

debris of the Kobe Municipal West Civic Hospital, which collapsed in the quake, were confirmed alive as of 10 p.m.

City officials and rescue workers freed 33 patients and nurses from the debris before 9 p.m. and were trying to save four others. The violent quake brought down the seven-story hospital. The fifth floor disappeared completely.

Relatives gathered as rescue efforts continued. A 36-year-old woman whose father is believed still in the hospital said tearfully, "I had been so happy (before the quake) when I was told that my father could leave the hospital soon."

The quake also cut off electricity to the site, forcing the rescue team to use its own lighting in the search, the officials said.

About 226,000 telephone lines in Nagata, Chuo, Hyogo and Nishi wards were cut, the city officials said.

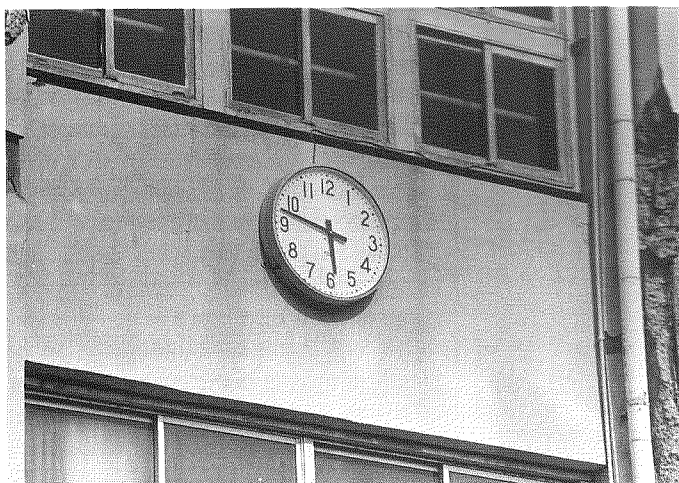
The quake also forced Kobe Port to close, as many of its 240 piers were damaged, and vessels are being denied use of the port, according to a municipal government official.

Some freighters and ferries were rerouted to other ports, and some are waiting in the harbor for the port to reopen, he said.

Kobe Port Island and Rokko Island, both man-made islands that are part of the port, have been isolated since bridges to the mainland were damaged.

About 34,500 residents are trapped on the two islands, he said.

"We must repair bridges and tramways to give residents access to and from the islands," the local government official said.



A school clock stopped when the quake hit KIMIO IDA

Island at epicenter of quake avoids massive damage

By CAMERON HAY

Despite being at the epicenter of the devastating earthquake Jan. 17, Awaji Island escaped the massive loss of life and large-scale destruction seen in densely built-up cities across the Seto Inland Sea.

Municipal governments here reported that 3,000 houses were destroyed, 52 people were killed and 150 injured. Many residents survived apparently because they were sleeping on the second floor of old houses where the first floor was completely crushed.

"When the earthquake came, the Earth moved up and down," said Sadakichi Akaji, 75, a resident in Ichinomiya, Awaji Island. "I couldn't do anything. The first floor just collapsed, but we were on the second floor. I saw some light, and crawled out. Then I got some help for my wife, who is in the hospital now but is all right."

"The children had just come back from a ski trip, so there were six of us here," Fumiko Yasui, 64, said. "The first floor was crushed, but we were all on the second floor, so no one was hurt. Having our lives is everything, I suppose."

The loss of life in Hokudan, a town at the northern end of Awaji Island, was greater.

"Five people were sleeping on the first floor here. Four of them were saved. We lost one little girl who was in elementary school," said an elderly man in Hokudan, as his sister, the grandmother of 10-year-

old Misa Sowa, picked her way through the rubble of the house.

Most of the houses that were destroyed or suffered extensive damage were older buildings.

"Look at this, that house is standing, so is that one, and so is that one. All the newer ones are OK. Only mine is damaged because



Devastation in Kobe KYODO

it's old, about 50 years old. I don't know what I'll do. I've only got fire insurance," an elderly man in Hokudan said.

All the large fires on the island appeared to have been extinguished by the afternoon, in contrast to Kobe, where continuing blazes cast thick black smoke over the city.

DAY 2 (Jan. 18)

6:22 a.m. — Leakage is reported from liquid petroleum gas tanks in Higashi-Nada Ward, prompting authorities to advise residents to evacuate.

10:30 a.m. — The Health and Welfare Ministry reports a cutoff in water supplies to either all or parts of five cities and four towns in the region, affecting 2.28 million people.

10 p.m. — The NPA reports the death toll at 2,594, with 881 listed as missing.

Survivors, rescuers struggle to cope in the aftermath of the earthquake

By SACHIKO HIRAO

Lines of people on foot and bicycles carrying emergency items to Kobe stretched for miles along National Route 2.