

# Ten deadliest quakes of the 21st century

February 13 2023

---



Mesut Hancer holds his dead daughter's hand. Irmak, 15, died in the Turkey-Syria quake.

The massive earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on February 6 is the fifth-deadliest this century.

Here is a list of the 10 worst quakes since 2000, ranked by [death toll](#):

## **2004: 230,000 dead, southeast Asia**

On December 26, a massive 9.1-magnitude earthquake strikes off the coast of Sumatra, triggering a tsunami that kills more than 230,000 people throughout the region, including 170,000 in Indonesia alone.

Waves 30 metres (100 feet) high, travelling at 700 kilometres per hour (435 miles per hour), swallow everything in their path.

## **2010: 200,000 dead, Haiti**

A magnitude 7 [quake](#) on January 12 devastates the capital Port-au-Prince and the surrounding region.

The quake cuts the country off from the rest of the world for 24 hours, killing over 200,000 people, leaving 1.5 million homeless and shattering much of Haiti's frail infrastructure.

In October the same year, Haiti is also hit by a cholera epidemic introduced by Nepalese peacekeepers who arrived after the quake. It kills more than 10,000 people.

## **2008: 87,000 dead, Sichuan**

More than 87,000 people, including 5,335 school pupils, are left dead or missing when a 7.9-magnitude quake strikes southwestern Sichuan province on May 12.

The quake causes outrage after it emerges that 7,000 schools were badly damaged, triggering accusations of shoddy construction, corner-cutting

and possible corruption, especially as many other buildings nearby held firm.

## **2005: 73,000 dead, Kashmir**

An October 8 earthquake kills more than 73,000 people, the vast majority in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province and the Pakistani-administered zone of Kashmir.

A further 3.5 million are displaced.

## **2023: 35,000 dead, Turkey and Syria**

On February 6, a 7.8-magnitude quake strikes near the Turkish city of Gaziantep, close to the Syrian border.

The biggest quake in Turkey in nearly a century, which is followed by a 7.5 magnitude tremor, reduces entire neighbourhoods of cities in southeastern Turkey and the north of war-ravaged Syria to rubble.

On February 13, the toll hits 35,224.

## **2003: 31,000 dead, Bam (Iran)**

A 6.6-magnitude quake in southeastern Iran on December 26 destroys the ancient mud-brick city of Bam, killing at least 31,000 people.

Nearly 80 percent of Bam's infrastructure is damaged and the desert citadel, once considered the world's largest adobe building, crumbles.

## **2001: 20,000 dead, India**

A massive 7.7-magnitude earthquake on January 26 hits the western Indian state of Gujarat, killing more than 20,000 people.

The quake flattens buildings across the state, with many fatalities in the town of Bhuj near the border with Pakistan.

## **2011: 18,500 dead, Japan**

On March 11, Japan is struck by an enormous 9.0-magnitude earthquake, unleashing a towering tsunami.

Around 18,500 people are left dead or missing as the wall of water travelling at the speed of a jet plane levels communities along the northeastern coast.

The ensuing meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi [nuclear plant](#) blankets nearby areas with radiation, rendering some towns uninhabitable for years and displacing tens of thousands of residents.

## **2015: 9,000 dead, Nepal**

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake on April 25 strikes in central Nepal, triggering avalanches and landslides across the Himalayan nation, destroying schools and hospitals.

The quake kills almost 9,000 people and renders millions homeless. It also reduces more than a hundred monuments to rubble, including centuries-old temples and royal palaces in the Kathmandu valley.

## **2006: 6,000 dead, Java**

On May 26, a 6.3-magnitude quake rocks the southern coast of the

Indonesian island of Java, near the city of Yogyakarta, killing around 6,000 people.

More than 420,000 are left homeless and around 157,000 houses are destroyed.

© 2023 AFP

Citation: Ten deadliest quakes of the 21st century (2023, February 13) retrieved 7 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-02-ten-deadliest-quakes-21st-century.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.