

Earthquake rattles Greece, Turkey

May 24 2014, by Costas Kantouris

An earthquake beneath the sea shook northern Greece and western Turkey Saturday, with more than 100 people reportedly injured in Turkey.

The quake struck at 12:25 p.m. local (0925 GMT) southwest of the Greek island of Samothraki, 210 kilometers (130 miles) east of Thessaloniki and 296 kilometers (185 miles) northeast of the capital Athens. It was also close to the Turkish island of Gokceada and the Greek island of Lemnos.

Ahmet Cinar, the governor for Canakkale province in northwest Turkey which includes Gokceada island, told private NTV television that more than 100 people sought treatment at hospitals for minor injuries, both on the island and the mainland. Most of them were hurt trying to get out of buildings in panic, including jumping from balconies. At least one woman was hurt by falling bricks.

The quake caused damage to some buildings in the province, including two mosques, but there were no reports of any structures collapsing.

Also in Canakkale, patients were evacuated from a state hospital whose walls cracked. Authorities were setting up a field hospital to take care of patients, the Dogan news agency reported.

A duty officer at the Lemnos police precinct said a female British tourist was slightly injured at the airport when part of the ceiling fell. She was treated at the scene and did not require hospitalization. No other damage

or injuries had been reported.

The Institute of Geophysics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki announced a magnitude of 6.3; the U.S. Geological Survey initially reported a magnitude of 6.4, later revised to 6.9.

There were divergences as to the depth, as well. The USGS reported a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles) but the Athens Geodynamics Institute has reported 27 kilometers (17 miles).

The temblor was widely felt, including in Thessaloniki, the west coast of Turkey and as far away as Bulgaria and Istanbul. Several strong aftershocks, of yet undetermined magnitude, have taken place.

"The earthquake has occurred in an area with especially high seismic activity, which, in the past, has given earthquakes up to 7 magnitude (in 1982)," Manolis Skordilis of the Institute of Geophysics told The Associated Press. "We are currently analyzing the aftershocks and are on alert," he added.

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