

Chile Assesses Extent of Earthquake Damage; Police and Military Ensure Order



Santiago, Apr 4, (RHC), – Coastal residents of Chile's far north spent a second sleepless night outside their homes as major aftershocks continued on Thursday following a magnitude-8.2 earthquake that damaged several thousand homes and caused six deaths. But no new major damage or casualties were reported, and a heavy police and military presence kept order, Mercopress news agency reports.

The infrastructure in the area is nearly entirely intact, but with aftershocks continuing, life has been anything but normal. Power remains out in many areas, and hospitals were handling only emergencies. Schools were closed, and large supermarkets and gas stations coordinated their reopening on Thursday with security authorities.

After a magnitude-7.6 aftershock struck just before midnight Wednesday, Chile's Emergency Office and Navy issued a tsunami alert, and for two hours ordered everyone living in low-lying areas along the country's entire 4,000-kilometer Pacific coastline to evacuate.

Among those moved inland was President Michelle Bachelet, who was in the city of Arica assessing damage in the north from Tuesday night's powerful quake.

The largest aftershock was felt across the border in southern Peru, where people in the cities of Tacna and Arequipa fled buildings in fear, however, no damage or injuries were reported

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