

Powerful 6.4-Magnitude Quake Rocks Western China



Beijing, July 3 (RHC)-- An earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale has rocked China's far western region of Xinjiang, killing at least three people and injuring over a dozen others.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the tremor occurred early on Friday and was centered in Pishan County, 164 kilometers (102 miles) northwest of the city of Hotan and 131 kilometers southeast of Shache, known as Yarkand in Uighur language.

The USGS measured the quake at a depth of 20 kilometers, saying that several aftershocks followed with the strongest measuring 4.8 magnitude. The quake was initially reported at various magnitudes up to 6.5.

Although the USGS said the location of the tremor was the edge of the vast and uninhabited region of Taklamakan, Chinese officials said three people had died in Pishan, which has a population of 258,000, mainly Muslim minority Uighurs.

Residents of the region voiced shock at the intensity of the tremor on social media, but authorities said they were optimistic the number of casualties would not be high.



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