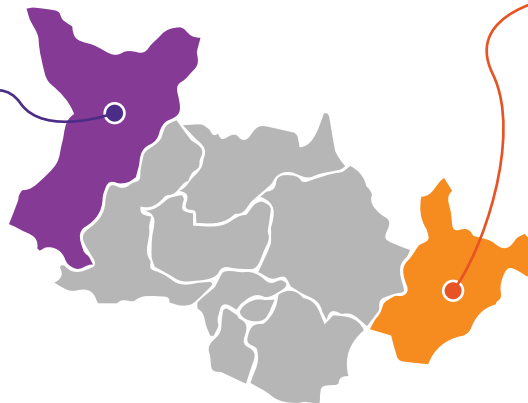


Welcome to the twenty-seventh issue of **OPEN MIC NEPAL** bulletin. The Open Mic project captures rumours and perceptions on the ground to eliminate information gaps between the media, humanitarian agencies and local people. By providing local media and outreach workers with facts, Open Mic aims to create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

CONCERNS

ASHRANG, GORKHA

"They say that households will have to provide daily allowances to the technical team that will monitor the construction process."



SINGATI, DOLAKHA

"They say that only those who use trained masons and carpenters to build the house will get the money."

ANSWERS

The procedure for the disbursement of the grant requires house owners to employ trained masons for reconstruction of the houses.

The Building Division Offices are coordinating mason training in districts. The Division Offices are also responsible for monitoring the construction process for compliance with the building guidelines and recommending households for subsequent tranches of funds. The reconstruction grant will be provided in three instalments.

Houseowners are not expected to provide daily allowances to the monitoring team.

Organisations such as the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) and the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) are providing mason training in the earthquake-affected districts. These organisations prioritise masons with prior experience while providing training to build earthquake-resistant houses.

Other non-government agencies are also incorporating mason training into their wider housing reconstruction programmes.

Individuals interested in receiving mason training or contacting trained masons can reach out to the Building Division Office or their Village Development Committee (VDC) officials for more information.

Bijay Krishna Upadhayay

Engineer
National Society for
Earthquake Technology
01-5591000 Ext: 204

Kamal Shrestha

Engineer
Building Division Office
Gorkha
9846056327

RUMOURS

GORKHA BAZAAR, GORKHA

"There are rumours that another big earthquake will strike again. People are scared again."

BHAISE, MAKWANPUR

"There are rumours of another big earthquake."

CHARIKOT, DOLAKHA

"They say the scientists have predicted another big earthquake in a few days. When will it happen?"

JAISITHOK, KAVREPALANCHOWK

"They say another earthquake will strike again"



FACTS

Scientists researching the earthquake that struck in April last year published a study in journal *Nature Geoscience* a week ago.

According to the study, the earthquake did not rupture the fault all the way to the surface, but stopped at 11 km below the surface. This means not all energy built up over the decades was released in the April earthquake. Scientists also warned that a major earthquake could strike the country within years or decades.

This, however, does not mean that earthquakes can be predicted. No one can forecast exactly when, where or how the next earthquake will strike.

Earthquakes do not kill; the weak structures that collapse during the shake do so. While building or rebuilding houses, families should follow the building guidelines for earthquake-resistant buildings. Weak and partially destroyed structures should be demolished and the debris cleared.

In the event of an earthquake, if you are indoors, protect your head. Move away from cupboards, windows or any appliance that might fall on you. Do not run downstairs or outside while the building is trembling. Once the shaking stops, get outside to an open space, away from poles, buildings, power lines, trees or anything else that might fall on you. Also, look out for falling rocks, landslides, trees and other debris if you are in a mountainous area.

Subesh Ghimire

Geologist
Geology Department
Tribhuvan University
9849594896

Umesh Prasad Gautam

Technical Officer
National Siesmological
Centre
01-4410141

CONCERNS

HETAUDA, MAKWANPUR

"We've heard that the government will give us Rs 500,000. When will we get this amount?"

BHAISE, MAKWANPUR

"When will the government give us the money to reconstruct houses?"

DHULIKHEL, KAVRE

"When will they distribute the grant for reconstruction? Where and how will we get the amount?"

PHULASI, RAMECHHAP

"The government did not provide us Rs 200,000 on time. Now, we've heard that we will get the money only after a survey has been carried out."



ANSWERS

The government will provide Rs 200,000 or the cost of building a house, whichever is less, in reconstruction grant to households whose houses were completely destroyed in the earthquake and who do not have an alternative place to live in.

Those who cannot afford the additional cost of building the house are eligible to get a bank loan of up to Rs 300,000 at a subsidised interest rate. Earthquake-affected community members will be the guarantors for this loan.

The government will determine the eligibility of households based on the survey being carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). The data agency expects to finish the survey in 11 priority districts (not including Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur of the 14 priority districts) by April.

It is not yet clear whether the distribution will begin after CBS has finished survey in all districts. According to a work plan prepared by the NRA, the reconstruction of private houses will not begin until late April.

According to the procedure for the disbursement of the grant, eligible households will have to fill out an application at local bodies—VDC and municipality offices—to receive the grant. Once the applications are approved by the District Level Project Implementation Unit, homeowners will have to sign an agreement with the local body to receive the first instalment of the grant.

Rudra Suwal

Deputy Director
Central Bureau of Statistics
9841232773

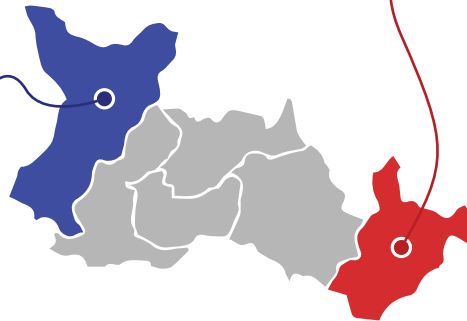
Ravi Shah

Deputy Director General
Department of Urban
Development and Building
Construction
9851056824

CONCERNS

GORKHA BAZAAR, GORKHA

"They say that those who do not have land ownership documents will not get the grant to rebuild houses."



SUSHPA-KSHAMAWATI, DOLAKHA

"We have been displaced from Bosimpa because of the earthquake, landslides and floods. The government has not yet decided where it will relocate us. We've heard we will get the grant too, but where are we to build our houses?"

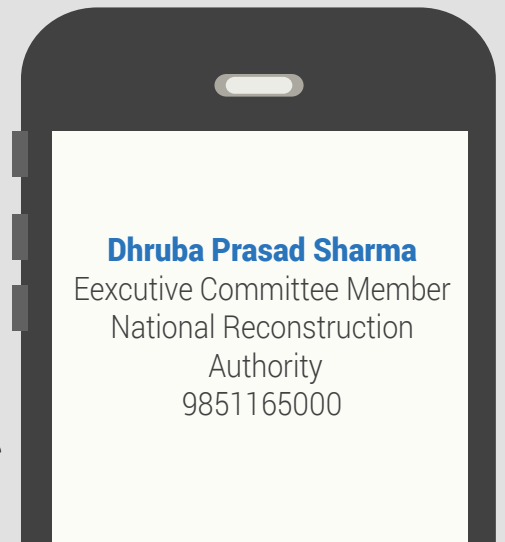
ANSWERS

The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) will oversee the relocation of those displaced by the earthquake.

The number of people who need to be relocated will be determined based on the survey currently being carried out by the CBS in 11 priority districts. The data agency began the reassessment of damage from the second of January.

The NRA said it would carry out the study of areas where the displaced people will be resettled in. A preliminary draft of the post-earthquake reconstruction and recovery plan prioritises relocation to areas close to the existing settlement, or to another area within the electoral constituency or within the same district.

According to the procedure for the disbursement of the reconstruction grant, landownership documents are not mandatory to get the reconstruction grant. Household can submit a copy of either their citizenship certificate or the Voter's ID card or the landownership certificate or the earthquake-victim ID card.



The rumours and issues presented here were collected by frontline workers from partner organisations and #quakehelpdesk volunteers based on their face-to-face conversation and community hearings with around 550 people in 6 districts between 7 - 13 January. The selection was done on the basis of prevalence and relevance. The information presented here is correct at the time of issue.

Open Mic Nepal presented by:

