

Beat: Miscellaneous

UPDATE1 -- Strong earthquake jolts New Zealand's North Island, no damage

-, 17.11.2014, 00:39 Time

USPA News - A strong earthquake struck the Pacific Ocean just off New Zealand's North Island on Monday morning, resulting in mild tremors being felt across the region but causing no damage or casualties, seismologists and witnesses said. No tsunami alerts were issued.

The 6.5-magnitude earthquake at 11:33 a.m. local time (2233 GMT Sunday) was centered about 155 kilometers (96 miles) east of Te Araroa, a township on the eastern coast of New Zealand's North Island. It struck about 31 kilometers (19.2 miles) below the seabed, making it a shallow earthquake, according to GeoNet, the country's seismological agency. GeoNet said it had received nearly 2,900 reports from the general public within an hour of the earthquake, reporting light to moderate tremors being felt in all parts of the North Island, including the capital Wellington. Some people in the northern parts of the South Island reported feeling very light shaking. "The girls said 'oh, earthquake.' It just kept rolling. The shelves were rocking, the fluorescent lights that hang down were swinging from side to side," Liz Koia, who was at a store in Te Araroa, told Stuff.co.nz. She said nothing fell off the shelves but added that she was keeping a close eye on the sea to make sure it wasn't retreating. Both the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center and New Zealand's Ministry of Civil Defense and Emergency Management (MCDEM) said there was no threat of a tsunami and no warnings were issued. "Based on all available data, there is no tsunami threat from this earthquake," the warning center said in a bulletin. New Zealand has been struck by a number of earthquakes over the past few years. A strong 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck near Christchurch in February 2011, killing 185 people and injuring more than 1,500 others, making it the country's deadliest disaster since a powerful 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the Hawke's Bay region in February 1931, killing at least 256 people and injuring thousands. A second earthquake, also measuring 6.3, struck near Christchurch in June 2011, killing an elderly man and injuring 46 others.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2947/update1--strong-earthquake-jolts-new-zealandund39s-north-island-no-damage.html>

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