Amateurs in Action

Recounts of ham radio operators who have used their effort and skills to help others in a time of need

Help in Gujarat



Ram Mohan VU2MYH and Dvrk Murty VU2DVO set up a makeshift ham radio relay station amid the chaos

During the bustling morning hours of Friday 26 January 2001, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake leveled hundreds of villages and several cities, killing many thousands and injuring well over a hundred thousand in Gujarat, the western-most state of India. The epicenter was near Bhuj, about 200 miles to the west of the Gujarati capital.

Within a couple of days, around forty operators from all over India set up more than twenty stations near the most affected areas to established makeshift hospitals and temporary shelters. Some of the operators traveled with aid groups to remote areas, connecting locals with government relief workers for supplies and information. For four days, before telephone and electric power was partially restored, amateur radio operators Ram Mohan VU2MYH and Nitten Ravi VU2BNR fielded more than 200 relay requests for doctors, medicine, ambulances, and cranes.

Worried relatives of tourists from France, Switzerland, the UK, and India itself, visiting historical sites in Gujarat sent requests to locate the whereabouts of their visiting loved ones. In many cases their requests were met with information, offering peace-of mind to both.

You can read more about amateur involvement in the Gujarat earthquake in Times of India and Tampa Bay Times and as mentioned in India's National Institute of Amateur Radio.





Pravin Valera VU2CPV joins the effort to help