

Low Quality Food Supplied To Nepal Quake Victims Claim

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KATHMANDU, May 27 (Bernama) -- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Nepal has confirmed that the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRSC) supplied inedible rice to the earthquake victims in Nepal and asked the Nepalese government to take the necessary action against the international humanitarian organisations.

The NHRC, during its inspection, found the rice distributed to earthquake victims in Kavre district to be of substandard quality and unsuitable for human consumption, the NHRC said in a statement Tuesday.

The NHRC inspected the food items distributed by the Nepal Red Cross Society, which was made available by the WFP, following reports that children who ate the rice suffered from diarrhoea.

"NHRC draws the attention of the government to punish the institutions involved in distributing substandard food that has direct connection with the health and life of the people," NHRC said.

The WFP, too, has accepted that the food it supplied was found to be substandard.

"At least 120 tonnes of rice it brought as relief for Nepal's earthquake victims were found to be substandard and were replaced immediately," said the WFP.

The rice was procured from local suppliers of Nepal and India and over 30 per cent was found broken during the investigation, Richard Regan, WFP emergency coordinator, told a press conference Tuesday.

Some earthquake victims of Kavre complained that the rice distributed by the UN agency was not edible, which prompted Nepalese authorities and NHRC to conduct an inspection of the rice and other food items distributed to the victims.

The government has instructed authorities in all earthquake affected districts to inspect and monitor the quality of food items to be distributed to the quake victims.

Nepal was hit by a strong earthquake on April 25 and a powerful aftershock on May 12 that killed at least 8,600 people and damaged almost half a million private houses and public buildings.

The UN said about eight million people in Nepal have been affected by the earthquake, of which 1.4 million require food aid.

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