

Dear All,

This message from Hartley Henry, the principal advisor to Dominica's prime minister:

This is Hartley Henry - Principal Advisor to Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit of Dominica.

It's 4 30am and I just spoke with Prime Minister Skerrit via satellite phone. He and family are fine. Dominica is not!! Tremendous loss of housing and public buildings. The main general hospital took a beating. Patient care has been compromised.

Many buildings serving as shelters lost roofs, which means that a very urgent need now is tarpaulins and other roofing materials.

Little contact has been made with the outer communities but persons who walked 10 and 15 miles towards the city of Roseau from various outer districts report total destruction of homes, some roadways and crops.

Urgent helicopter services are needed to take food, water and tarpaulins to outer districts for shelter. Canefield airport can accommodate helicopter landings and it is expected that from today, the waters around the main Roseau port will be calm enough to accommodate vessels bringing relief supplies and other forms of assistance.

It's difficult to determine the level of fatalities but so far seven are confirmed, as a direct result of the hurricane. That figure, the Prime Minister fears, will rise as he wades his way into the rural communities today -Wednesday.

The urgent needs now are roofing materials for shelters, bedding supplies for hundreds stranded in or outside what's left of their homes and food and water drops for residents of outlying districts inaccessible at the moment.

The tarmac at Mellville Hall [Airport] was not too badly damaged so the strip should be opened in a day or two for larger relief planes to land.

The Prime Minister is hoping to make contact with ABS Radio in Antigua this morning to speak directly to the outer world as to the state of Dominica and its urgent needs.

The country is in a daze - no electricity, no running water - as a result of uprooted pipes in most communities and definitely to landline or cellphone services on island, and that will be for quite a while.

In summary, the island has been devastated. The housing stock significantly damaged or destroyed. All available public buildings are being used as shelters; with very limited roofing materials evident.

The country needs the support and continued help and prayers of all.

Will update further as new information is received.



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