Tsunami As The Most Dangerous Natural Disaster In Japan

On March 11, 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit Japan at 2:46 pm. It continued for 3 minutes and is the greatest earthquake recorded in Japan. As a result, a massive tsunami around the height of 38m equivalent to a 12 story building flooded more than 517km² of Japan's coast. The epicentre was located 130km off of Sendai Honshu, 32km below the sea. An estimated 28,000 people died with 90% of them drowning. According to national geographic, the water cascaded in a 5.5m sea wall which is also the deepest sea wall in the world. In the Naka River, the current of the water moved upstream. Consequently, all the water washed cars houses trees and countless other rubble away. The coastline of Sendai Honshu subsided about 1.5m. the land also shifted a few metres from its original place. In Fukushima, the waves corrupted the power supply of the nuclear generators.

Tsunamis are created by underwater earthquakes on the ocean floor. The earthquake creates a disturbance in the ocean and creates a wave. Waves start to build up as the reach the land and can travel up to the speed of a jet plane. The waters from the shore slow retract from the shores as the wave hits the coastline. The waves can create great damage.

When the tsunami hit, it immediately destroyed buildings and washed away cars. The flooding contaminated the food supply and other human necessities. Majority of the population had no clean water or electricity. Many people had lost their lives. About 28,000 people died or were missing and 90% of deaths were from drowning. The area of Fukushima had a nuclear emergency and residents had to evacuate. To this day, about 52,000 evacuees are still living in temporary housing although the majority have bought or build new houses.

After the tsunami occurred, the Japanese governments established a contingency plan to help the population rebuild. One of the most important parts of the plan is designated evacuation sites for people. These sites are used to shelter people who have fled their homes because of a natural disaster. The government also created systems for different people with different needs. The system has different levels of housing damage which will sort residents into a more suitable home. For example, if a resident’s house has been completely damaged then they get to use the support fund which will replace, repair or lease a house for them. Government-funded temporary housing also gets bigger and residents can stay for even longer.

People from around the world started donating money and aid after hearing about the devastating tsunami. Many people gave donations and created fundraising to donate to organisations. The AAR Japan set up temporary housing and donated food and necessities within one day of the tsunami. On March 15th, 2011, the Direct Relief donated $15 million and an additional $600,000. On April 25th, 2011, JACL and Direct Relief gave an additional $1 million to those who still needed help.

The responses had a major impact on Japan and its people. The government and their contingency plan helped the residents and also will prevent another tragedy because of a tsunami. Without the temporary housing, many of the residents would be left without homes or shelter to live it. Many of the residents would not be able to get new houses, build or repair if they did not get help from temporary housing and the government. Without donations, the

economy would not be able to restart again. Residents would not be able to get food, water or necessities if they weren’t donated.

After the earthquake occurred, the tsunami warnings were not properly managed or sent out. Although the earthquake warning worked perfectly fine, there was a large power outage after the earthquake hit. This because the cables weren’t strong enough. The tsunami warnings did not reach to the residents living in the coastal areas or people who have left their homes already. Despite the 30 - 60 minutes time the residents had to evacuate after the earthquake, the radios and TVs did not display the warning in time. In the future, Japan needs to upgrade its warning and alert system. They need more durable electrical systems that can be able to withstand earthquakes. Stronger radios and emergency connections need to be built so everyone is aware of the tsunami warning. Schools and public places need to be informed of the evacuation plan beforehand. Doings theses things will stop another preventable tragedy from happening.