

China lauds UN support for quake relief

Chinese premier Wen Jiabao has expressed his government's appreciation to visiting UN chief Ban Ki-moon for the organisation's help following the devastating May 12 earthquake and said the nation was confident of overcoming the disaster.

'On behalf of the Chinese people, I thank you for coming to the quake zone and extending your sympathy to the victims,' Wen told the UN secretary-general.

'Our meeting is extraordinary here in Wenchuan County, the epicentre of the 8.0-magnitude earthquake on May 12,' the premier said.

The UN chief arrived in Chengdu, capital of quake-hit Sichuan province, Saturday and rushed to Yingxiu town in Wenchuan.

While briefing Ban on China's earthquake relief work, Wen said the country appreciates the efforts of the international community to offer rescuers, funds and materials to the quake zone.

'All these moves, including the UN emergency relief efforts, showcase all people's friendly feelings for China and their lofty humanitarian spirits,' Wen said.

Rescuers from all parts of the country have arrived in quake-hit areas as soon as possible and quickly started rescue and relief work, finding and saving more than 60,000 people within a few days.

Wen said while rescue and relief work would continue the main focus of the government's efforts would be on reconstruction and resettling the survivors.

Noting that the whole nation is doing its utmost for the relief work, Wen said the Chinese are convinced that they will overcome all difficulties and reconstruct the quake zones.

Ban said his heart and sympathy went out to the Chinese people. Ban also complimented the Chinese government on the manner it handled the relief and rescue efforts.

At a press conference, Wen urged reporters to record the truth so that the dead can be remembered and the survivors can be consoled.

'Let people remember the devastating earthquake, remember the lost lives, and remember the brave fight of the people in the quake-hit regions and across the nation against the disaster,' the Chinese premier said during a press conference.

He said the massive earthquake has claimed more than 60,000 lives in Sichuan province and other regions in the country. In addition, nearly 30,000 people remain missing and nearly 300,000 are injured.

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