

Unexpected tremors



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By: Roberto Morejón

Familiar with tropical cyclones, Cubans have developed a culture of prevention and resistance to recover what was lost to these storms, but they are still surprised by the recurrence of earthquakes this year.

According to experts, the largest of the Antilles can be defined as an area with different levels of seismic risk, although perceptible tremors have been rare, without forgetting the non-sensitive ones.

The most recent activity began last November 10th on the coast of southeastern Cuba, with the epicenter in the town of Pilon and its surroundings, where the neighbors live in fear after two strong earthquakes.

Both phenomena caused several injuries and significant material damage, especially in the provinces of Granma and Santiago de Cuba.

The contingency was all the more striking because it occurred in the eastern part of the country at a time when it was recovering from Hurricane Oscar, whose rains caused eight deaths and floods never before seen in the region.

These telluric movements, which forced thousands of inhabitants to leave their homes and public buildings, were followed by another event, in this case of magnitude 4.3, centered in the same area of the eastern province of Granma.

Thousands of aftershocks followed the strongest tremors, some of which were felt by the population, but most of which were visible only to experts.

At the end of this period, on December 23, an earthquake was reported in Santiago de Cuba, without causing any loss of life, although it did cause some material damage and several landslides.

The account of what happened in the second half of 2024 reinforces the importance of prevention, interpreted as the process of reducing potential damage and constructing buildings that meet the

requirements set by technicians.

The authorities are counting on the contributions of seismological research on the regions where earthquakes are most likely to occur.

In the midst of severe material limitations due to the blockade and the inclusion of Cuba in a list of countries considered by the United States as sponsors of terrorism, the authorities have offered assistance to the victims of this year's earthquakes, and provisions are being made to apply the lessons learned.

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