

Earthquake Near Iran-Iraq Border Kills 221, Injures 2,800

At least 221 people were killed and 2,800 injured after a 7.3-magnitude earthquake struck near the Iran's border with Iraq.

Around 50 aftershocks were registered and more were expected, Iranian officials warned.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake was recorded at 9:18 p.m. local time (1:18 p.m. ET) Sunday. It measured the quake at a magnitude 7.3, while Iraq's state geologists said it was magnitude 7.5.



U.S. Geological Survey / NBC News

Iranian state TV raised the death toll to 214 people early Monday, adding that 2,504 others were injured in the temblor. Iraq's Interior Ministry confirmed that seven people in the country were killed by the quake, with 320 people wounded.

The quake was felt as far west as the Mediterranean coast. Its worst damage appeared to be in Iran's western Kermanshah province, which sits in the Zagros Mountains that divide Iran and Iraq.

Many houses in rural areas of Iran are made of mud bricks that can crumble easily in a quake.

Stephen Hicks, a seismologist at the University of Southampton in England, said

that in a region where earthquakes are common, Sunday's quake appeared to be the largest in "a long time."



The earthquake destroyed buildings in Sarpol-e-Zahab, Iran. Pouria Pakizeh / ISNA via AP

Iran sits on many major fault lines and is prone to quakes. In 2003, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake flattened the historic city of Bam, killing 26,000 people.

The quake was felt as far south as Baghdad, where many residents rushed from their houses and tall buildings when tremors shook the Iraqi capital.

"I was sitting with my kids having dinner and suddenly the building was just dancing in the air," said Majida Ameer, who told Reuters she ran out of her building in the capital's Salihiya district with her three children. "I thought at first that it was a huge bomb. But then I heard everyone around me screaming: 'Earthquake!'"



People in the street in Baghdad, Iraq, on Sunday following aftershocks from an earthquake along the Iran-Iraq border. Hadi Mizban / AP

At her home in the Iraqi city of Irbil, about 170 miles northwest of the epicenter, Lana Serwan said the temblor lasted for a minute.

“Everything was shaking,” said Serwan, 35.

Another Irbil resident, Manar Ksebeh, 26, said he was in his 12th-floor apartment when he heard people running and shouting. So he fled down his building’s stairwell.

“I wanted to make sure I wasn’t feeling dizzy,” Ksebeh said.

Electricity was cut off in several Iranian and Iraqi cities, and fears of aftershocks sent thousands of people in both countries out onto the streets and parks in cold weather.

Video from Sulaymānīyah, Iraq — 48 miles southeast of the epicenter — showed people fleeing a coffee shop as a glass door appeared to break.

Other footage posted to social media showed a swinging chandelier in an apartment in Israel and people who evacuated high-rise buildings in Kuwait lining the streets.

Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/7-2-earthquake-strikes-iraq-iran-border-n820061>

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