

Newsletter Special

Please offer your support to the people of Sichuan Province
Special message from the Head Teacher Joan Deslandes



As you all would have heard by now, the Chinese people as a nation and as part of the international community are mourning the loss of over 60,000 lives in one of the largest earthquakes recorded in recent times. The tremors, registering 7.8 on the Richter scale hit Wenchuan County in the Sichuan province at 14.26 on Monday, May 12th.

Among the dead, an estimated 247,000 people are injured and many more (a reported 32,000) are still missing. People are still being found and looked for in a desperate attempt to locate more survivors, this almost two weeks after the devastation.

So far the Sichuan province has received 6bn Chinese Yuan (around £440m) in donations from China and abroad and the majority of the pleas from the local government have been for immediate provisions such as tents, quilts and clothing. Many people are now without homes, a reported 80% of buildings were affected by the

disaster and many are in desperate need of clean clothing. Drinkable fluid, too has been an issue with clean water recently being restored for 7m people.

Kingsford Community School is deeply saddened by what has happened, not only as a school with deep links to China, its culture and the teaching of its language, but also as part of the global community. Our thoughts and concerns are firmly with those who have lost loved ones and those still looking for close friends and relatives.

The effect of the earthquake's aftermath has impacted deeply on the Chinese people and as both a show of respect and a support for their plight, the Governing Body of Kingsford and I feel that any aid Kingsford Community School can provide for this stricken region, in the form of donations will, in the grander scheme of things help contribute to rebuilding parts of people's lives and restore some sense of comfort and relief.



Unfortunately, this disaster was not entirely isolated. A few days previous to the events in Wenchuan County, the country of Burma was ravaged by tragedy. Cyclone Nargis ran through the southern Burmese coast leaving 78,000 people dead and another 56,000 people missing. But these reports are still unconfirmed as one report alone suggested that 80,000 people died around the delta of Laputta, which itself had a population of 350,000. The figures in human loss can in no way describe the tragic scenes and horrendous environments the Burmese survivors still have to live through.



This disaster echoes the 2004 tsunami tragedy in Indonesia, but the main difference is that the aid Burma immediately needs is nowhere near enough or as frequent as desired. A leading emergency medical consultant had reported that 5,000 sq km (1,900 sq miles) of land in the region is still underwater from the cyclone, this expanse previously being homes and farmland of the native population.

Both disasters have caused an immeasurable amount of suffering and loss and both countries are in urgent need of immediate relief. The day to day problems they now encounter are far worse than any of us here in the UK could even begin to imagine. Our contributions, in the form of monetary donations will indeed be beneficial and of help to both the Chinese and Burmese people whose lives will now be forever tainted with the memories of the past few weeks.

Please do make a donation to this appeal. Your donations, however small will most certainly make a difference to those in desperate need for help.

Joan Deslandes
Head Teacher

When making your donation please note that all donations should be placed in a sealed envelope marked 'China and Burma Appeal' and given to the school. The school will forward donations received to the Red Cross Society.

There is also a special account opened by the Chinese Red Cross Society whose details are as listed:

Account Name: the Chinese Red Cross Society
Bank for deposit of foreign currencies: The Jiuxianqiao Branch of CITIC Bank
Account Number: 711211148260000209
Donation hotline: (8610) 65139999

For online donations please visit:

www.redcross.org.cn and donate online through the special section designed for this purpose

The China Red Cross Foundation is also receiving donations.

Address: No. 53 Ganmian Hutong,
Dongdanbei Street,
Dongcheng District,
Beijing 100010
China

For money transfer through bank accounts:

Account name: the China Red Cross Foundation
Bank for deposit of foreign currencies:

Bank of China

Account number: 800100086608091014

Should you wish to send any messages of support to the Chinese people please send an email the Kingsford Confucius Classroom link and they will be forwarded to the Chinese Embassy.