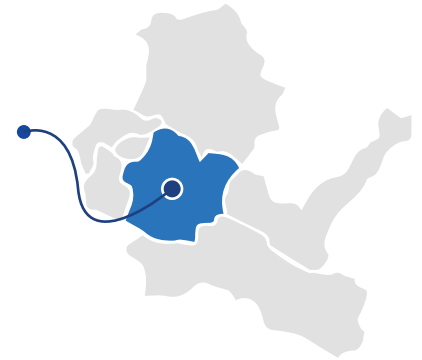


Welcome to the thirteenth issue of **OPEN MIC NEPAL** bulletin. The Open Mic project captures rumours and perceptions on the ground to eliminate information gaps between the media, humanitarian agencies and local people. By providing local media and outreach workers with facts, Open Mic aims to create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

## CONCERNS

### JAISITHOK, KAVREPALANCHOK

"People here are interested to know about technologies for building earthquake-resistant houses."



## ANSWERS

Earthquake-resistant buildings are designed to withstand earthquakes and minimise damage.

There are many earthquake-resistant technologies. Here, we present some methods appropriate to the Nepali context and design aesthetics.

A house, whose foundation, walls and roofs are connected tightly together, are more immune from damage during earthquakes.

An earthquake-resistant house can be made of bricks, stones or cinder blocks. Regardless of the material used, the principle is to connect the walls, foundation and roof securely together. This can be achieved through the use of strong wooden beams, bamboo or iron rods on the floor, sills, lintels and pillars in the corners of the walls.

To make mud-and-stone houses earthquake resistant, the foundation should be wider than the floor. A bigger stone must be placed on top of every two stones on the wall, and a rod or a wooden beam must be inserted horizontally and vertically in places for reinforcement along the wall.

The number of floors in a house must be determined based on the area of the land the house will be built on and based on the quality of the soil.

A house made of mud and stones should not be more than two storeys tall.

It is better to get masons trained in building earthquake-resistant houses to build your house. You should get the design of your house approved by the government and follow the building codes.

#### **Bijay Krishna Upadhayay**

Engineer  
National Society for  
Earthquake Technology  
9851019860

#### **Nripal Adhikary**

Co-Director  
Adobe and Bamboo  
Research Institute  
9843112859

## CONCERNS



### **BIGUTAR, OKHALDHUNGA**

"The cold has caused pneumonia in children."

## ANSWERS

Pneumonia is caused by an infection of the lungs by bacteria, virus or fungi. The cold or wet weather does not cause pneumonia.

Anyone can get pneumonia, but children under 5 years of age and people above 65 years of age are more susceptible to the disease.

If left untreated, pneumonia can be fatal. If you notice that your child is breathing heavily, coughs up phlegm, has chest pain, is feverish, and has bluish skin, lips or fingertips, take the child to the nearest healthcare facility immediately.

Good hygienic habits such as washing hands helps in preventing pneumonia. Avoiding contact with people who have the cold or the flu can also help by preventing the spread of germs.

### **Dr Kailash Prasad Shah**

Kanti Children's Hospital  
9841265963

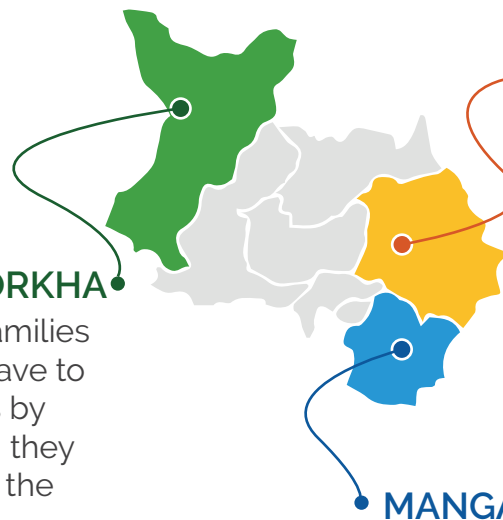
### **Damodar Adhikari**

Health Cluster Co-lead  
World Health Organisation  
9801010022

## CONCERNS

### GORKHA BAZAAR, GORKHA

"There are rumours that families who received Rs 15,000 have to start building their houses by mid-October. If they don't, they will not receive the rest of the money the government promised."



### PIPALDANDA, SINDHUPALCHOK

"People who have been living in jungles after the earthquake are in need of permanent shelters. It's been almost five months since the earthquake, but people are still forced to stay in tents."

### MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOK

"The government should provide additional funds and draft policies for building houses as soon as possible."

## ANSWERS

You don't have to build your house before Dashain to receive the rest of the aid the government has promised. The government has not set any deadlines to build new houses.

The Ministry of Urban Development is responsible for providing additional support to build houses. The Ministry is still working on a directive to disburse this aid and it is not yet clear whether the aid will come in form of cash, coupons or building materials.

The National Reconstruction Authority was formed to coordinate and oversee the resettlement and rehabilitation of the earthquake-affected communities. It has no legal validity because it was formed through an ordinance, which expired at the end of August.

A bill regarding the formation of the Authority has been presented before the Parliament. The Authority will start its work once the bill is passed.

The shelter cluster is supporting people living in temporary settlements and is currently coordinating activities with partner agencies to provide items needed for protection in winter.

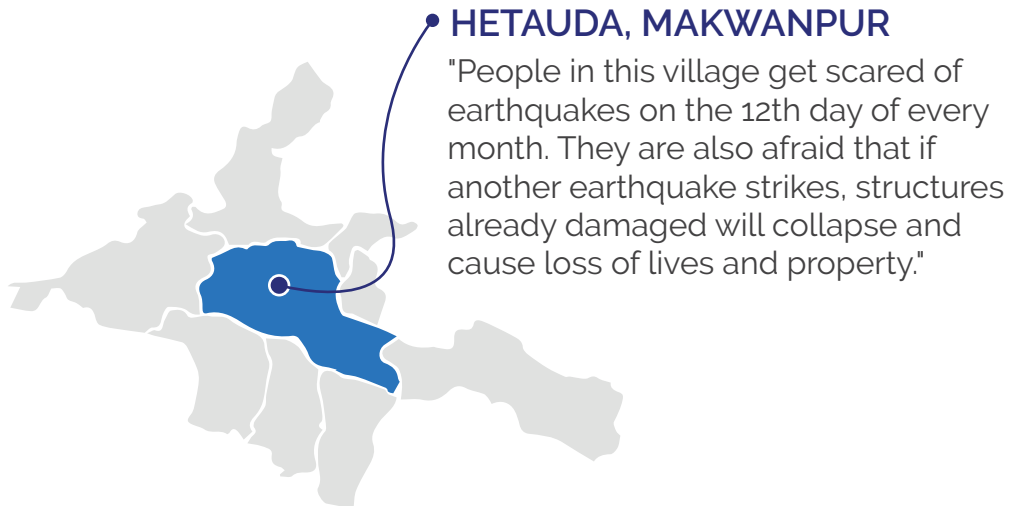
### **Padam Kumar Mainali**

Spokesperson  
Ministry of Urban Development  
9851005219

### **Sanjeev Hada**

Shelter Cluster Co-lead  
9851027783

## RUMOURS



## FACTS

Earthquakes are unpredictable natural occurrences. The date and time on which past earthquakes occurred have no bearing on future earthquakes.

It is normal for people to experience trauma and be afraid of earthquakes after going through a major one. Listening to people if they want to talk, talking with them, providing them with reassurance and emotional support can help alleviate such fears.

Weak buildings and structures may collapse in aftershocks, which are frequent after a big earthquake.

Structural engineers can inspect and assess whether damaged structures can be repaired for habitation or if they should be demolished. Severely damaged structures should be demolished to prevent them from collapsing and hurting people.

The house-owner of a damaged house is responsible for bringing down the house and clearing the debris.

If you are unsure if a structure is safe, it is best to stay away from it and tell children not to play in and around such an unsafe house. Also put up a sign to warn other people.

If you are aware of any building that might be a public hazard, contact the District Disaster Relief Committee.

**Ram Prasad Thapaliya**

Chief District Officer  
Makwanpur  
9855027777

## FOLLOW-UP



### OKHALDHUNGA

"Pregnant women and new mothers living in cold tarpaulin shelters have had their bodies swollen and are suffering from headaches."

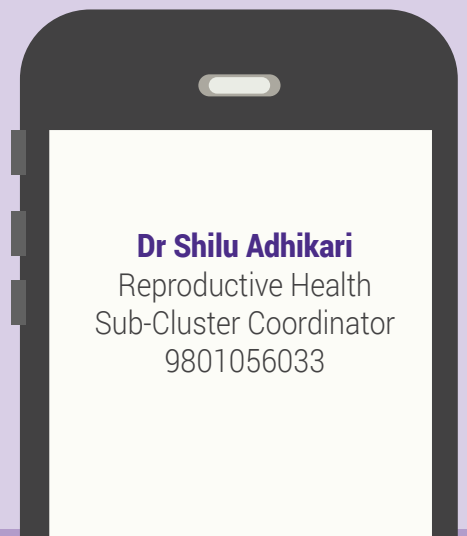
In the 12th issue of Open Mic Nepal bulletin, we provided some information regarding pregnant women who have headaches and swelling. Here, we add some important information that could not be included then.

If a pregnant woman has a severe headache and excessive swelling, she should see a health professional, a nurse, a midwife, or a doctor and have her blood pressure checked and her urine tested for protein. If her blood pressure is normal and no protein is detected in the urine sample, she has nothing to worry about.

If the urine sample comes positive for protein, it could mean that she has pre-eclampsia, a condition if left untreated can lead to eclampsia. Eclampsia is characterised by seizures and brain haemorrhage and can be fatal.

While doctors generally recommend at least four check-ups during pregnancy, the visits will not be enough if the pregnant woman has pre-eclampsia. Increased antenatal visits and monitoring can prevent eclampsia from setting in. If a pregnant woman has pre-eclampsia, she may also need intervention to deliver the baby earlier.

Eclampsia contributes to maternal mortality significantly worldwide. Increasing the antenatal visits when a problem is found is one of the ways to mitigate this problem.



**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 280 people in 14 districts between 17 - 24 September. The selection was done on the basis of prevalence and relevance.**

Open Mic Nepal presented by:

