Beat: Miscellaneous

Moderate earthquake felt throughout Taiwan, no damage

-, 07.03.2013, 19:17 Time

USPA News - A moderate but shallow earthquake struck northern Taiwan on late Thursday morning, causing buildings to sway in the capital Taipei and other parts of the island, seismologists and witnesses said. There were no immediate reports of major damage or injuries.

The 5.6-magnitude earthquake at 11:36 a.m. local time (0336 GMT) on Thursday was centered about 36 kilometers (22 miles) north-northwest of Hualian City, the capital of the county which carries the same name. It struck about 15.2 kilometers (9.4 miles) deep, making it a shallow earthquake, according to Taiwan`s Central Weather Bureau. The bureau said moderate shaking was felt mainly in Yilan County and Taichung City, but many parts of central and northern Taiwan were able to feel light shaking. Buildings in the capital Taipei swayed during the earthquake, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The United States Geological Survey (USGS), which also measured the strength of the earthquake at 5.6, estimated that around 237,.000 people near the epicenter may have felt light shaking. It said more than 24.4 million people further away may have experienced weak shaking. Located along the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, Taiwan is frequently rattled by moderate and strong earthquakes. On April 26, 2010, a strong 6.5-magnitude earthquake struck southwestern Taiwan, injuring 96 people and damaging at least 340 buildings throughout the island. And on September 21, 1999, a powerful 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck central Taiwan, killing at least 2,297 people and injuring nearly 9,.000 others. The quake, the second-deadliest earthquake in the island`s history, destroyed scores of homes and left more than 600,.000 people homeless. The only earthquake more deadly than the earthquake in 1999 was a powerful earthquake that struck western Taiwan on April 21, 1935. It left at least 3,276 people killed and injured more than 12,.000 others. Railways were left destroyed, iron bridges were fractured and tunnels cracked.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-601/moderate-earthquake-felt-throughout-taiwan-no-damage.html

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619