

Earthquake victims in the spotlight of Cuban attention

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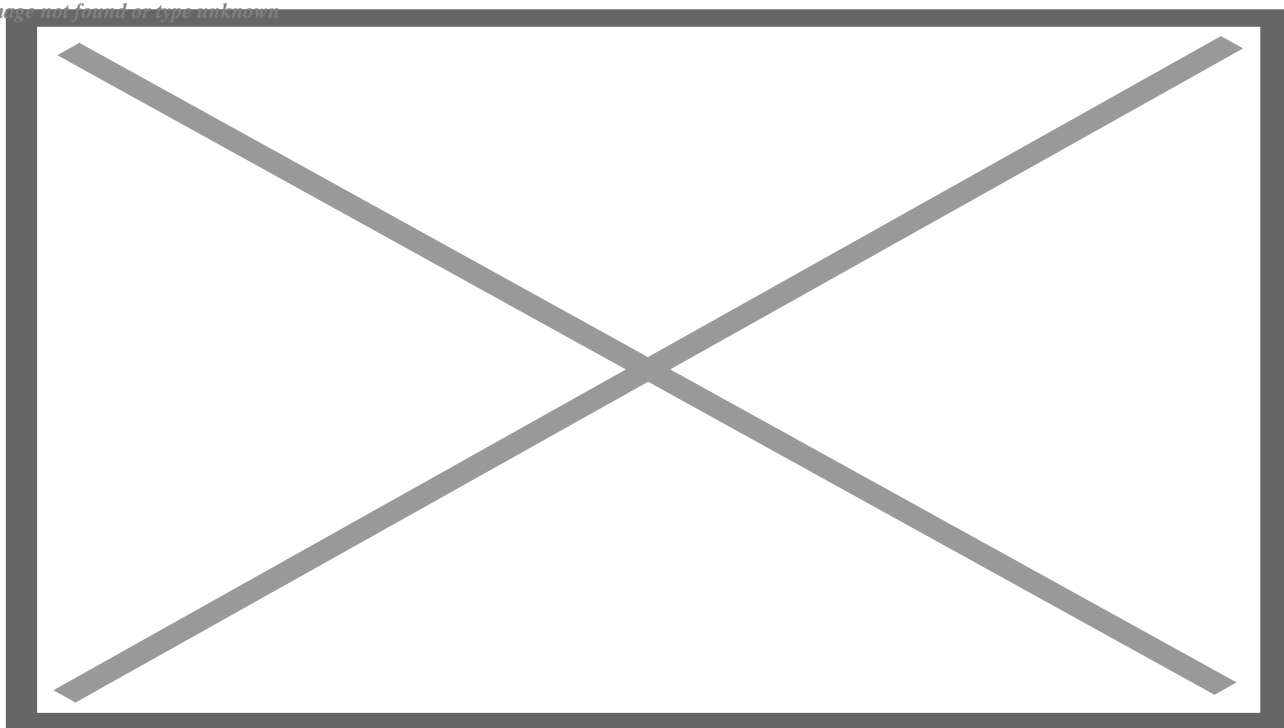


Photo: Radio Bayamo

By Roberto Morejón

Cuba is experiencing an unusual problem due to the persistence of several natural disasters whose effects are straining the country's limited resources, always with the priority of saving lives.

The devastating hurricanes Oscar, in the eastern province of Guantanamo, and Rafael, in the western part of the archipelago, were followed by an unusual anomaly.

Shaken by periodic cyclones, the largest of the Antilles has a long history of dealing with these phenomena, but not with earthquakes, which are rare in the local geography.

However, two earthquakes of significant intensity and hundreds of aftershocks were registered in the southeast of the eastern region of Cuba earlier this week.

The municipality of Pílon, in the province of Granma, was one of the hardest hit, with three buildings collapsing and nearly 200 reported partially damaged, as well as schools and electrical networks, with four people injured.

Experts highlighted the high level of energy released in the southeastern region, a vast area where more than 2,000 homes, 30 health centers and 144 other public facilities were damaged by the two earthquakes.

Experts in the field, concentrated in the city of Santiago de Cuba, stressed that in any region affected by a telluric movement, it is normal to experience a delay in the recovery of the equilibrium of the plates on which it rests.

The neighbors of the area refer to the fear they initially felt when they perceived the tremors of the earth and how they moved from their houses and other buildings to open spaces, as recommended by the Civil Defense norms for this type of phenomena.

The imminence of a tsunami was quickly ruled out, as some people suggested, without the necessary knowledge.

In the end, discipline prevailed among the inhabitants of the shaken region, despite the unusual occurrence of this type of contingency in the Caribbean nation.

As in the regions of the country hit by two hurricanes, the authorities visited the towns most affected by the earthquakes and work has already begun in the province of Granma to help the families affected.

Cuba, which is also suffering from a strain on its electrical grid, is devoting forces and resources from a limited fund due to the U.S. blockade to ensure that no one is left defenseless in the face of natural disasters such as earthquakes.

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