

Beat: Miscellaneous

Magnitude-5.6 quake kills 18, injures 130 in Afghanistan

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USPA News - A moderate earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday resulted in the deaths of at least 18 people, the presidential palace said on Thursday, adding that 130 others were injured and that hundreds of homes in the area were damaged. The 5.6-magnitude earthquake at 1:55 p.m. local time (0925 GMT) on Wednesday was centered about 11 kilometers (6 miles) south of Mehtar Lam, a town in Laghman province.

It struck about 62.1 kilometers (38.6 miles) deep, making it a relatively shallow earthquake, according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The tremors were felt in neighboring Pakistan and as far away as the Indian capital New Delhi. The USGS estimated some 634,000 people near the epicenter may have felt `moderate` shaking while more than 30 million people in the wider region could have perceived `weak` to `light` shaking. The office of Afghan President Hamid Karzai said Thursday that the earthquake caused significant damage and casualties in Nangarhar province, where more than 300 houses were damaged or destroyed. At least 17 people were killed and 126 people were injured in the province. In Kunar province, where around 45 houses were damaged, at least one person was killed and four others were injured. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties from Laghman province or other nearby provinces, but local authorities in the region said the overall number of casualties is expected to rise. Northern Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan are regularly hit by moderate and strong earthquakes, especially around the Hindu Kush range. In June 2012, at least 75 people were killed and 13 others were injured when a 5.4-magnitude earthquake struck a mountainous region of northeastern Afghanistan.

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