

Beat: Local

Magnitude-6.8 earthquake shakes Russia;s Far East, no damage

-, 15.02.2013, 01:08 Time

USPA News - A strong earthquake Friday morning struck a sparsely populated region of Russia`s Far East, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties, officials said. It is believed to be strongest earthquake to hit the region in recent years.

The 6.8-magnitude earthquake at 1:13 a.m. local time (1313 GMT Thursday) was centered about 54 kilometers (33 miles) from the settlement of Sygannakh in Russia`s Yakutia Republic. It struck about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) deep, making it a shallow earthquake, according to the Geophysical Survey of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) measured the strength of the earthquake at 6.6 on the body wave magnitude scale (Mb), the same scale used by the Russian Academy of Sciences. Computer models from the USGS estimated that approximately 3,000 residents in the region may have felt light shaking which is unlikely to have caused damage. "Faint tremors were felt in residential areas but there was no loss of life or damage and vital facilities are operating normally," said a spokesperson for the republic`s ministry of emergency situations. The region is sparsely populated with Druzhina, the nearest large town, being 132 miles (82 miles) west-southwest of the quake`s epicenter.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-514/magnitude-68-earthquake-shakes-russias-far-east-no-damage.html>

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619