

UN, Japan Sign Pact For Emergency Support For Nepal

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KATHMANDU, May 23 (Bernama) - The United Nations (UN) and Japan have signed an agreement of USD\$ 1 million to help Nepal immediately clear debris in the aftermath of the April 25 earthquake that damaged more than 400,000 private houses and public buildings.

The Government of Japan and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) have signed the agreement for an emergency grant to help manage debris and create emergency employment through a cash-for-work program, in the aftermath of the two devastating Nepal earthquakes, said a statement of the UNDP office in Nepal.

"The fund is expected to help jumpstart rapid recovery in the most affected districts, including debris management, safe demolition of damaged buildings, tools and equipment support, and other necessary support needed for early recovery over the next nine months", the statement said.

In three of the most affected districts of Nuwakot, Rasuwa and Sindhupalchowk, the project will help contribute to financial sustainability of the earthquake affected population, including those who are socially vulnerable, allowing restoration of livelihoods through the cash-for-work program, the statement said.

"The project, which will be implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Governance, targets worst hit people by the earthquake and provides direct employment through debris removal and waste management work", it said.

The agreement comes following the request of the Nepal Government to support for clearing rubbles of damaged houses in earthquake hit districts including the capital as it had become difficult to rebuild new houses without clearing the debris.

Several damaged houses in Kathmandu and other urban areas have posed serious threats to the neighbours as some of the damaged houses in the core urban centres have not yet been demolished and cleared in the absence of proper equipment with the Nepal Government.

Meanwhile, the National Planning Commission (NPC), Nepal's development planning authority, has devised a four-phased plan of reconstruction along with a strategy of constructing modern, systematic and safe settlement by using safe construction technology.

The Commission has prepared a plan for reconstruction in four phases on the basis of international trend, national strategy regarding disaster management approved by the government and working modality of national disaster to face the situation of disaster, according to the NPC.

The Nepal Government has promised to rebuild the damaged houses and structures within five years.

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