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Haitian people 'already done their mourning'

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for patients coming in. At some hospitals, you just have to chop the leg or arm off to fix a broken limb. I've never seen so many amputations in my life. It's like 30 per cent of the people. It's just tragic."

According to the European Commission, the death toll in Haiti is estimated at 200,000, while some 250,000 people are in urgent need of assistance and a staggering three million have been affected.

Day after day, Mrs. Ratnam and her team work to dress and redress wounds and to transport patients around for the doctors and nurses.

"The Haitian people are like people I've never met before. They

'There's relatively no painkillers here and yet you would not hear a peep out of them.'

Megan Ratnam
pastor helping in Haiti hospital

are not a people to sit and mourn for yesterday — they live for tomorrow. So they've already done their mourning, they've already cried," Mrs. Ratnam said.

She said she is surprised by how the victims are holding up.

"There's relatively no painkillers here and yet you would not hear a peep out of them. I saw a man the other day and his back — you can

see his vertebrae — and he had no painkillers. They were dressing his wounds and they asked him, 'How do you do it?' and he just said, 'God gives me the strength.'"

Back home in Markham, Mrs. Ratnam's parents, Brian and Marg Murphy, said even though they are concerned about their daughter's safety, they are proud.

"We are praying all the time," Mr. Murphy said. "One thing she said to us was, 'It's your fault I'm going, because you taught us how to care.'"

As for Mrs. Ratnam's birthday plan, "I think I'm going to fix some more limbs. I feel pretty selfish if I take a day off. I can celebrate my birthday when I get back," she said.

"Here, at nighttime when they are falling asleep, they sing. In the morning when they wake up, they sing. It's beautiful. They sing beautifully."

Mrs. Ratnam is to return to Canada Jan. 30.

HAITI RELIEF

Markham's Kindred Spirit Orchestra has launched a campaign for World Vision's Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund, with donation boxes outside the Unionville Old Library Community Centre (221 Main St. Unionville) and the International Music Academy (4981 Hwy. 7, Suite 8). The campaign continues until Jan. 31.



MEGAN RATNAM: Markham native helping at hospital in earthquake ravaged Haiti.