

Tzu Chi Prepares Aid Distribution for 9,000 Households in Japan

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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[Distribution scheduled for June 9 - 12](#)

On June 9 and 10, a team of volunteers from Taiwan and Japan will distribute money, relief goods and a letter from Master Cheng Yen to more than 9,000 households in northeast Japan. This is the area devastated by the earthquake and tsunami on March 11. It will be the largest relief operation the foundation has conducted there in the three months since the disaster.

The distributions will begin in Kamaishi, Iwate prefecture on June 9 and run for three days. Others will begin on June 10 in Rikuzentakata, in Iwate, and also run for three days. Both were badly hit. Rikuzentakata, a city of 23,000 people, was almost wiped from the map; every building smaller than three stories high was flooded. More than 1,000 people were confirmed dead and over 1,300 missing. In Kamaishi, about 1,250 residents were killed or missing.

The team of 52 volunteers set out from Taiwan on June 7 aboard a China Airlines plane from Taipei to Haneda airport in Tokyo, where they joined volunteers from the Japan branch. They brought 12,000 custom-designed relief packs, which contains a letter from Master Cheng Yen, relief cash, a brochure, and a USB flash drive that loaded with videos and Tzu Chi songs.



Together with the packs, the volunteers – most of them women -- carried relief goods and personal items. But the total luggage was 200 kilograms overweight. To reduce the load, the volunteers reduced their personal items. Volunteer Pan Wen Chun-lu said they divided the load among all the members. “Besides the 40 bags of packed goods and instant noodles we have each reduced the amount of personal items by 10 kilos and everyone carried one more bag – that solved the problem.”

The team leader is Yang Ming-da: “this is a large-scale relief operation,” he said. “It has been well arranged on the Japanese side. Volunteer Chen Jin-fa went to Japan on May 26 to take care of everything and now we have come to take part in the mission.”



Hsieh Ching-kui, director of the foundation’s Religious Culture and Humanitarian Aid Department, said that they had investigated the needs of the people. “We have what they need. Now what they need most is some cash, to provide for additional daily necessities for them. We estimate that we will provide goods for nearly 9,000 households in Kamaishi and Rikuzentakata.” Accompanying the delegation is a team of 10 from the Tzu Chi Culture and

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Communication Foundation, to record and understand the situation in Japan. Reporter Huang Yong-ling said that it was three months after the disaster: “we hope we can see what are the problems and difficulties with daily living now, including those of education, health and other issues.”

The responsibility of the volunteers is heavy, like their baggage. As Tzu Chi people, they are marching forward one step at a time, together with the survivors of the disaster. They bring with them the love of people in 39 countries who have contributed money to the relief effort. They will deliver the aid in person to the recipients. Master Cheng Yen thanked them warmly, saying: “After March 11, many people left Japan. But Tzu Chi people have already gone many times to the disaster area. They have made appropriate preparation and started to give cash to the survivors. Everyone should pray sincerely for blessings for the people affected by the earthquake and tsunami.”