

Welcome to the ninth 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



BADIKHEL, LALITPUR

"Since there are rumours of a cholera epidemic in Kathmandu, residents in Lalitpur suspect the same in their district."

ANSWERS

Sixty cases of cholera were detected in Kathmandu in the last few weeks. According to the Division of Epidemiology and Disease Control, most of the patients have already recovered. A few cases were also detected in Lalitpur.

Cholera is a water-borne communicable disease. Drinking boiled water--whether from the tap or jars—can help prevent the disease.

If members of a family or neighbourhood fall sick at the same time, with diarrhoea and vomiting, they could be infected with cholera bacteria.

Most common symptoms of cholera include watery stool, vomiting, and muscle spasms.

If left untreated, cholera can kill a healthy adult within hours. So, if a person shows such symptoms, he/she should be given oral rehydration solutions and taken to a health facility where the person can receive intravenous saline treatment.

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RUMOURS

CHAUTARA, SINDHUPALCHOK

"Government officials are not allowed to take earthquake victim ID cards, but they are."



CHALING, BHAKTAPUR

"The government will take legal action against those whose houses are not completely damaged but who took the red card."

FACTS

Earthquake victim identity cards are distributed to all families whose houses suffered damage in the quake. The identity cards specify whether the house is partially or completely damaged.

The profession of the family head has no bearing on the household's eligibility to receive these ID cards. If a government official has lost his/her house to the quake, she/he is eligible to receive the ID card.

Anyone who provides false statements and acquires the ID card will be punished according to law.

If you are aware of any government officials providing false information to receive the ID cards, you can report it to the District Disaster Relief Committee (DDRC). The DDRC, together with local police, will investigate all complaints of information falsification committed to receive the ID cards.

If proven guilty, the ID card of the accused will be confiscated and, in rare cases, the person will be fined Rs 1,000 or imprisoned for 15 days or both.

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RUMOURS



LAHAREPAUWA, RASUWA

"They say the government manages the temporary resettlement. But how is it government's work when we built the tents ourselves, when we pay the rent on the land and when we manage the land ourselves? "

SYAULE, SINDHUPALCHOK

"There are rumours that the government will rehabilitate us in an area with facilities."

FACTS

The government has prepared a list of settlements that are at risk and need relocation. The list is based on the reports submitted separately by seismologists who visited the earthquake-affected villages, and Constituent Assembly members, who visited their respective constituencies.

Administration offices of the affected districts have a copy of the list. You can contact your District Administration Office to find out whether your village is at risk and needs to be relocated.

The Rasuwa District Disaster Relief Committee, in coordination with non-government organisations, has been providing corrugated iron sheets for temporary shelter and other relief items. The government does not pay rent for camps set up on private property.

The National Reconstruction Authority will start work on permanent settlements once the Cabinet endorses the reconstruction policy.

The preliminary draft of the policy prioritises relocation to areas close to the existing settlement, or to another area within the electoral constituency or within the same district.

The draft also says that the government will provide economic and technical support in building houses but the actual building work will have to be undertaken by the house owner.

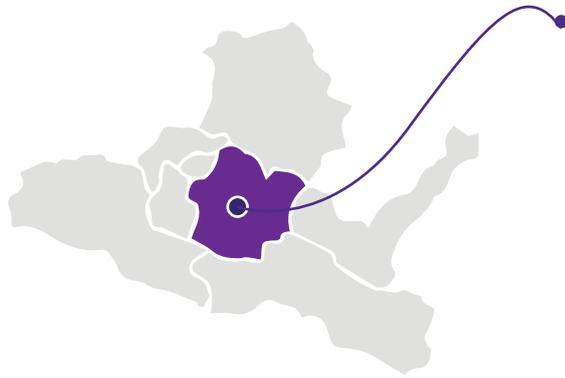
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CONCERNS



MANGALTAR, KAVREPALANCHOK

"I had hired people to demolish my house. Yesterday, four of them got critically injured after being buried in the debris. I am not in a position to pay their medical bills. Who will be held guilty if they die? Will the state compensate those who get injured while demolishing houses?"

ANSWERS

The government will not compensate those injured while demolishing houses.

The national building code recommends that all workers be insured against accidents in the workplace. The minimum cover for accidental death is Rs 200,000. For other accidents, the minimum cover has to match the amount set by the National Insurance Company of Nepal.

In practice, however, labourers are rarely insured against workplace-related accidents and death. Compensation in case of accidents or death is usually left up to the workers and employers themselves.

It is important to follow safety precautions while undertaking demolition:

- Earthquake might have caused hidden damage to the structure. It is, therefore, necessary to shore up the building to prevent accidental collapse.
- Demolition should not be carried out at night, unless there is adequate lighting.
- Warning signs should be installed in the area to alert people to possible danger.
- Safety helmets (hard hats), goggles, gloves and safety boots should be provided to the workmen on the site.
- Safety belts or ropes should be used by personnel working above six metres in height.

A comprehensive safety measures can be found in the national building code, 2007. [Click here for the pdf.](#)



RUMOURS



• PHINAM, GORKHA

"Those who did not build temporary shelters with Rs 15,000 that the government provided will have to return the money. People will also have to return in two years Rs 200,000 that the government will provide to build houses."

FACTS

A family entitled to an earthquake victim ID card will not have to return the relief package provided in cash by the government.

If the family used the building material it already had or those provided by organisations, it does not have to spend Rs 15,000 the government gave on temporary shelter.

The government has not determined the procedure for disbursing Rs 200,000 to affected families. Rs 15,000 will be deducted from this total amount.

Affected families will not have to return or repay this amount.



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 200 people in 10 districts between 20- 27 August. The selection was done on the basis of prevalence and relevance.

Open Mic Nepal presented by:

