

Six Killed, Several Injured in Strong Chile Earthquake



Santiago, Apr 2 (RHC), – At least six people have been killed and several others seriously injured in Chile following an earthquake measuring 8.2 on the Richter scale in the country's northern region.

According to Chile's Interior Minister, Rodrigo Penailillo, four men and two women were confirmed dead in the cities of Iquique and Alto Hospicio.

The ministry said the victims had died of either a heart attack or falling debris.

Earlier reports had placed the number of the deaths at two.

The US Geological Survey said that the earthquake hit at 08:46 pm local time on Tuesday at a depth of 20.1 kilometers (12.5 miles), 95 kilometers (59 miles) northwest of Iquique on Chile's northern coast.

Meanwhile, Chile's President, Michelle Bachelet, has declared parts of the country's northern region as disaster zones. The president arrived on Wednesday in the region of Iquique, accompanied by members of her cabinet, to meet with local authorities and coordinate the government's response to the earthquake. She will later travel to the region of Arica.

Following the earthquake, several small tsunami waves hit some areas in the north of the country, while the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center issued a warning for Latin America's entire Pacific coast, which was later lifted.

A number of roads in Chile were reportedly blocked by landslides. The quake has also caused power cuts.

Today, hundreds of thousands of Chileans living in coastal areas, who had been evacuated due to the tsunami threats, have begun to return to their homes, AFP reports.

So far, at least 10 strong aftershocks, including a 6.2-magnitude tremor, have occurred.

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