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➤ Field Survey Report – the Northwest Iran Earthquake –

Mr. Tomohiko HATORI, senior researcher of ADRC, visited the Islamic Republic of Iran during the first week of August together with two researchers from the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution (DRI). The main purpose of the visit was to study the area of Northwest Iran that was struck by an earthquake on the morning of 22 June 2002, local time. They also visited the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES), the National Committee For Natural Disaster Reduction (Ministry of Interior, Government of Iran), the local government of Qazvin Province, and the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran to exchange information.

The affected villages are located in the mountainous region 250km west of Tehran. The search and rescue activities conducted by local communities and Iranian disaster management divisions were quite prompt. The earthquake measured 6.3 on the Richter scale and caused about 230 deaths and 1,300 injuries. Almost 110,000 people were affected and the total cost of the damage was over 300 million US dollars.



The building completely destroyed by the earthquake, Cahngoureh, near the epicenter

The sun-dried clay adobe brick constructions were heavily damaged especially near the epicenter. The housing foundation aims to have the houses reconstructed by early November. These villages exist in mountains over 2,000 meters above sea level, and so are completely snow covered in winter. Even though it is mid-summer, the night is already cold for the victims, who are living in tents, which makes blankets absolute necessities of life.

People, including school children, are aware that their country is very seismically active and know how to avoid the danger when earthquakes occur. Some of the refugees living in tents say that they will build earthquake-resistant houses in place of their fallen homes. Though public education seems to be widespread, many people had lived in houses made of sun-dried adobe bricks due to financial reasons or an underestimation of the risks. These financial barriers and misconceptions are similar to those in Japan. It is necessary to continue to endeavor to raise people's awareness of disaster risk management. Fortunately for Tehran, which is located in an area of high seismic activity, no large earthquakes have occurred in over 150 years, allowing urbanization to progress. Now, countermeasures to cope with the possibility of another large earthquake are being prepared. The experience of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995 in Kobe, Japan will be useful for disaster management cooperation between Iran and Japan.

(Tomohiko Hatori, Senior Researcher)

➤ ADRC Visiting Researcher's Report

□ Mr. Khun Sokha

I joined ADRC on July 30, 2002 and am from Cambodia, which is often faced with disasters like flood, drought, and storm. In 2001, Cambodia

was again affected by flood and drought even though the country had not recovered from the disasters of 2000.

The flood of 2000 was more serious than any previously recorded in Cambodia, including those of 1961, 1966, 1978, 1984, 1991, and 1996. The total damage was approximately \$161 million US dollars and the death toll was 347. The flood and drought of 2001 caused damage to many social infrastructure systems, properties, crops, and the lives and health of people and animals. The flood of 2001 affected about 2 million people in 14 Provinces/Municipalities. The estimated total direct damage was \$36 million US dollars.



Disasters in Cambodia are therefore affecting the Royal Government of Cambodia's development program, especially in relation to poverty reduction. For strengthening its capacity and capability in disaster management, the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) transformed its role through a Royal Decree that set up the new NCDM and a sub-decree outlining the organization and functioning of the NCDM.

The NCDM is the national agency responsible for disaster management in the country, and directly reports to the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministries. The NCDM is run by an executive committee composed of a President, a 1st Vice President, and a Secretary General. The Prime Minister, currently Samdech Hun Sen, is the President of NCDM. The members of NCDM include the heads of all seventeen government ministries. Under the Royal sub-decree, all government ministries and agencies are to actively participate and collaborate with the NCDM.

For the 6 months that I will be conducting research, I would like to learn the experiences of Japan and share disaster information with ADRC member countries. As I am also very interested in conducting research on disaster management, I would like to know about Internet based GIS system "VENTEN", which is available on ADRC website. I hope that my 6 months of research study at ADRC will provide me with varied experience and knowledge, including information on new technology that will increase my own skills so that I can help to improve disaster reduction management in Cambodia.

(Khun Sokha, Assistant to the 1st Vice President of the NCDM, Head of the Department of Emergency Response and Rehabilitation, Cambodia)

➤ Recent Natural Disasters in Asia

□ Sequential Floods in China

Frequent heavy rainfalls in June, July, and August, have caused landslides and floods in large parts of China. In Yunnan Province, which is in the south west of China, severe landslides and mudflows affected 999,000 people, and killed 106 people. In Hunan Province, central China, which was damaged by Typhoon Beimian in early August, wide-spread flooding triggered by heavy persistent rainfall since August 11 caused extensive damage to a wide area of the region. Approximately 5 million people suffered considerable damage.

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