

Magnitude 6.3 earthquake shakes Colombian capital

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Bogota, August 18 (RHC)-- An earthquake of 6.3 magnitude followed by dozens of aftershocks has struck the Colombian capital Bogota, according to the United States Geological Survey, prompting frightened residents to flee into the street and leading a woman to fall to her death.

There were no immediate reports of major damage from Thursday's quake, which Colombia's national geological service reported as a magnitude 6.1.

The Colombian agency said it struck at 12:04 pm (17:04 GMT), with its epicentre in the town of El Calvario, 40km (25 miles) southeast of Bogota. It hit at a depth of less than 30 km (19 miles). Buildings shook and sirens sounded as thousands of panicked residents poured into the streets of the capital.

Mayor Claudia Lopez said one woman fell to her death in the southeast of the capital. “We deeply regret the only serious incident reported: a woman threw herself from the 10th floor of a residential building in Madelena, apparently due to nerves. We’re accompanying those who were with her in the house with medical teams,” Lopez said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Colombia’s Congress reported damages to the chambre of representatives, where the earthquake shook a plaster decoration free from the ceiling and onto a desk below. No one was hurt, the chambre said.

Colombia’s civil defence agency noted residents had been evacuated in the entire municipality of El Calvario. Windows in the area were damaged by the quakes.

The initial quake was followed by aftershocks minutes later as people crowded the city’s streets.

Colombia’s national geological service estimated the second quake at a 5.6 magnitude, with the following aftershock measured at 4.8.

Central Colombia is seismically active and features one of the country’s main geological faults. In March, authorities warned of an increase in seismic activity around the Nevado del Ruiz volcano, a peak responsible for triggering the country’s largest recorded natural disaster, killing 25,000 people in 1985.

In 2008, a quake centred in El Calvario killed 11 people.

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