

Hot Mud Flood, Sidoarjo, East Java

Highlight

- A gas pipe buried under the relief well exploded Wednesday, 22 November 2006. The explosion occurred at around 20:20 p.m. (1320 GMT) in part of the state-owned Pertamina East Java Gas Pipeline. At least eight people died, 13 injured and one reported missing because of the accident.
- The explosion will likely cause gas disruptions to customers in east Java.
- There are no more IDPs staying at the evacuation sites. All of them have moved to a rental house or a relative's house.

Background

The mud began to gush from the gas exploration field of Lapindo Brantas Inc - a subsidiary of the Bakrie Group - on May 29. An area of rice fields and residential land measuring 450 hectares is now a mud lake. The mud has also affected the toll road and the railway. Experts have warned they cannot predict when the mudflow might end.

Place



Sidoarjo District, East Java Province.

Map of East Java: the black arrow shows the location of the hot mud flood.

Sidoarjo District can be reached in 30 – 45 minutes by car from Surabaya.

Current Situation



A gas pipe buried under the relief well exploded Wednesday, 22 November 2006. The explosion occurred at around 7:30 p.m. (1230 GMT) in part of the state-owned Pertamina East Java Gas Pipeline. At least eight people died, 13 injured and one reported missing because of the accident. Most of the dead are police and soldiers who were securing the site.

The explosion will likely cause gas disruptions to customers in east Java



Below is the table of the explosion victims based on MOH report, 23 November 2006:

NO.	Hospital	Deaths	Patient			Missing
			In-patient	Out-patient	Total	
1	Sidoarjo Hospital	-	4	4	8	-
2	Bhayangkara Porong Hospital	-	1	1	2	-
3	Dr. Sutomo Hospital	-	2	-	2	-
4	Delta Surya Hospital	-	1	-	1	-
Total		8	8	5	13	1

The mud flood has presently engulfed 1810 houses as well as 18 schools, 2 government offices, 20 factories and 15 mosques. Recently, the flow has reached 126 000 cubic meters a day. To date, an estimated 3000 families, or about 10 000 people, have been displaced.

The mud, gushing at a rate of 50 000 cubic meters (1.75 million cubic feet) a day, has now covered about 450 ha of land, which includes the six villages, paddy fields and sugarcane plantations as well as part of the Sidoarjo highway south of Surabaya, the country's second-largest city. In some areas the sludge is 6 m deep.

The Bakrie Group said on Thursday, 16 November 2006, that it would continue to accept overall liability for paying for the efforts to tackle the mud-volcano disaster at the Lapindo Brantas gas exploration well in Sidoarjo.

Affected Population

There are no more IDPs staying at the evacuation sites. All of them have moved to a rental house or a relative's house.

Problems encountered and needs

Some agencies are concerned about the environmental and health risks of the plan to channel mud into the Porong River, despite government assurance that the mud is not harmful to human health. It might threaten 7000 ha of shrimp farms in Jabon District.

Government Action



Some officers are digging the mud to search for the missing victim of gas pipe explosion, Wednesday, 22 November 2006.

Over the past few weeks, the government has been channeling the mud into the sea, fearing that the arrival of the rainy season could cause the embankments to collapse. Green groups and locals have protested against this move, saying that it will damage marine life in the area.

The government promised on 17 October 2006 that Lapindo Brantas Inc. would still hold responsibility for the damage caused by the Sidoarjo mudflow, despite the change in the company's ownership.



On Saturday, 15 September 2006, the President signed a decree to form the National Mudflow Disaster Management Team in Sidoarjo. The team, called National Mudflow Mitigation Team, was formed to protect residents around the location of the disaster, maintain the basic infrastructure, and resolve the mudflow problem while minimizing environmental damage within six months. All costs covering the duties – an estimated 1.5 trillion rupiah (164 million US dollars) – of this national team will be borne by Lapindo Brantas Inc.

On Wednesday, 27 September 2006, in the cabinet meeting, the President declared the area swamped by the mudflow in Sidoarjo, East Java, as a disaster area and ordered 2983 affected families to be permanently relocated because the area is no longer fit for human habitation. The government has been preparing land in West Porong District for this purpose.

The President has also agreed with the plan for channeling the mud water into the Porong River; the river would then carry the mud into the sea.

The government will shift the toll road linking Indonesia's second largest city of Surabaya to the rest of Java, including gas pipes under the road as well as train tracks, as a result of the disaster.

MOH and WHO Action

Recent Action:

- The Crisis Center, MOH through its operation room is closely monitoring the situation, ready for back up support and in regular contact with Dr. Soetomo Hospital where the injured cases are being treated.
- The injured victims are under treatment and under control.
- MOH – PHO – Dr. Soetomo Hospital and its networks hospitals and WHO has already organized and developed contingency plan which includes possible gas explosion and other related emergencies that could emerged in relation to the Hot Mud and Gas flow disaster site.
- WHO is ready to provide necessary support base on needs if required.
- MOH, WHO, PHO and Dr. Soetomo Hospital plan to organize a workshop from 30 November to 1 December 2006 in Surabaya to review the present situation, life support and critical care, post trauma management and to strengthen the contingency and operational plans accordingly.

Continuing Action:

- DHO Sidoarjo opened 11 medical posts: 6 in-building medical posts and 5 out-building medical posts. Ambulances (118) from Dr.Sutomo Hospital are on stand by and ready if needed. Masks were already distributed to the IDPs.
- WHO conducted several joint assessments, between the WHO EHA unit and Environmental Health unit, in the affected area.
- During the initial phase, WHO facilitated MOH to mobilize clinics to the site to assist the IDPs.
- WHO facilitated MOH to conduct refresher training courses for doctors and nurses.

Status of International Aid

So far the government has not officially requested any international aid. The local authorities, with support from central government and ministries, are trying their best to manage the situation.



Contact people in Indonesia

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Source of Information from Indonesia

Information is gathered from the following sources. This report is for reference only and should not be quoted as factual accuracy can change.

1. WHO
2. UN system
3. Crisis Center (PPK), MOH
4. Media Centre
5. Local news media.