

## Global Indian International School Students in Japan Evacuated during Earthquake

- Global Indian International School teachers and emergency response team praised for swift evacuation of students

**Singapore, 16 March 2011** – Global Indian International School (GIIS) Tokyo students were swiftly evacuated to a nearby children’s park when the 8.9 magnitude earthquake struck just before 3pm Japan time/4pm Singapore time. The evacuees consisted of Kindergarten and Primary students between the ages of 3 to 11 years.

GIIS was founded in Singapore in 2002 and has a presence in eight countries including Japan. GIIS Tokyo was established in 2006 and is located within 304 km from Sendai – the epicentre of the earthquake.

As the quake proof building started shaking, Ms. Rajeswary Sambathrajan, Principal of GIIS Tokyo activated the GIIS emergency plan and teachers systematically organised for the students to evacuate their school building. An emergency response team was also set up in both the Tokyo and Singapore campus to closely monitor the situation and serve as a communication tool between the school and parents.

Despite the mobile communication network being paralysed, the taskforce realised that email services on the Blackberry and iPhone were still working and promptly proceeded to communicate with parents. Parents were notified of their children’s safety status and pick up location.

Mr. Atul Temurnikar, Co-founder and Chairman of GIIS said, “The safety and well being of our students and employees were of our utmost concern. Every action to ensure their safety was taken and we are happy to announce that all of our students, staff and their families are safe and accounted for.”

Panic stricken GIIS parents were extremely appreciative of the swift reaction and efficient handling of the emergency response team led by Mr. Atul from Singapore, Ms. Rajeswary and GIIS staff in Tokyo. Hundreds of thank you notes have started to pour in from relieved parents in appreciation of the management's actions.

One such note read:

"I would like to thank the teachers and staff of GIIS from the bottom of my heart for taking such good care of my daughter – Ena Sato – once the earthquake struck. Due to the distance between where I work and the school, it took me almost 6 hours to reach Tobu Friends Hall – a community hall near the school. When I reached the hall, I found the teachers calming my five year old daughter and reassuring her. I was so relieved, I was at a loss for words and thankful that the teachers stayed back despite their own worries about their family to ensure her safety," said Shing Siah Lee, mother to Ena Sato.

The earthquake caused some damages to the school building and its facilities. "Our building suffered damages and the experience is permanently etched in all of our minds. But we are determined to move ahead, begin restoration work and open the school once we have the go-ahead from relevant authorities," said Atul.

**-End -**



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