

# At least 5 dead as another quake jolts southern Philippines

A powerful earthquake hammered the southern Philippines early yesterday, killing at least five people and rattling areas already reeling from two tremors in the past two weeks.

The 6.5-magnitude quake struck at around 9 am in Mindanao, an island the size of South Korea. Pictures and videos on social media showed parts of a hotel and a condominium caving in, patients being wheeled out of a hospital, and rescuers digging through the rubble.

A village elder died in Makilala town in Cotabato province when a two-story building he was in collapsed. Cotabato Governor Emmylou Talino-Mendoza said four other people died elsewhere in the town – a seven-year-old was crushed by a cinder block while the rest were caught in a landslide.

In Kidapawan City, Cotabato, one side of a hotel was left-leaning on a hospital. The hotel had been damaged in earlier quakes and did not have guests. Six employees and an engineer inspecting the building managed to run out said city mayor Joseph Evangelista.

A five-story condominium in Davao City crashed. Nine residents were saved but others could still be trapped inside, said police.

President Rodrigo Duterte was in his home city of Davao when the quake struck. Photos of cracks on his bedroom walls were sent by his aide Christopher Go to reporters. “He’s safe,” said Mr. Go. The President was in Davao for a public holiday to remember the dead.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the quake was set off by movement in a local fault at a depth of 6km, about 28km east of Tulunan town in Cotabato.

Mindanao was hit by two quakes last month: a 6.6-magnitude quake on Oct 29, and a 6.3-magnitude quake on Oct 16. Citing “inter-related active faults” in Mindanao, Phivolcs said: “We expect small to moderate-magnitude earthquakes to

occur in the epicentral area which may continue for several days to weeks.”

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