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UPDATE 7-New Zealand quake kills at least 65, hundreds may be trapped



By Gyles Beckford | Reuters – 14 minutes ago

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* Christchurch Mayor says up to 200 may still be trapped in buildings

* Main hospital sees influx of seriously injured

* City hit a second time by quake

* Most deadly natural disaster for 80 years

* Army and helicopters help in rescue

(Adds mayor on missing, hospital official, details)

WELLINGTON, Feb 22 (Reuters) - A strong earthquake killed at

least 65 people in New Zealand's second-biggest city of

Christchurch with more casualties expected as desperate rescuers

picked through rubble to find people trapped in toppled

buildings.

It was the second quake to hit the city in five months, and

New Zealand's most deadly natural disaster for 80 years.

"We may well be witnessing New Zealand's darkest day...The

death toll I have at the moment is 65 and that may rise,"

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key told local TV.

"It's hard to describe. What was a vibrant city a few hours

ago has been brought to its knees," added Key, who had flown to

Christchurch.

The 6.3 magnitude quake struck at lunchtime, when the

streets and shops thronged with people and offices were still

occupied.

Christchurch's mayor described the city of almost 400,000

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people as a war zone.

"There will be deaths, there will be a lot of injuries, there will be a lot of heart break in this city," Mayor Bob Parker told Australian TV by phone. He later told local radio up to 200 could be trapped in buildings.

The quake is country's worst natural disaster since a 1931 quake in the North Island city of Napier which killed 256.

Christchurch Hospital saw an influx of injured residents.

"We've had a lot of people at the emergency department...a significant number, a lot of major injuries," said David Meates, the chief executive of the Canterbury Health Board.

"They are largely crushes and cuts types of injuries and chest pain as well," he said, adding some of the more seriously injured could be evacuated to other cities, where hospitals have been put on alert and prepared to accept casualties.

All army medical staff have been mobilised, while several hundred troops were helping with the rescue, officials said.

A woman trapped in one of the buildings said she was terrified and waiting for rescuers to reach her six hours after the quake.

"I thought the best place was under the desk but the ceiling collapsed on top, I can't move and I'm just terrified," office worker Anne Voss told TV3 news.

Emergency shelters had also been set up in local schools and at a race course, as night approached.

Helicopters dumped giant buckets of water to try to douse a fire in one tall office building. A crane helped rescue workers trapped in another office block.

"I was in the square right outside the cathedral -- the whole front has fallen down and there were people running from there. There were people inside as well," said John Gurr, a camera technician who was in the city centre when the quake hit.

Authorities ordered major hospitals up and down the country to make room for quake victims. There were reports of a shortage of ambulances.

"A lady grabbed hold of me to stop falling over...We just

got blown apart. Colombo Street, the main street, is just a mess...There's lots of water everywhere, pouring out of the ground," Gurr said.

Emergency crews picked through the rubble, including a multi-storey office building whose floors appeared to have pancaked on top of each other.

SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL

Christchurch is built on silt, sand and gravel, with a water table beneath. In an earthquake, the water rises, mixing with the sand and turning the ground into a swamp and swallowing up sections of road and entire cars.

TV footage showed sections of road that had collapsed into a milky, sand-coloured lake right beneath the surface. One witness described the footpaths as like "walking on sand".

Unlike last year's even stronger tremor, which struck early in the morning when streets were virtually empty, people were walking or driving along streets when the shallow tremor struck, sending awnings and the entire faces of buildings crashing down. Police said debris had rained down on two buses, crushing them, but there was no word whether anyone had been killed or injured.

The power company Orion said it expected that as much as half of Christchurch area would be without power overnight.

The quake hit at 12:51 pm (2351 GMT Monday) at a depth of only 4 km (2.5 miles), according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

TALK OF POST-QUAKE RATE CUT

The quake helped knock the New Zealand dollar down to \$0.75, about 1.8 percent off late U.S. levels, on fears the damage could dent confidence in the already fragile economy.

Westpac Bank also raised the possibility that the central bank could cut interest rates over the next few weeks to shore up confidence after the quake, while other banks pushed out their expectations for the next rate hike. ANZ now expects the central bank to be on hold until the first quarter of 2012.

Shares in Australian banks and insurers, which typically have large operations in New Zealand, fell after the quake. But

credit rating agency Fitch said the tremor would not itself trigger a downgrade of New Zealand sovereign rating.

The tremor was centred about 10 km (six miles) southwest of Christchurch, which had suffered widespread damage during last September's 7.1 magnitude quake but no deaths.

James Goff, of the University of New South Wales' Natural Hazards Research Laboratory in Australia, said some buildings that survived last year's quake had been weakened and unable to withstand the second one, especially such a shallow tremor.

"A lot of the infrastructure has still not fully recovered from the last earthquake so that would have still been feeling weak and susceptible to another big earthquake," he said.

The region has been struck by thousands of aftershocks since the original quake.

New Zealand, which sits between the Pacific and Indo-Australian tectonic plates, records on average more than 14,000 earthquakes a year, of which about 20 would normally top magnitude 5.0.

(Additional reporting by Bruce Hextall, Michael Smith and Cecile Lefort in SYDNEY; Writing by Mark Bendeich and Ed Davies, editing by Jonathan Thatcher)

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[Sven](#) 8 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



Of course, as prophesied this world will end. So we better be ready all the time. Have intimate and living relationship with God and be good & show love to all fellow men daily. This is the two great commandments. Life is a mystery.

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[Ailenp](#) 13 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



we just pray all we can do,, there is possibilities that could be happened but hope it will not,,
but,, there is a sign that what happened now in this world,,,,
we should always pray,, if that time to time,,it could be ,,god help us,, to make it unity what god they do belved in this world,, as long we love each other,, let remind that how we rich we do anything thru materials things,, there is the only way to be success what challenges in this world might be ,,thats was ,PRAY, to jesus christ ,,amen,,,

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Jojo 17 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



Brothers and sisters around the world, these happenings around the globe are signs that we as human beings had committed countless sins and done so many mistakes during our lives, that we had forgotten that we are God's creation and subject to God's commandments. My God and your God is now trying to remind us, through these happenings, to repent for our sins, renounce evil and go back to His kingdom. Our salvation as a planet lies not on any material thing being invented right now, but our renewed faith in our Redeemer, our God Almighty Father, our saviour, our protector, our refuge. Prayers are our only link to Him and now is time for this. God bless to all.

[▶ Reply](#)

Clearbook 18 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



No one is perfect, we cannot predict when God will end this world, even the Bible says there is no specific year or month. There are signs... yes, the Bible warned us of that signs that the end of this world is near. Earthquakes is one of them. Just be prepared of our salvation. This earth is only our temporary home, God promised us a permanent home in heaven and everlasting life with Him. God is just waiting for us to repent and receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Move now before it's too late!

[▶ Reply](#)



Waldy 18 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



I'm praying for all of you , God bless

[▶ Reply](#)



Theresa Palisoc 20 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



whether the 2012 prediction comes true or not, it is high time that each individual may ask himself, are u ready now to face Jesus on HIS 2nd Coming? Are we doing now His Will? Are we keeping all the commandments that He gave??Are we ready now to face the Lord.? ???THEN ACT NOW BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE..!!!!

[▶ Reply](#)



Fyro Miege 25 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



Seems like things/events mentioned in revelations are happening nowadays but then we must not lose our faith in God for He is the only One who makes things happened by that all we have to do is pray for His salvation and for our safety.. We must also be responsible in our own little ways in treating our mother earth the right way before its too late...

[▶ Reply](#)



Omer Lauchangco 26 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



amen po s lahat nang nag post dito, kaya po ang gawin natin meditate HIS word everyday, for He is great in every aspect of our life. let me share His word " Ephesians 4:6 Do not let anyone deceive you with foolish words it is because of these very things that God's anger will come upon those who do not obey him.

[▶ Reply](#)



Arjay 33 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)



Wherever you are and whatever you do if you have time to read the Bible just read the whole chapter of matthew 28 about the signs and the end of the times of this earth's history. The earth has full of sins and darkness already. And dont be in trouble and not to be afraid of what is goin on. We should be thankful that soon He would revealed Himself in the clouds of Heaven to rescue us from satan's place. The Bible says, if you can hear nation battled against other nation, random calamities all over the world like strong typhoons and flushfloods, landslides, strong earthquakes, people killing against people, and the increase numbers of religions around the world. Remember that this only the beggining of all troubles on this earth prior on His second coming. We are now shaking by God to test our faith how firm we are til the last day of this earth. Examine yourself now and be one of the remnant people of these last remaining days. Also the bible says, that a huge number of people and

greater than the perfect numbers of sands in the sea would be left on this earth than the number of righteous people with Jesus in the clouds going to Heaven. Why? its because today many are called but in the last days few only are chosen by God. This is the reality. Dont idle your time anymore. Stick to God and we will be rewarded. Stay Righteous, Stay with God. Expect the Calamity to come because thi is a wake up call to His people and not to glorify the enemy....

▶ [Replies \(1\)](#)



[Airen](#) 39 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

2 0

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straigh. Then you can really feel HE's telling you not to be afraid because HE is always with you & will never leave you no matter what happens. GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME.. I REALLY BELIEVE HE'S ALIVE. THANK YOU GOD.

▶ [Reply](#)



[Jhossana](#) 44 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

0 0

I'm not sure but you can try read revelation 16:14-16 and you will understand

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[Anthony](#) 55 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

2 0

Should you worry about end of the world 2012 predictions? Answer: NO. Why? According to the most reliable source, no man or even angel knows the Apocalypse day.

One thing is for sure: past prophecies about the end of the world that do not come true are NO guarantee that other 2012 predictions will not come true - but will something happen to bring about a 2012 end of the world doomsday for planet earth, on exactly December 21 2012? While we don't think so, its still not wrong to ask the question. Let US all ask for God's Help and Seek Salvation.

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[Sweet Revenger](#) 56 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 0

Let's acknowledge that we are sinners, confess and repent from our sins to Jesus. And God with all His glory and unending grace will give us His forgiveness and salvation going on through eternal life. Remember, the first step in on us. Unless we repent, we will also perish.

▶ [Reply](#)



[Meilene](#) 57 minutes ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 0

For GOD loves the world he sent his only begotten son Jesus Christ to save us for all of our sins...To live w/ him thru eternity... aMEN...

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[Glenn](#) 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 0

an earthquake is nothing but a natural phenomenon. god or any of your religious beliefs has nothing to do with it. end of the world? instead, your life may end faster if your ignorance continues endlessly.

▶ [Reply](#)



[July](#) 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#)

1 0

...this is just one of many signs that the time is near... baka totoo ang 2012 na movie... :(.. yet these things should not have to worry us all, instead we have to pray for our salvation... May the Lord God have Mercy on us.! after all only faith can save ourselves.

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 **Hayde** 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#) 2   0

why fear?.....when God in there?.....have faith.....and believe.....God will take care of us.....

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 **Lotzkie** 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#) 0   0

tamah,.. tayo ang may kasalanan kaya nangya2ri 2,... just love G0d n his creation....

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 **Mercenario Felesis** 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#) 0   0

sa palagay b ninyo, s lindol gaganawin ang mundo?

[▶ Reply](#)

 **Sinn** 1 hour ago | [Report Abuse](#) 5   0

..God says,(Isaiah 41:10) "so do not fear for I am with you. Do not be dismayed for I am God. I will strenght you and help you, I will uphold youwith my righteous hand... Faith & Pray more with God!

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