

Tzu Chi Sets Up Service Stations After Kaohsiung Explosions

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Saturday, 02 August 2014 12:49



In response to devastating explosions in the south Taiwan city of Kaohsiung, the Tzu Chi Foundation has set up a disaster command center and eight service centers. More than 100 volunteers have gone into action to care for the injured in 16 hospitals, offer hot food to residents and rescue workers and go to the funeral home to recite prayers for the deceased and comfort the relatives.

On the night of July 31, a series of explosions, probably caused by a gas leak, struck the districts of Cianjhen and Lingya. They killed 25 people, four of them firemen, and injured 259. After the accident, the volunteers set up the command center. They divided the over 100 people into different groups to care for frightened residents and provide relief goods. A large area was damaged, so that over 1,000 people were evacuated to 10 nearby locations, like schools and community centers. Tzu Chi volunteers went to the emergency shelters and gave out relief goods. They also set up nine service stations to provide assistance, one of them in the funeral home where the dead were taken.



At 2 A.M., two hours after the explosions, volunteers began providing hot meals to the firefighters, soldiers and other rescue workers. By the morning of August 1, the volunteers had prepared 200 servings of breakfast to the residents and emergency workers; by noon, over 1,000 servings of lunch had been distributed. In addition, the foundation is shipping 300 sets of Jing Si multi-purpose folding beds to the disaster area; they are due to arrive in the afternoon of August 1.

At seven o'clock in the morning, the foundation set up a co-ordination center at its headquarters in Hualien, on the east coast of Taiwan. It set up a conference call between Hualien and Kaohsiung, which arranged the delivery of manpower and goods to the affected area. Dharma Master Cheng Yen is concerned for the residents of the area. Seeing the extent of the disaster, the Master's heart goes out to the victims. At the same time, she reminds every volunteer to pay attention to their own safety and remain calm while doing the relief work. When they are caring for the residents and the families of the deceased ones, the volunteers must have sincerity and love.

Report by the Tzu Chi Foundation 1/8/2014