

Powerful quake off north Japan kills 4, more than 90 injured

March 17 2022, by Mari Yamaguchi



An employee clears products fallen from shelves at a convenience store in Iwaki, Fukushima prefecture, northern Japan Wednesday, March 16, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake shook off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday, triggering a tsunami advisory. Credit: Kyodo News via AP

A powerful 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday night, smashing furniture, knocking out power and killing four people. A small tsunami reached shore, but the low-risk advisory was lifted by Thursday morning.

The region is part of northern Japan that was devastated by a deadly 9.0 quake and tsunami 11 years ago that caused nuclear reactor meltdowns, spewing massive radiation that still makes some parts uninhabitable.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told a parliamentary session Thursday morning that four people died during the quake and the cause of their deaths are being investigated, while 97 others were injured. A man in his 60s in Soma city died after falling from the second floor of his house while trying to evacuate, and a man in his 70s panicked and suffered a heart attack, Kyodo News reported earlier.

The Japan Meteorological Agency early Thursday lifted its low-risk advisory for a tsunami along the coasts of Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures. Tsunami waves of 30 centimeters (11 inches) reached shore in Ishinomaki, about 390 kilometers (242 miles) northeast of Tokyo.

The agency upgraded the magnitude of the quake to 7.4 from the initial 7.3, and the depth from 60 kilometers (36 miles) below the sea to 56 kilometers (35 miles).



Furniture and electrical appliance are scattered at an apartment in Fukushima, northern Japan Wednesday, March 16, 2011, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake shook off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday, triggering a tsunami advisory. Credit: Kyodo News via AP

NHK footage showed broken walls of a department store building fell to the ground and shards of windows scattered on the street near the main train station in the inland prefectural capital of Fukushima city. Roads were cracked and water poured out from pipes underground.

Footage also showed furniture and appliances smashed to the floor at apartments in Fukushima. Cosmetics and other merchandise at convenience stores fell from shelves and scattered on the floor. In Yokohama, near Tokyo, an electric pole nearly fell.

The Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, which operates the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant where the [cooling systems](#) failed after the 2011 disaster, said workers found no abnormalities at the site, which is being decommissioned.

Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority said a fire alarm went off at the turbine building of No. 5 reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi but there was no actual fire. Water pumps for the spent fuel cooling pool at two of the four reactors at Fukushima Daini briefly stopped, but later resumed operation. Fukushima Daini, which survived the 2011 tsunami, is also set for decommissioning.



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Wednesday, triggering a tsunami advisory. Credit: Kyodo News via AP

More than 2.2 million homes were temporarily without electricity in 14 prefectures, including the Tokyo region, but power was restored at most places by the morning, except for about 37,000 homes in the hardest hit Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures, according to the Tohoku Electric Power Co. which services the region.

The quake shook large parts of eastern Japan, including Tokyo, where buildings swayed violently.

East Japan Railway Co. said most of its [train services](#) were suspended for safety checks. Some local trains later resumed service.

Many people formed long lines outside of major stations while waiting for trains to resume operation late Wednesday, but trains in Tokyo operated normally Thursday morning.

A Tohoku Shinkansen express train partially derailed between Fukushima and Miyagi due to the quake, but nobody was injured, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said.



People make a line to wait for taxi in Sendai, Miyagi prefecture, northern Japan early Thursday, March 17, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday evening, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



Products are scattered at a convenience store in Fukushima, northern Japan Wednesday, March 16, 2011, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake shook off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday, triggering a tsunami advisory. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



A vehicle drives past on a street during a black out in Tokyo Thursday, March 17, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday evening, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



Walls are fallen at an apartment in Fukushima, northern Japan Thursday, March 17, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday evening, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



People walk on a street during a black out in Tokyo Thursday, March 17, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday evening, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



People wait at a Tokyo train station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



People stand around a gate of a Tokyo train station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



A station staffer, left helps a passenger at a Tokyo train station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as ride services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



A station master helps customers at a Tokyo train station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as ride services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



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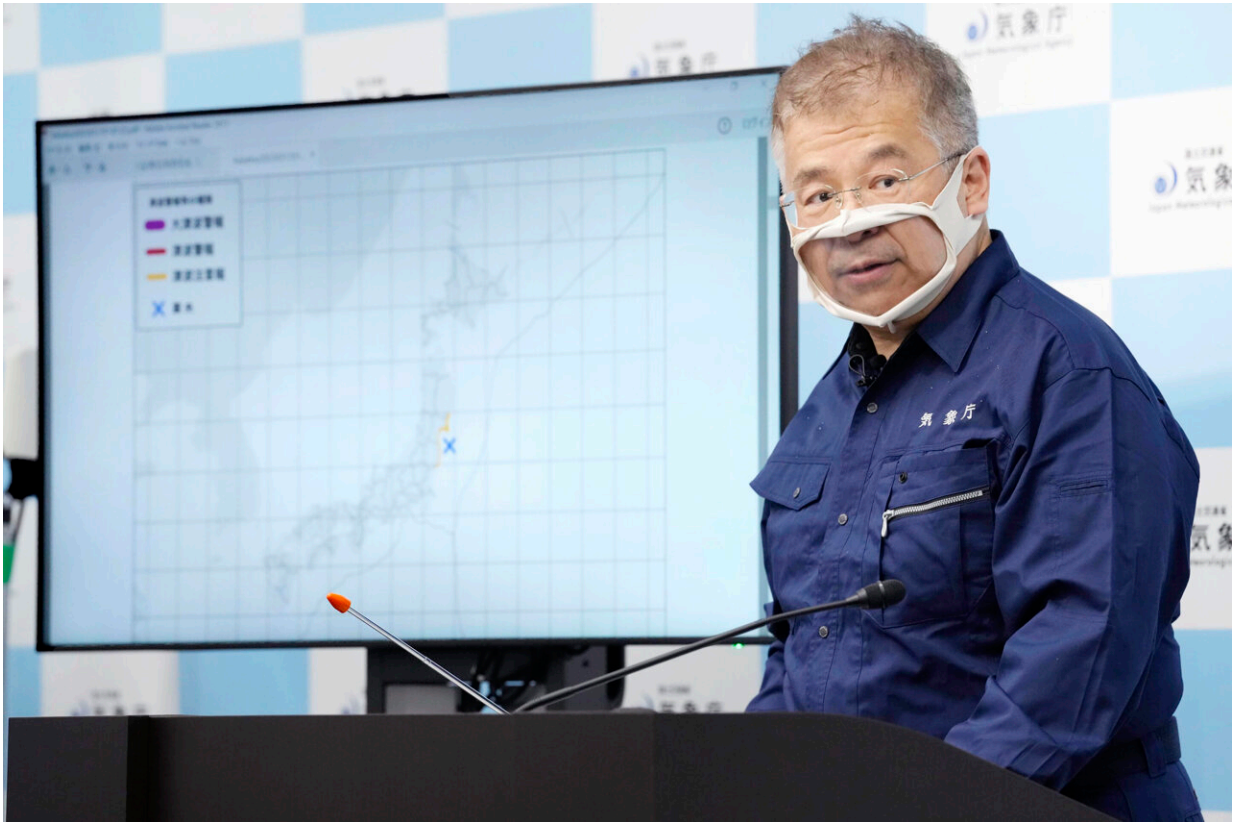
People stand around a gate of a Tokyo train station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



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A worker of meteorological bureau speaks during a press conference in Tokyo Thursday, March 17, 2022, following an earthquake. A powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan on Wednesday evening, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: Kyodo News via AP



People wait for a bus in Tokyo's Ginza shopping district as street lights went out early Thursday, March 17, 2022, after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae



People wait for train services to resume at Tokyo Station in Tokyo, early Thursday, March 17, 2022, as all the services were suspended after an earthquake hit the area. A powerful 7.3 magnitude earthquake has struck off the coast of Fukushima in northern Japan, triggering a tsunami advisory and plunging more than 2 million homes in the Tokyo area into darkness. Credit: AP Photo/Hiro Komae

He told reporters that the government was assessing the extent of damage and promised to do its utmost for rescue and relief operations.

"Please first take action to save your life," Kishida tweeted.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said authorities were scrambling to assess damage. "We are doing our utmost in rescue

operations and putting people's lives first," he said.

He urged residents in the affected areas to use extra caution for possible major aftershocks for about a week.

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