Case Study – Nepal Earthquake

On-the-Ground Security Assistance

OVERVIEW

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<th>Challenge</th>
<th>KEY BENEFITS</th>
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<td>A devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck northern Nepal, on April 25, 2015, injuring over 22,000 people and killing over 8,000 in addition to causing significant infrastructure damage. The quake caused an avalanche on Mount Everest that killed at least 18 climbers, injured 41 others and trapped hundreds, making it the deadliest day on the mountain to date. Hundreds of impacted people required safeguarding and evacuation. In addition, intermittent electricity, cell tower and landline outages meant a number of people were stranded without a means of contacting help.</td>
<td>With lives on the line, there was no room for error in the aftermath of the April 2015 Nepal earthquake. iJET advised clients on best security assistance options based on the risk level for each person in order to avoid, mitigate and eliminate potential risks and get everyone home safely. iJET’s intelligence and security expertise enabled the team to quickly identify which people were impacted, account for their whereabouts and shelter in place until an evacuation was possible. iJET conducted several operations resulting in successful evacuations for over 20 multinational organizations.</td>
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Solution

The iJET team provided up to the minute situational intelligence to client organizations and conducted several operations to locate, validate proof of life, safeguard and evacuate impacted people country-wide in Nepal. iJET’s team monitored the unfolding situation in Kathmandu and the surrounding region to ensure all affected people were sheltered in place during multiple strong aftershocks that brought on mudslides and further infrastructure damage, making some roads impassable.

iJET IN ACTION

When the 7.8-magnitude earthquake hit near Kathmandu, Nepal on April 25, 2015, iJET’s Global Integrated Operations Center team issued an alert to all clients. iJET raised its global readiness level to Alert and began triaging calls for assistance from organizations with impacted people in Nepal. An incident management team was assigned and immediately began coordinating with local resources to assess the situation on the ground in Nepal, conduct route surveys, identify locations for safe havens and planning to recover and assist people countrywide with evacuation or emergency relocation.

- **Situational Assessment:** researched all information that could help verify proof of life and establish communications with impacted people.

- **Safety Check-in Protocols:** initiated an electronic lifeline for people, even for those stranded in remote villages like the Himalaya Mountain area.

- **Communications:** enabled electronic methods, and in some cases, note-passing to make contact to arrange safe havens and transport.

- **Safe-haven:** removed people from impacted areas and ensured they were sheltered in place with basic necessities and provided secure transport to the airport once safe to do so.

- **Critical Intelligence Alerts:** monitored post-disaster law-and-order conditions and threats, as well as, provided ground-related and health-related advice. iJET’s Global Integrated Operations Center team pushed 11 critical alerts to clients during the Nepal earthquake crisis.

Help In The Himalayas

In the Himalayan Mountains, iJET coordinated a helicopter evacuation for a student to the nearby village of Lukla until weather conditions made further transportation possible. iJET was able to establish a safety check-in plan via SMS with the student. She was securely transported to Kathmandu the following day, a 107-mile journey. Due to overwhelmed commercial airlines, she spent the night in a hotel in Kathmandu until she could fly home the next day. iJET in-country security teams provided secure transportation to the airport, provided expedited flight check-in and maintained a presence at the airport until 30 minutes after flight departure to ensure the flight was able to successfully clear Nepal airspace.

“I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for all that you have done,” said a university administrator. “Despite it being a pleasure working with you, I hope you understand when I say that I hope we never have to work together again.”

Delayed Communications in Dhulikhel

In the southeast village of Dhulikhel, a traveler was stranded without a cell phone. Through note passing with other nearby students, iJET was able to initiate contact with her and establish an electronic leash for safety check-ins using other students’ phones. iJET’s global operations team enabled a refuge for her with a local French expatriate until evacuation plans could be implemented. Though she had a plane ticket home, she was not able to make her original flight due to the damage to local roads that were compromised by a landslide. iJET worked with their incident management team on the ground to seek out alternate routes to safely transport her to Kathmandu airport the following day with a new plane ticket for a flight home. The iJET team waited for 30 minutes after the flight departed to ensure it cleared Nepal airspace.

Proof of Life in Limi

In the northwest Limi area, a student requiring evacuation assistance located iJET’s global operations center hotline number on iJET’s Twitter page and reached out for help via SMS. Not only was iJET’s team able to establish an evacuation plan for this student, through his working SMS connection, the team was able to verify proof of life for four other students that were thus far unaccounted for and also required assistance. iJET deployed a vehicle convoy to deliver the students to Kathmandu airport and reunited them with the rest of their university group prior to boarding a flight home. The iJET team remained on the ground for 30 minutes following the plane’s departure to ensure it wasn’t turned around.

Multinational organizations that send people across the globe to do work on behalf of the business require a risk management partner to help forecast, understand and prepare for associated risks. iJET’s security and intelligence experts empower clients to make informed decisions about their people and operations and meet their duty of care obligations. In addition, iJET tailors security assistance and response for our client’s unique plans and protocols, saving lives and costs.

iJET solutions enable organizations to operate globally with confidence by helping them prepare, monitor and respond to threats that could impact operational performance.

CONTACT US for more information at info@iJET.com.