:

We are deeply sensible of the help you wonderful people imbedded in the Subud world organization have offered us and will offer us. We are grateful for your prayers. Knowing that you accompany us is real.

There is something noble and alive here; a spirit which is energetic and resourceful. So in spite of the destruction there is still a sense that this is a good place to be.

Somehow, by Grace, amongst all that wreckage, we in the Subud community are safe. The quake was local, virtually right under us, and since it was shallow, the intensity of the shock was horrific. Many of our homes are unusable or unsafe. Many members have left because living conditions are so harsh. The aftershocks are very frequent and the stronger ones continue to damage already weakened buildings and fragile nerves. Before this immediate tragedy we had over 4,000 aftershocks making daily fissures in our resolve and our homes.

The human cost is very heavy: disturbing images will horrify the children for a long time, something grand in the aspect of a city that was familiar and comfortable is gone, homes gone, work disappearing, businesses and institutions crumbling before our eyes, and the very earth not to be trusted. I am thinking of a friend: a good, kindly, talented, light-hearted, friend buried in the rubble of one of our fine old churches. This is essentially a small town and I know that my sad feeling is going click, click, click through a line of thousands of hearts tipping like dominoes.

Caledonian Hall, before and after



On March 6, Maynard wrote to the WSA Care Support team:

We had a really interesting group meeting last night. We went all around the room ticking off who was there, and not there, and finding out what their living conditions were. What kind of help was needed, and above all, if we could finesse relocated housing onto the Subud property - who would be interested? To our surprise there was some interest but no quick takers. People want to be in their own places in spite of the damage and lack of services. The Earthquake Commission is rushing in a fine war-

like manner at the housing problem and doing emergency repairs to any place that might be habitable if made safe and relatively water tight. Houses that have spat most of their brick cladding will get a temporary plywood skin. Roofs will be fixed - all very hasty and temporarily practical, but not permanent rebuilding. And this seems to speak to the situation because for many of us, camping out in our own house is far preferred to being relocated to a sound house.

So...we come back to the point that the city is devastated and all that that means, namely, things are going to get tough. There are great programs, but much of this support is temporary. For instance, your job is gone; the mortgage still needs to be paid, in fact - even the damn insurance needs to be paid on houses that are a write off. Stop the payments and boom, no pay-out. We conclude that over a long period, possibly some years, we will be using our emergency money to prop people up, keep them going, keep their situation from deteriorating even more. Perhaps the best way I can put this at the moment is that, yes, the funds you send us are certainly useful for emergency support, but perhaps it would be closer to the - emerging - truth to say that your funds will become much valued and necessary for long term Recovery Funding. Things will get clearer as we go on.

From Judy Gibb, Subud New Zealand Chairlady, March 1:

The care and support of the Christchurch members for each other and for their community is phenomenal, which binds them even more closely together as they withstand the



strains of daily challenges. All are safe for the moment, and some are returning to the city as now 86% of the population

have power. Just imagine 120,000 tonnes of silt already removed from the streets. The “student army” of 20,000, so quickly assembled via facebook, are being deployed elsewhere today.

So many positive things are in the news – 18,000 packed lunches arrived today from the Otago Students’ Association; workers from all around the country have joined in the relief operations; the price of petrol has gone up throughout the country – with the exception of the Christchurch area for most companies.

For all of us, the knowledge of the love, support and prayers of so many around the world is very helpful, and of course the financial assistance is most welcome. However, for the Christchurch members the real extent of their physical needs will probably only be apparent in the coming weeks and

months. For the moment their immediate needs are being met by mutual support and by the relief packages provided by government and council. Many support mechanisms are available for a few weeks and no doubt will be reassessed as the situation becomes more stable. All members have been accounted for and many are currently out of Christchurch. But soon major decisions will have to be made. Houses that may be repaired or have to be demolished.... Jobs that are no longer available... Necessary moves to other centres in search of work... For those not in the work-force... Insurance funds will be available for many but how far they will go towards reconstruction... And, of course, the emotional trauma has shattered many as the after-shocks continue...

Our local Christchurch committee set up to administer the funds given to Subud New Zealand feels that the best use of the funds is probably as bridging finance to assist members to meet urgent needs which arise from here on. We are conscious of how lucky we are to be living in a country which has excellent infrastructure in place, that we have resources throughout the country that have been able to be brought into action when required, that so many international experts have sped to our aid. There is no comparison with the enormity of the natural disasters in many other countries of the world.

Perhaps an unfortunate effect of all the publicity around the world is the impression that NZ has been flattened. On the contrary! So the sad news of tourist numbers being already greatly reduced because of this event will have an obvious effect on the national economy, and consequently damage the country's prospects of speedy recovery. Christchurch airport is open for all flights and tourists are most welcome to visit all the rest of the country. Please come and bring your friends! You will be more than welcome!

From Luke Penseny, WSA Chair:

The primary source of support is our prayers and support for these members and citizens who have experienced this enormous shock in every sense. They will need our continuing prayers and support in the weeks and months ahead as they adjust to this life-changing experience.

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***CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE
APPEAL TO DATE:***

Donations from the World Subud Association to Christchurch total approximately \$18,000 USD as of mid-March.

From Hamida (Virginia) Thomas, SDIA Executive Director:

SDIA has already sent more than \$6000 and we are preparing to make another transfer of about \$15,000 USD for both Subud and non-Subud members in the community.

From the Outside Community:

Pauline Mary Crosbie of Global Renewal Projects, in partnership with the multi-faith community of Melbourne, Australia, is organizing a concert 'New Hope Rebuilding Christchurch' on March 19, with proceeds going to Subud Christchurch.

Needs Assessment:

The WSA and SDIA are waiting for a needs assessment and an indication from Subud Christchurch as to whether additional funds would improve the humanitarian response.

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