EARTHQUAKES

Two earthquakes occurred in recent months (Nepal/India, and China/Burma) with fatalities between 500 and 1000, but with no indication in the news media of any substantial damage to engineered structures. Conflicting numbers have been quoted on fatalities, injuries, damaged houses and destroyed houses.

Eastern Nepal and northeast India

August 20, 1988; 2309 Gmt (before dawn, Sunday August 21, local time); 26.775 N, 86.609 E, 71 km deep. Richter magnitude 6.5. Hundreds of fatalities, thousands of injuries and extensive damage in northern Bihar, India, particularly in Darbhanga, Madhubani and Saharsa. Fatalities and injuries in eastern Nepal, including the Kathmandu valley. Damage in Gangtok, Sikkim and Darjiling, India. Felt in India from Delhi to the Burma border and in Bangladesh.

Southern China, near the Burmese border

November 6, 1988; 1303 Gmt; 23.5 N, 100.1 E, 33 km deep. Richter magnitude 7.6, or 7.4 (USGS). Fatalities mounting to 1000 with many injuries and much housing damage in Yunnan province. More to come in subsequent issues.