

Beat: Travel

Strong quake hits southwest China, killing at least 1

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USPA News - A strong earthquake struck a mountainous region of southwestern China on Saturday afternoon, destroying a number of houses and killing at least one person, authorities said, just months after more than 600 people died in another earthquake. The 6.3-magnitude earthquake at 4:22 p.m. local time (0855 GMT) was centered in GarzÅ Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Sichuan province, about 39 kilometers (24 miles) northwest of the town of Kangding.

It struck about 18 kilometers (11 miles) deep, making it a shallow earthquake, according to China's Earthquake Network Center (CENC). Officials from China's Earthquake Administration said at least one person was killed in Kangding County, while about a dozen more were injured, including one who was seriously injured. Numerous houses collapsed or were seriously damaged across towns in the region, but it was not yet clear whether more casualties were expected. The state-run Xinhua news agency identified the fatality as a woman in her 70s who died after being hit in the head by falling debris. "The house window was shaking fiercely. Some people rushed out of the building," a woman in Chengdu told Xinhua, while a resident in Kangding said the quake caused many items to fall to the ground in his house. Power outages were reported near the epicenter and rescue teams were dispatched to assess the situation. A highway that links Tibet and Sichuan was also damaged and caved in at one point, causing the road to be closed and stranding more than 100 vehicles in the area. Trains in the region were halted but resumed at 6:55 p.m. Minor damage was also reported at a staff building at Kangding Airport, but flight operations were not affected. Buildings in China are extremely vulnerable to earthquake shaking, and even light earthquakes frequently cause serious damage and casualties. At least 617 people were killed in August when a 6.5-magnitude earthquake struck Ludian County in Yunnan province, making it the country's deadliest earthquake since April 2010, when a 7.1 quake in northwest China killed 2,698 people.

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