
Magnitude 5.0 earthquake rattles Puerto Rico causing damage to the south of the island

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'The fear is that that they've once again been affected,' Guayanilla spokesman Danny González told The Associated Press. 'It was a strong one.'

A couple of homes in the nearby city of Ponce also were damaged, prompting authorities to close several streets in the downtown area for safety as engineers inspected deep cracks.

The 10:45am quake struck 9 miles south-southeast of Guanica at a shallow depth of 4 miles, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It was felt across the island.

Víctor Huérano, director of Puerto Rico's Seismic Network, told the AP that the quake is part of a string of tremors that have followed a 6.4 earthquake that hit January 7, killing one person and damaging or destroying hundreds of homes and schools.



The Inmaculada Concepcion church, built in 1841, is seen partially collapsed after an earthquake hit the island in Guayanilla, Puerto Rico on January 7. Aftershocks have continued

The new quake re-energized the area, leading to 10 aftershocks in the hour that followed, he said.

'This is going to continue, and it's going to continue for some time,' Huérfino warned.

Some 1,000 people remain in shelters in Puerto Rico's southern region, and officials expected that number to rise with the latest quake.

Authorities have noted that the majority of those sheltered are simply scared to return home but have reported no damage in their house.

Guanica Mayor Santos Seda said that while no damage was reported in his town, he worried about the emotional toll the tremors are having on people.

'It's a setback to progress we've made emotionally,' he said of the latest quake.