

Mexican Earthquake Kills 96, Affects 2.3 Million



Mexico City, September 12 (RHC)-- The 8.2 magnitude earthquake in Mexico that struck last Thursday has affected about 2.3 million people while the number of deaths currently stands at 96, according to official sources. The reports come as aftershocks continue to shake Mexican communities, terrifying residents who are sleeping outdoors rather than returning to homes that took a pummeling in the initial quake.

The governor of the southwest state of Oaxaca, Alejandro Murat, said there were 71 confirmed fatalities there, many of them in the town of Juchitan, where the rush to bury victims crowded a local cemetery. "41 municipalities have been affected by this earthquake," Murat said. "We're talking about more 800,000 people who potentially lost everything, and some their loved-ones," said Murat, who added that one in 5 of the state's 4-million strong population is feeling the impact of the quake.

Television footage from Oaxaca showed homes and buildings razed by the quake, which struck the narrowest portion of Mexico off Chiapas, on the isthmus of Tehuantepec. In the Indigenous coastal town of Juchitan, which lies a little over 15 miles from Tehuantepec, more than 5,000 homes were flattened. The town of 100,000 in Oaxaca state was the hardest-hit in the country, and Juchitecos continue to climb through the rubble, searching for victims amid the shattered glass, rubble, and ground concrete.

Classes in the region will remain suspended "to continue evaluations and avoid risks," according to

authorities. 324 schools were affected, including 42 that were seriously damaged or destroyed. At least 15 people died in neighboring Chiapas, and its governor Manuel Velasco said about 41,000 houses were damaged in the state's 122 municipalities, estimating nearly 1.5 million people were affected. A further four deaths were also registered in Tabasco state to the north.

President Enrique Peña Nieto declared three days of national mourning and pledged that his government remained committed to rebuilding the shattered towns and villages. Speaking to reporters, localBar residents expressed frustration with Pena Nieto's administration, lamenting how the poor southern regions remain neglected by the more affluent northern and central regions of Mexico.

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