

Deadly 6.9 Magnitude Earthquake Strikes Southern Philippines

A 6.9 magnitude earthquake struck the southern Philippines Sunday, killing at least one child and injuring dozens, officials said.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) traced the epicenter to near the town of Matanao in the populated province of Davao del Sur on Mindanao island, 6 km (3.7 miles) from the town of Padada, which bore the brunt of the quake.

“A 6-year-old girl died after a wall collapsed on her,” Matanao Mayor Vincent Fernandez told local media.

The state-run Philippine Information Agency said several shoppers and employees were inside the three-story Southern Trade grocery store in the town of Padada when the quake struck and the building “completely collapsed.”

A provincial police commander, Alberto Lupaz, said at least 62 people were injured in the hardest-hit regions, adding some people appear to be trapped under the market where rescue efforts have been delayed, the Associated Press reported.

“They (rescuers) were attempting to check the rubble ... the aftershocks were too strong,” Lupaz said.

Spokesman Salvador Panelo said President Rodrigo Duterte is monitoring the aftermath and all relevant agencies “have been mobilized to provide immediate assistance to those in need.

“The office of the president, meanwhile, requests everyone remain calm but stay vigilant in anticipation of aftershocks,” Panelo said in a statement.

Panelo said Duterte was at his home in Davao with his youngest daughter, Kitty when the quake struck.

“The first lady Honeylet Avanceña was on her way home when the ground rumbled and trembled,” Panelo said. “She said the car she was riding was

swaying. They were unhurt.”

The quake was the third to hit the south since October. Two quakes measuring 6.6 and 6.5 struck the town of Tulunan within days of each other, killing 22 people.

The Philippines sits on the so-called Pacific Rim of Fire, where earthquakes are frequent, some of which are devastating. In July 1990, a 7.7-magnitude temblor struck the main Luzon island, killing more than 1,600 people, many of them trapped inside a hotel that crumbled in the northern town of Baguio.

Source:

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