

At least 268 dead and 151 missing in Indonesia earthquake

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Jakarta, November 23 (RHC)-- The death toll from Monday's earthquake in Indonesia stands at 268 as search operations continue, according to the National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB).

The 5.6-magnitude earthquake that struck West Java province on Monday has left 1,083 people injured, 58,362 displaced and more than 21,000 homes and infrastructure destroyed.

With a figure of 151 people missing, search and rescue operations for victims are still ongoing, said the head of Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency, Suharyanto.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo ordered the country's authorities to prioritize the search and rescue of victims. "We are still in an emergency response, so the focus on carrying out the search and evacuation of the victims is our priority," BNPB said.

According to the entity, there are currently more than 22,000 houses with severe, moderate, or slight damage. The Indonesian president, in a visit to the areas affected by the earthquake, said that the government will offer compensation for the damaged houses.

Human Development and Culture Minister Muhadjir Effendy said: "Incidentally, the timing [of the earthquake] coincided with the time when [children] were reciting the Quran in madrasas and mosques."

The minister's statement indicates that most of the victims who died from the earthquake in Cianjur, West Java, are believed to be children. The number of victims is likely to increase as the search is still ongoing.

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