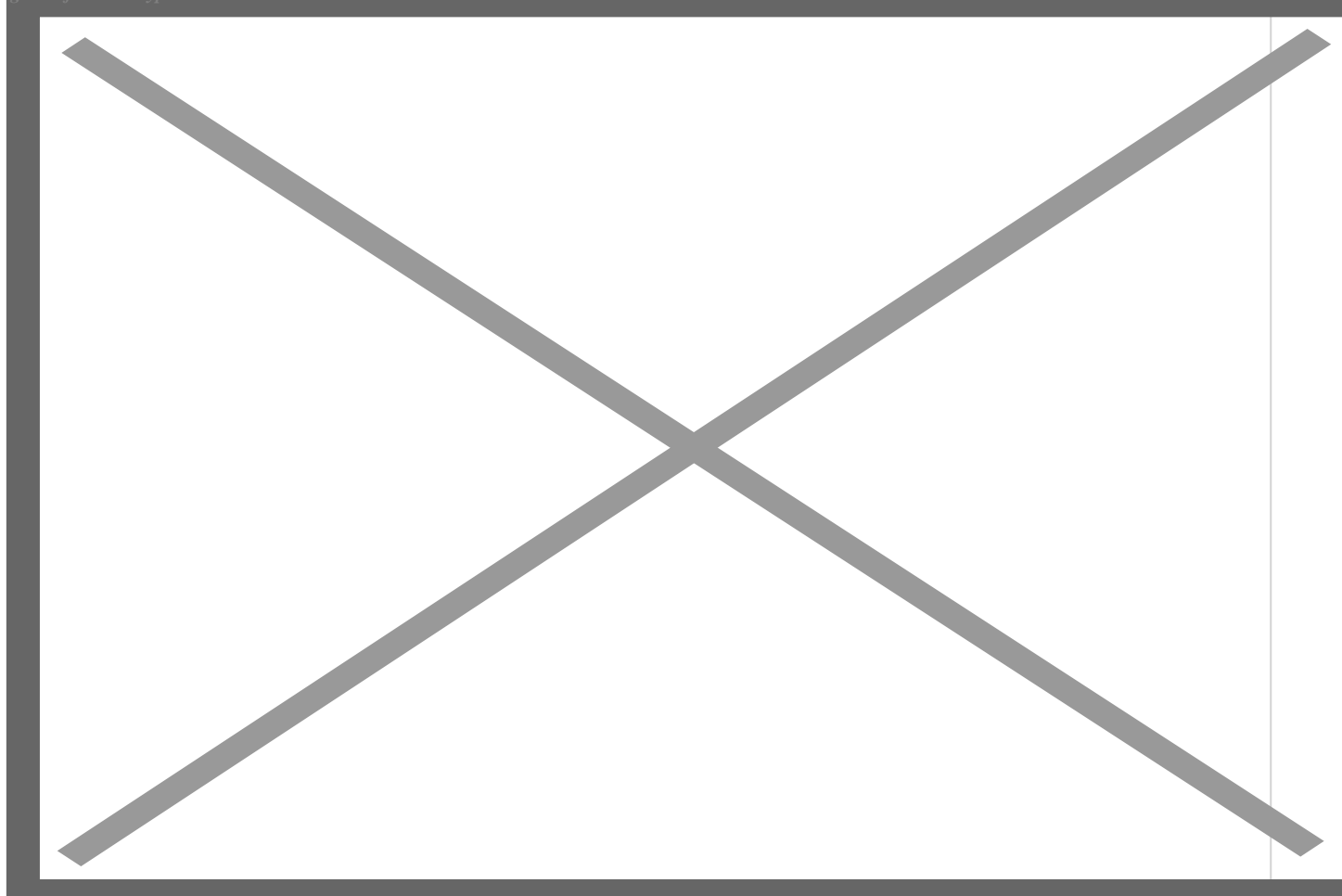


U.S. freezes aid while Kabul appeals for emergency assistance in aftermath of devastating earthquake

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sufficient medicine and equipment to treat the wounded.?

Kabul, June 24 (RHC)-- With the death toll from the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan rising, the Taliban have appealed to the international community for help, saying the crisis-stricken country lacks sufficient medicine and equipment to treat the wounded.

The death toll has crossed the 1,150 mark, according to officials, who fear the toll is likely to mount further as search and rescue operations continue to face hurdles in the mountainous southeastern region of the landlocked country.

In just one district of Khost province, the earthquake killed at least 25 people and injured over 95 others, local officials said Friday. According to Mohammad Nassim Haqqani, a spokesperson for the interim government's disaster management ministry, more than 2,000 people sustained injuries in Wednesday's earthquake, and more than 10,000 homes were either completely destroyed or partially damaged.

"The health ministry does not have enough drugs, we need medical aid and other necessities because it's a big disaster," he was quoted as saying.

The 6.1 magnitude earthquake struck about 44 km (27 miles) from the city of Khost, near the Pakistani border, early on Wednesday.

Following the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan on Wednesday, Iran expressed condolences and pledged full support to the neighboring country.

The caretaker government in Kabul has called on the international community and global charities to help those affected by the massive quake. The Taliban have also urgently renewed Afghanistan's call on the US to release the country's assets. There are about \$7 billion of Afghan funds from the country's central bank frozen in the United States.

In February, U.S. President Joe Biden signed an executive order that would seize the Afghan assets and move half to a fund purportedly designated for humanitarian aid for Afghanistan. However, Biden nodded to legal wrangling with some 9/11 families pursuing claims against those assets as the reason for not trying to free the other half of Afghan funds allegedly for the Afghan people.

The freeze has continued amid Afghanistan's economy being on the verge of collapse, inflation soaring, and millions of Afghans on the brink of starvation.

However, Washington's callous indifference to humanitarian crises is known to all and sundry.

When Iran was hit by the worst coronavirus pandemic in the Middle East, calls mounted from around the world on the United States to ease sanctions on the country in order to allow the Islamic Republic to buy vital medical equipment and vaccines from abroad, but Washington was unimpressed.

This is the deadliest earthquake to hit Afghanistan sitting in the lap of the Hindukush Mountains since 2002 when a magnitude-6.1 earthquake killed around 1,000 people in northern Afghanistan.

Before that, in 1998, a magnitude-6.1 earthquake and following tremors in northeast Afghanistan resulted in the death of at least 4,500 people.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/291663-us-freezes-aid-while-kabul-appeals-for-emergency-assistance-in-aftermath-of-devastating-earthquake>



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