

6.5 earthquake shakes Costa Rica's Pacific coast

October 24 2012, by Cesar Barrantes

(AP)—A powerful earthquake struck Costa Rica's Pacific coast on Tuesday, swaying buildings and sending people running into the streets in the nation's capital of San Jose.

The 6.5-magnitude [quake](#) was centered in the Guanacaste region of the Central American country, only 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the popular tourist town of Nicoya, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It had a depth of 24.5 miles (39.5 kilometers), according to a preliminary report.

At the beach of Matapalo, an hour drive from Nicoya, residents said they heard a roaring sound when the quake struck.

"I'm shaken. But it doesn't feel close to how it sounds like. The sound was deafening," said Alberto Canales, a receptionist at the Hotel Riu Guanacaste.

There were no immediate reports of major damage or casualties, however, from the 6.5 quake, which was followed by a magnitude-4.5 aftershock.

The original quake was felt in San Jose, where people ran out of buildings fearing they would collapse.

Vanessa Rosales, president of Costa Rica's National Commission for Emergencies, said no one had reported serious damage from Tuesday's quake. Red Cross officials also said no damages had been reported yet.

Rosales said that on Wednesday they will have a more complete picture of what the quake did.

The region suffered an even more powerful earthquake last month, when a 7.6 earthquake rattled the same coasts, causing panic, [evacuations](#) but minor damage.

Seismologists both in the U.S. and Costa Rica said the quake is probably an aftershock of the Sept. 5 major [earthquake](#).

"It is a very good likelihood that we are looking at an [aftershock](#)," said USGS geophysicist Rafael Abreu.

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