



Evacuees prepare their breakfast KIMIO IIDA

DAY 6 (Jan. 22)

Before dawn — The Hanshin region gets its first rainfall since the quake.

11:37 p.m. — The Meteorological Agency reports more than 1,000 aftershocks since the initial quake, with 105 of them strong enough to be felt.

Evacuees, relief workers build sheds as rain falls for first time since quake

By SACHIKO HIRAO
and AKEMI NAKAMURA

Plastic make-shift sheds started emerging around Kobe, on school grounds and roads, as devastated city had the first rainfall since the Jan. 17 quake.

Some evacuees at Nishi-Nada Elementary School in Nada Ward constructed several sheds on the school grounds to secure space for bonfires and cooking, as well as to keep emergency items from getting soaked.

The Kobe Municipal Government distributed about 10,000 plastic sheets to help people prepare for the rain.

A growing number of people are coming to the evacuation center from the surrounding areas to get plastic sheets, said Reiko Fujimoto, principal of the school, which is serving as an evacuation shelter.

"Some who stayed at their partly col-

lapsed homes come to pick up the sheets to build temporary sheds or cover items that they dug out of their houses. Others can't leave their collapsed homes because they must keep their eyes on their items to prevent theft," Fujimoto said.

About 2,000 people are currently staying at the school where basic necessities are distributed and medical service are being provided by three volunteer doctors, she said.

The evacuees include 200 people staying in their cars or in tents on the school grounds, Fujimoto said.

"We can get basic things such as food and water here. The question now is not basic necessities but where we will go. Even if the municipal government builds temporary housing, it's not for everyone," said Sukehiro Sakai, 55, a resident of Nada Ward.

Sakai said that he was concerned about possible aftershocks. He said he heard on the radio that a big aftershock is anticipated sometime soon.

While the victims of the killer earthquake have been facing inconvenient and insecure situations, some people in Kobe have opened their businesses.

A real estate agent employee in the Motomachi district in Chuo Ward said that he received three phone calls in 30 minutes in the morning from people wanting to move into new apartments immediately.

"We will re-open this office soon. But I don't know if we can find apartments right away because we can't contact the owners of real estate property and usually some paper work is necessary. Besides, I don't

know how many of our apartments are available," he said.

Kazuo Tsuchie, 47, a shoe shop owner in the Motomachi district, said she opened her shop on Jan. 19. "I open the shop five hours a day," she said. "Some people staying at temporary shelters came to buy sneakers."

At Kobe Harborland, a restaurant owner whose diner in the Sannomiya district collapsed, started selling "bento" lunches to passengers taking the ferry from Kobe to Osaka.

"Because my house in Kita Ward sustained only small damage and water supply has started, I have made these bento to keep my business going," she said.

Electricity, telephone restored for most of Kobe, many still don't have water

Electric power and telephone service returned to normal for most of this earthquake-devastated city of 1.4 million people after five days of paralysis.

But about 50 percent of the households in the city remain without water supply, according to the Kobe Municipal Government.

Power has been restored in all but 15 households in the most seriously damaged areas.



Mass funeral in Kobe KYODO