

Tzu Chi Delivers 2,500 Cooked Meals to Saola Victims

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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Volunteers of the Tzu Chi Foundation delivered 2,500 cooked meals, 341 eco-blankets, food and other necessities to people who were forced from their homes by Typhoon Saola and took refuge in temporary shelters.

The typhoon, packing winds of 155 kilometers per hour, struck the eastern coast of Taiwan in the early morning of August 2, making landfall in the Xiulin district of Hualien county. The typhoon, which has caused four deaths in Taiwan, brought torrential rain and fierce winds. Volunteers set up relief co-ordination centers at branches across the island and concentrated on help to people in Hualien and Yilan counties, New Taipei and Taipei city.

Five villages in Xiulin received warnings of landslides. Under the direction of the county government, 550 people were evacuated to reception centers, in the county offices, activities centers and a primary school. At the request of the Xiulin government, volunteers immediately delivered instant rice, instant noodles, blankets and daily necessities to the centers and expressed their concern for those who had been moved there. On the afternoon of August 2, the districts of Heping and Heren asked for blankets; the volunteers provided 341, delivering them by helicopter.



Huang Zhi-xia, chief of the number 12 area of Fushi village, told the volunteers that, just after two o'clock that morning, she heard the sound of loosing rocks. She urgently woke up everyone and asked them to leave the village, more than 30 people in 20 households. By seven that morning, all had been evacuated safely to the reception centers. She expressed her great thanks to the volunteers for providing the instant rice, noodles and other materials.

The situation in the Chongde village of Xiulin district was more serious. Large quantities of earth and rock fell down the mountainside and into the houses 500 meters on each side of Provincial Highway 9. The roads were covered with rocks and stones and became impassable; they were quickly flooded. Miss Zhou, who has lived there for 30 years, said: "this is the first time that I have seen such a serious landslide." She saw with her own eyes the muds and stones bursting into her house; she carried her one-year-old child onto the roof to escape. Such a terrifying experience remains etched in her mind; as she thought of it, her eyes were full of fear.



The volunteers embraced her lightly on the shoulder and comforted her. She felt the warmth of

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their concern and said with a smile: "I thank the volunteers for their help in this emergency. At least now we are all safe." Volunteer Pan Rong-san expressed their gratitude to the mayor of Xiulin village, the soldiers and members of other emergency services for their help and their concern during the typhoon. The volunteers brought 160 hot meals and, in heavy rain, crossed the rubble-strewn roads to deliver them to each family who needed them. They brought comfort to the people who had lived through such an ordeal.

The torrential rain caused serious damage to Yilan county. On August 1, volunteers from Hualien delivered by rail 500 kilograms of instant rice and 50 boxes of instant noodles, for emergency use. It proved very timely. At lunchtime on August 2, nearly 100 volunteers prepared lunch boxes and delivered them as nearly 2,000 cooked meals to residents in three villages that had been flooded.



In Taipei city and New Taipei, the volunteers at the relief co-ordination centers delivered relief supplies and comfort to people in Bali, Peitou and Sanxia districts. On the morning of August 2, volunteers in the Tanshui district prepared instant rice and noodles and delivered them to an old people's centre, where dharma masters and members of the public had been evacuated. Those in Peitou took lunch boxes to those who had been taken to a primary school, while those in Sanxia took condolence money to the family of police who died in the line of duty and held a prayer service; they also helped the residents of a public housing estate in Qingshui street clean up their neighborhood and provided them cooked food.