

## Taiwan town, fearing toxins, refuses China typhoon aid

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TAIPEI, Aug 19 (Reuters) - A Taiwan town where 700 people were displaced after the island's worst typhoon in 50 years has declined mobile homes from political rival China, fearing the they might contain toxic chemicals, officials said on Wednesday.

Chiatung Township refused 100 quick-assembly homes after Taiwan's notoriously anti-China county of Pingtung said that based on news reports in China, they might contain formalin, a chemical that can be hazardous in high doses, deputy county magistrate Chung Chia-pin said.

"Although the homes are a humanitarian donation, we need to consider safety first," Chung said. "Also, not just China, but other countries are also offering these donations."

The homes, which reached Taiwan on Tuesday, should be tested for any contamination, said township chief Lai Hsieh-ho.

China said the homes had already been checked.

"These mobile homes are strictly produced according to Taiwan's design requirements and technical standards by the mainland's top producers," Fan Liqing, spokeswoman for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, told a news conference.

Typhoon Morakot hit Taiwan on Aug. 8, killing an estimated 500 people in massive landslides. The government has come under fire for its slow response to the disaster and for initially refusing offers of foreign aid. [nTP202685]

China has claimed sovereignty over self-ruled Taiwan since 1949, when Mao Zedong's Communists won the Chinese civil war and Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists fled to the island. Beijing has vowed to bring Taiwan under its rule, by force if necessary.

But with ties warming since 2008, China has offered typhoon relief including 1,000 mobile homes, 10,000 sleeping bags and 10,000 blankets as well as about 176 million yuan (\$26 million).

Taiwan residents' distrust of Chinese goods shot up last year when dairy products by several firms in China were found to be contaminated with melamine, killing at least six babies and making tens of thousands sick.

(Reporting by Ralph Jennings in Taipei and Yu Le in Beijing; Editing by Ken Wills)

Source: [Reuters](#)