

PAKISTAN'S EARTHQUAKE – THE LASTING IMPACT

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Abstract

Perhaps, Pakistani Nation would never be able to forget the horrible morning of October 8, 2005 when it faced the history's worst ever earthquake in the form of a great loss of lives, property and business. It was the day when an earthshaking quake with a magnitude of 7.6 on Richter scale jolted a number of cities, towns and villages of North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA), Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), Islamabad and Lahore, leaving hundreds & thousands of people dead and score of human-beings injured on the spot. The official reports have added that the death toll increased up to 73000 people including a major portion of the deaths of children and infants closing chapter of the young generation in quake-hit zone completely. Besides this the quake has left 2.8 million people without shelter.

This paper examines the impact of the recent Pakistan earthquake and the relief and recovery effort that ensued before setting out recommendations for the future improvement of Emergency Management in Pakistan.

Background

The earthquake background informs that Kashmir lies in the area where the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates are colliding. Out of this collision, the Himalayas began uplifting 50 million years ago, and continue to rise by about 5 mm/year. This geological activity is the cause of the earthquakes in the area.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) measured its magnitude as 7.6 on the Richter scale with its epicenter at 34° 29' 35" N, 73° 37' 44" E, and 100 km (65 miles) northeast of Islamabad (Pakistan). The epicenter was located at a depth of 26 km (16.2 miles) below the surface. The earthquake caused a widespread destruction in northern parts of the country besides damaging some parts of northern India and Afghanistan slightly.

The worst hit areas included country-administered Kashmir, Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and western & southern parts of the Kashmir Valley in the Indian-Administered Kashmir. It also affected some parts of the country's largest province; Punjab while Karachi city in Sindh province experienced a minor aftershock at a magnitude of 4.6. There have been many secondary earthquakes in the region, mainly to the northwest of the original epicenter. A total of 147 aftershocks were registered in the first day after the initial massive quake that hit at 8:52 am, one of which had a magnitude of 6.2 (a tremor of magnitude six is rated as "strong" earthquake). 28 aftershocks occurred with a magnitude greater than five during four days after the principal quake and even eleven after the big one.



Relief work begins

Pakistan's earthquake has reflected an unprecedented relief work done by the government agencies, non-government organizations, political, religious, trade & media organizations, national & international donors and general public. This is the only tragedy of the world where beggars offered petty donations for the quake victims. The relief work was primarily focusing on taking out the dead bodies and rescuing the people lying-down under huge debris of houses, schools, government buildings, seminaries, mosques/worship places, banks, hospitals and other institutions, completely smashed owing to quake. Secondly the relief activities turned to shift the injured persons to the hospitals of those cities where the hospital buildings remained safe.

Role of the Government

The situation, later the massive destruction, forced the government to announce emergency across the country, which hampered all the routine work in government departments, as it only focused to take all necessary steps towards providing maximum relief to the quake survivors. The President of Pakistan, General Pervaiz Musharraf played a most vital role in facing the challenges appeared after the earthquake. He strategically framed out the work and immediately announced to establish President Relief Fund (PRF). The PRF put everyone on the way of an enthusiastic campaign of fundraising for the quake victims. Besides this the federal government immediately allocated billions of Pak rupees (millions of \$ US) for the quake-hit areas.

International Donor Conference

The government in the third week of October 2005 announced to hold an international donor conference in Islamabad on November 19, 2005. This conference, which was attended by United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, remained successful, as the international donors pledged \$ 5.8 billions on the eve of this function. The following brief statement reflects contribution of the international donors.

State/Org	Pledges	State/Org	Pledges
Asian Development Bank	\$ 1b	Switzerland	\$ 40m
World Bank	\$ 1b	Norway	\$ 35m
Saudi Arabia	\$ 573m	Sweden	\$ 20m
United States	\$ 510m	Finland	\$ 06m
IDB	\$ 500m	Indonesia	\$ 05m
China	\$ 326m	Denmark	\$ 05m
IMF	\$ 275m	Australia	\$ 4.5m
Iran	\$ 200m	Canada	\$ 4.5m
Turkey	\$ 150m	Bangladesh	\$ 02m
Germany	\$ 130m	Azerbaijan	\$ 1.5m
France	\$ 124m	Malaysia	\$ 01m
United Kingdom	\$ 120m	Mauritius	\$ 01m
Japan	\$ 120m	Thailand	\$ 0.25m
European Union	\$ 110m	Sri Lanka	\$ 0.10m
UAE	\$ 100m	Afghanistan	\$ 0.5m
Kuwait	\$ 100m	Singapore	\$ 0.4m
Agha Khan Foundation	\$ 50m	Bhutan	Rs. 3.2m



Compensation Policy/Guidelines

According to Federal Relief Commission (FRC) the government's compensation policy announced for the earthquake victims narrates as noted below;

- **Compensation – Dead**
The compensation for the dead to a household is restricted to Rs. 100,000 (One hundred thousand only / about \$ 1700) for the time being, irrespective of the number of dead.
- **Compensation – Injured**

Category-I (Rs. 50,000/ about \$ 800)

i). Permanent disability, which includes amputation of appendages or loss of one or both eyes, paralysis of limbs due to injury or head injury leading to permanent disability.

Category-II (Rs. 25000 / \$ 400)

- i) Fracture of bones
- ii) Amputation of fingers/toes
- iii) Abdominal injuries leading to major surgeries
- iv) Injuries requiring hospitalization for more than two weeks at the time of admission

Category-III (Rs.15000 / \$ 250)

- i) Minor Injuries admission to a hospital for less than two weeks
- ii) Seriously injured cases having visible evidence of injury on the body and exempted from producing hospital discharge slip for payment of compensation
- iii) Other injury cases claiming compensation but having no visible signs of injury on the body subject to verification of the compensation distribution committee.

- **Reconstruction Grant**

- i) Rs. 175,000 per household admissible to all the affected houses including the special grant of Rs. 125,000 announced by the President of Pakistan and Rs. 25,000 as an incentive to those adopting quake resistance standard in house building as laid down by the government.
- ii) CGI sheets for construction of transitional shelters were provided free of cost.

The earthquake – Latest Updates as on March 25, 2006

As per official sources following is the brief about the earthquake's victims and relief work / operation.

Casualties

Dead	73,338
Seriously Injured	69,417
Other Injured	58,897



Recuperation and Relief Camps

Facility	Total	Available Space
CC/Hospital	1	36
Relief Camps	11	1407

Medical Assistance

Field Hospitals (International)	43
Medical Teams (International)	48
Field Hospitals (Domestic)	24
Medical Teams	39

Relief Provided

Tents	940,349
Blankets	6,276,167
Rations	73,487 (Tons)
Medicines	1,803 (Tons)
Miscellaneous goods	30,970 (Tons)

Tent Villages / School Established

Area	Villages	Schools
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	74	20
NWFP	531	20
Total	605	40

Infrastructure

Roads Cleared	95 %
Water Supply Restored	75 %
Electric Supply Restored	70 %
Telecom facility restored	96%

Interim Construction

Interim Shelter Construction	372,715 units
CGI Sheets Provided	1,441,102 units

Air Sorties

Air Sorties Generated for Relief operation	29,578
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Financial Aid

Amount Pledged	US \$ 6,523.103 million
Amount Committed	US \$ 3,113.105 million
Amount Disbursed	US \$ 1,021.175 million
Domestic Pledges	Rs. 10.799 billion

Compensation Distributed (Million Rs)

Description	AJ & K	NWFP	Total
Dead	3,386.000	1,732.300	5,118.300
Injured	545.122	345.825	890.947
Houses	6,710.300	6,924.725	13,635.025
Total	10,641.422	9,002.850	19,644.272

Volunteers Reported

AJ & K	65
NWFP	0
Total	65

NOCs (Non-Objection Certificates) issued for Import: **Total: 2170**

International Assistance

Air flights for relief goods	1630
Relief Workers participated in Relief Operation	11,240
Number of Countries	86

Role of NGOs

In the relief/rehabilitation work, a number of National and International NGOs have performed a remarkable job in the quake-hit zone to date. The International NGOs/Organizations/Donors working for the South Asia Earthquake are:

World Food Programme, Disasters Emergency Committee, Red Cross/Red Crescent, Islamic Relief Worldwide (UK), Islamic Relief Worldwide, Mercy Corps, OXFAM, Tear Fund, American Red Cross, Plan International, Ameri Cares, The British Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, Catholic Relief Services, Care International, Church World Services, Christian Aid, Concern, Air Serv, Humedica, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, International Rescue Corps, Map international, Medair, Medicins Sans, Frontier Muslim Aid, Northwest Medical Teams, Plan USA, Save The Children USA, UNHCR, United Methodist Committee on Relief, World Vision, Action Aid International, Action against Hunger, ADRA, Episcopal Relief and Development, Operation USA, OXFAM USA, Relief International, UNICEF-USA, World Concern, World Emergency Relief, Mercy-USA, Brother's Brother Foundation, Food for Hungry, International Aid, International Orthodox Christian Charities, International Relief Teams, Lutheran World Relief, American Refugee Committee, Baptist World Aid, Direct Relief international and BBI.

General Public Role in Relief Work

Realistically, the role of Pakistani Nation, in the form of a dedicated participating in relief operation, can never be forgotten at any stage. The people individually as well as in small groups gathered relief goods by moving door-to-door besides depositing donations in the President Relief Fund and other relief accounts. The people after hearing about the tragedy, rushed to the quake-hit areas through various modes of transportation just to help the victims. All employees working in government and private organizations announced to donate their 1-day salary amount in the President Relief Fund besides sending relief goods to the victims through trains, road transport and their personal transport.



Input from Political, Religious, Social, Trade circles in relief activities

The contribution of political, religious, social and trade organization in relief activities continued in quake zone is much admirable. It is pertinent to mention that most of the industrial and pro-government political organizations donated huge amounts for the earthquake victims through PRF while the anti government political parties and most of the religious organizations executed relief works at their own alleging that “the government remained failed to reach the quake zone on time, which resulted into the improper work for rescuing the people”. However, such parties performed relief activities by providing a huge quantity of relief goods to the quake-hit areas. Reportedly all these parties established thousands of relief camps across the country for collecting/gathering relief articles for the quake victims. It was unprecedented that the nation performed a vital role in sending the relief items to the most difficult hilly areas of quake zone in severe winter season, started in the country from November, 05 to February 06.

The Earthquake-Aftermath

Reconstruction of Houses and Buildings

According to careful estimates Pakistan will have to bear about \$ 3.5 billion for the reconstruction of destroyed houses and building across the quake-hit areas. On March 30, Major General Nadeem Ahmad Khan, Chairman Rehabilitation and Reconstruction section for the earthquake, told a private news channel that the international funding institutions had promised to provide \$ 3.5 billion for this purpose out of which half of this major amount has been received to the Pakistani government. He stated that a sum of \$ 200 million is expected to be spent on the houses reconstruction in the quake zone while rest of the amount would be spent on the building reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure.

Rehabilitation work continued

The rehabilitation work in all quake-affected areas is still continued, as the efforts have been geared up for the proper execution of rehabilitation tasks. According to United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Anan “Survivors of the Pakistan’s earthquake will be engulfed in a “wave of death” unless the international aid effort is stepped up immediately, while the World Health Organization’s regional director Hussein A. Gezairy has termed the incident “A bigger catastrophe than the Tsumani in destruction to infrastructure”. The World Bank and Asian Development Bank have estimated that the cost of the devastating earthquake will exceed \$ 5 billion, which includes estimated cost for relief, reconstruction and livelihood support for the victims. Although the rehabilitation work is continued in the quake-hit zone with the already received half of the amount of \$ 3.5 billion, but the remaining portion of the amount must be given to the government to execute the rehabilitation work properly.

US Troops Left Quake Zone

The US troops who had rushed to Pakistan’s quake-hit areas NWFP and AJK, have started returning to their homeland from March 31st. According to a private news channel, the process for the complete return of the US troops will be completed by April 15. It may be recalled that before this, the NATO forces who had also reached Pakistan last year to participate in the relief activities have already returned in February, this year. The Pakistani government have severally applauded the services of US troops a NATO force contingents for their dedicated participation in the relief efforts.

Return of quake survivors from Tent Villages

The earthquake-affected people have started returning to their native areas from tent villages run by the government and non-governmental organizations in different parts of the five-affected district of the North-West Frontier Province. The reports from the quake-hit zone in NWFP have confirmed that the people in the camps at various localities were seen packing



their belongings and heading towards their native villages/towns in line with the NWFP governments decision of closing all camps by March 31st. The repatriation process will be completed in three phases. Over a hundred families left for their villages located on the hilltops on the first day of starting the process from a government-operated camp in the city of Battagram.

Canada announced immigration for Quake-hit people

In-context with the rehabilitation process, The Canadian government has announced to award immigration status to the quake-affected people. The Canadian High Commission in Islamabad, through its website, has asked the quake survivors to contact Embassy in person or through letter proving their belonging from the quake-hit zone. The High Commission has also asked the affected people that if they have not the resources to visit embassy, they can write a letter containing their complete address. The High Commission has termed this scheme as most beneficial, stating it would help the quake survivors to shift themselves in Canada easily without any condition.

Mobile bank to function in quake hit areas

The Ministry of finance and commercial banks has agreed that the mobile bank teams will operate in the designated earthquake-affected areas so that affectees are ensured speedy disbursement of money, with which they can start reconstruction efforts. No fee charges would be realized from the affected people for opening and operating accounts. The condition of minimum balance will also not apply to the accounts of earthquake affectees in AJK and NWFP.

Landslide Threat Exists in Pakistan

The landslides present a substantial threat to the survivors of the October 8 earthquake in Pakistan and urgent action is needed ahead of summer rains to prevent large-scale loss of life. According to Professor David Petley of the International Center at Britain's University of Durham and Dr. Mark Bulmer of the Landslide Observatory at the University of Maryland in the United States, both visited quake-hit zone in January this year, have said that while the response of Pakistani and international relief agencies to the earthquake had been remarkable, the landslides have posed a substantial threat to the survivors. They said that following the threat there should be necessary arrangements for the quake survivors before start of the summer rains in Pakistan so as they could be saved from this threat as a precautionary measure.

Establishment of Disaster Management Cell-DMC

Feeling a dire need of Disaster Management Cell (DMC), Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz has accorded approval to establish the DMC at prime minister secretariat, Islamabad. The premier has asked the concerned authorities to equip the DMC with latest technology of earthquake precautions and measures so that such worst incident could be avoided in future. It may be recalled that there were lot of debates on the urgent need of DMC's establishment in the country as soon as the nation faced the earthquake tragedy.

National Volunteers Movement-NVM

The President of Pakistan has asked the department concerned to form a force of volunteers by naming it as National Volunteer Movement in the country. The President has also inaugurated the NVM, urging the authorities concerned to prepare database of the volunteers and build their capacity to participate in the relief activities in quake zone. It is worth mentioning that there was no particular forum existing in the country before the earthquake.

Federal Relief Commission's Task concludes

The Task assigned to FRC regarding rehabilitation of quake-survivors has almost concluded and this temporarily established department has been closed. According to Major General



Farooq Ahmad (Chief of FRC) the FRC has almost completed its assignment, but the departments concerned will do the rest of the work. He admitted that had there been a particular or already established disaster management department in the country, the nation would have not faced this tragic incident.

Economic Impact of the Earthquake

The earthquake is expected to have some adverse impact on Pakistan's overall economy. At least in the short run, it is true that the affected region accounts for a fairly small fraction of the Country's output. According to Mr. Mohsin S.Khan, Director, International Monetary Fund, Pakistan's main economic infrastructure-factories, ports, financial centers-was mostly unaffected. Similarly, Pakistan's main crops-cotton and wheat- are mostly grown in other parts of the country. Still with economic activity having been virtually wiped out in the directly hit Areas, there will be some dampening impact on growth. Together with a somewhat buoyant Harvest of crops like cotton, grother in 2005/6 could be some ½ to 1 percent lower than the 7 Percent projected prior to the earthquake. Eventually, however, as rebuilding activities get underway, growth may strengthen. The Natural disasters destroy assets, and the process of restoring assets results in growth. The relief and reconstruction may result in some price increases. Obviously, the relief and reconstruction efforts will affect the government budget. The relief and reconstruction efforts translate into an average cost of about 1-1 ½ percent of GDP per year in the next few years. To combat such problems Mr. Mohsin said that the IMF is Ready to provide financial resources through the Emergency Natural Disaster Assistance (ENDA). The ENDA is aimed at meeting the foreign exchange financing needs of a country hit by a natural disaster. It is the quick disbursing and the government only needs to present a statement of the general economic policies they response to follow.

Recommendation

On the eve of such prestigious event, it is recommended the following:

- To Equip Pakistan with latest technologies and methods to avoid at maximum such natural disasters
- To establish a global network of NGOs working on Emergency management.
- To Build Capacity of the government and NGOs on Emergency Management.
- To Establish Office of The International Emergency Management Society (TIEMS) in Pakistan.
- To organize International Conference under aegis of Tiems Management in Pakistan.
- To initiate fundraising campaign for Pakistan's earthquake, starting from this conference.
- To prepare an affective project proposal for the rehabilitation of quake survivors

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Authors Biography

Mr. Khalid Hasnain Qureshi was born in September 1970 in Khanewal District of southern parts of the Punjab, Pakistan. He did graduation (Bachelor of Arts) and Law Graduation (LLB) from Bahauddin Zakria University, Multan, Punjab. He started his professional career in 1994 and served on various important positions in Sambu Construction Company, Daewoo group, Pakistan Lions Youth Council and English Daily "The Post" He also rendered honorary services to Daily "The News" International and Daily "Pakistan". Currently he is working with a UN enrolled prominent NGO, Pakistan Lions Youth Council. His excellent performances during his 12-year professional track include special promotion, award winning



and appreciation certificates. He has skills in Human Resource Management, Volunteer management, Administration, Project proposal, Project design and management and Monitoring & Evaluation. He already visited South Korea twice in 1995 and 2002 in connection with attending 30th International Camp (as delegation head) organized by Korean National Commission for UNESCO in Ichon-Seoul and 1st AVA Asia Pacific regional conference on volunteer management (as country speaker) staged by Federation of Volunteer efforts in Busan respectively.

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