YEAR'S STRONGEST

Quake Kills 10 in Japan

TOKYO (AP) — An undersea earthquake stronger than any recorded this year rocked central and northern Japan Monday, killing 10 persons and injuring 99 others, the national police reported.

The quake originated off Japan's Pacific Coast and hit hardest at Miyagi Prefecture, about 100 miles north of Tokyo. All of the deaths occurred there, including two persons killed by falling telephone poles and two crushed in a house under construction in Sendai, the prefectural capital, police said.

Also in Miyagi, the quake destroyed seven houses, started fires in two others, cut roads in seven places and set off seven landslides, the police said.

SEISMOLOGISTS REGISTERED the strongest tremor at 7.5 or 8 on the Richter scale—devastating power if it had been centered in a populated area.

A tidal wave warning was issued for the northeast coast, but the first wave to hit the coast, about 30 minutes after the first late-afternoon tremor, measured less than 7 inches. It was followed by other small waves causing no damage. The Central Meteorological Agency later lifted the warning.

In Tokyo, telephone service was disrupted in some areas and officials said some water mains may have been broken. Bottles and cans fell from shelves in stores and homes.

The meteorological agency said the epicenter of the quake was beneath the Pacific Ocean off northern Japan's Miyagi Prefecture. It reported a weak tremor at 5:06 p.m. and a much stronger shock nine minutes later that registered about 7.5 on the Richter scale at the epicenter, 5 on the Japanese scale of 7 at Sendai, Dihfunato and Mito, 150 to 200 miles north of Tokyo, and 4 on the Japanese scale in Tokyo and Yokohama.

THE SEISMOLOGICAL institute at Uppsala, Sweden, recorded the strongest tremor at 8 on the Richter scale. The institute said it was the most powerful quake it had detected around the world this year.

Commuter trains and subways were halted in Tokyo and other areas. Some runs of the 125-m.p.h. bullet trains also were suspended.

Planes at Tokyo's Haneda Airport were grounded while workers inspected runways.

"I felt like I was getting seasick," said a telephone operator on the 20th floor of a new office building in downtown Tokyo.

A cook in a restaurant on the same floor reported: "At first we felt an up and down motion and that made us worried because we thought the epicenter could be some place close. Then all of a sudden the jets started moving the building from side to side. We had to hang on to the cutting tables and doorknobs. Somebody rushed to the gas jets to turn them off."

Quake toll climbs on Japanese coast

TOKYO (UPI) — One of the most powerful earthquakes to hit Japan since World War II shook crowded vacation areas of the Pacific coast yesterday, leaving at least 18 persons dead or missing.

The quake, which registered 7 on the Richter scale and lasted about one minute, was accompanied by nearly 150 weaker tremors.

The government meteorological agency said the tremor struck at 12:24 p.m. between Izu Oshima island and the Izu peninsula about 100 miles west of Tokyo. No major tidal waves were reported.

The region, which is in the volcanic belt that runs from Mount Fuji into the Pacific, is a popular hot springs resort area. It was crowded with thousands of tourists at the beginning of a three-day holiday weekend.

Hardest hit was Izu peninsula, where nine deaths were confirmed and nine persons reported missing in mishaps caused by the quake. Large road cracks blocked traffic and private railway services were halted.

A bus carrying 38 tourists was struck by an 80-inch boulder in the Izu peninsula resort town of Hakone, killing three persons and injuring several.

One bus was buried in a landslide apparently triggered by the quake near Hakone and several passengers were missing.

Another landslide buried four residential houses in Izu, killing four persons.

The quake halted 150 mph "bullet trains" linking Tokyo and Hakata on southern Kyushu island for about five hours. Commuter train and subway service in the Tokyo area also was suspended.

Earthquakes occur almost daily in Japan, but agency officials said yesterday's was among the 10 worst tremors to hit the island nation since the end of World War II.

The most devastating quake since 1923 struck Fukui province off the Japan Sea coast in June 1948, leaving 5,188 persons dead or missing.
An offshore quake eats Japan

TOKYO (AP) — An earthquake shook wide areas of southwestern Japan today, disrupting rail service and temporarily cutting off power to an estimated 20,000 homes when a transformer failed in Miyazaki.

The tremor, recorded at 4:49 p.m., registered 6.7 on the Richter scale. It originated in the East China Sea near Yaku island in Kagoshima province.

National railway authorities said train service was halted or slowed down for several hours pending track checks.

There were no reports of casualties or property damage.

At about the same time, volcanic Mt. Sakurajima on the southern tip of the island of Kyushu erupted, sending a column of black smoke more than 5,000 feet into the air. It was not known whether the eruption was related to the quake.

The Meteorological Agency said tidal wave warnings were issued along the Pacific Coast of the island of Shikoku and Yamaguchi province on Honshu island. No tidal waves were reported and the warnings were lifted an hour later.

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Relief Units Rushed To Japan Quake Site

TOKYO (AP) — Eight thousand troops and policemen carried out relief operations Tuesday along Japan's northeast coast where a powerful earthquake killed 21 persons and injured nearly 500.

The quake destroyed several hundred houses, most of them in Sendai, 180 miles north of Tokyo, leaving nearly 2,000 persons homeless, police said. It hit at 5:14 p.m. Monday and registered 7.8 on the Richter scale.

Supermarkets and grocery stores in Sendai were jammed Tuesday by residents rushing to buy up instant and ready-cooked food because gas was still cut off in most of the area.

TRAINS, BUSES and auto traffic remained paralyzed in the quake region, with national highways closed at 15 places in Miyagi Prefecture (state). Rail lines were wrecked in 38 places, 21 bridges were destroyed or damaged, and one small fishing boat was sunk.

Five thermal power plants on the coast of Miyagi were shut down because of damage. The quake also caused more than 140 landslides and three fires in Miyagi.

Except for gas, 60 percent to 70 percent of the public utilities had been restored, officials said. However, 8,000 homes still were without water, and all schools were closed.

The epicenter of the quake was located beneath the Pacific about 80 miles off Sendai.

TEN PERSONS DIED when a cement wall collapsed in Sendai. Two were killed by falling telephone poles, one was crushed to death in a house under construction, and an elderly man hospitalized with high blood pressure died of shock.

Circumstances of the other deaths weren't available.

The red brick walls around 99-year-old Miyagi Prison in Sendai collapsed, but none of the prisoners was hurt and none escaped, the Justice Ministry said. It is Japan's oldest prison.

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