

14 killed, 160 injured as 6.4 magnitude earthquake strikes Indonesia's Lombok island

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Authorities issued a yellow alert, which suggested that some more casualties are a possibility.

East Lombok district was the hardest hit with 10 deaths, including a Malaysian tourist, said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, a spokesman for Indonesia's Disaster Mitigation Agency. The number of casualties could increase as data was still being collected from other locations on the island, he said.

At least 162 people were injured, including 67 hospitalized with serious injuries, Nugroho said.

The quake caused blackouts in East Lombok and North Lombok districts and triggered a large landslide from Mount Rinjani, an active volcano. Rescuers were evacuating more than 800 tourists from the mountain.

In East Lombok and the provincial capital of Mataram, the quake lasted about 10 seconds, causing residents to flee their homes onto streets and fields, Nugroho said. He said most of the fatalities and injuries were caused by falling slabs of concrete.

Photos released by the disaster agency showed damaged houses and the entrance to the popular Mount Rinjani National Park, which was immediately closed for fear of landslides.

Television footage showed residents remaining outside, fearing aftershocks, as the injured were being treated on mattresses taken out of their partially damaged houses and patients were wheeled out of a hospital.

Indonesia's meteorology and geophysics agency recorded more than 130 aftershocks.

Like Bali, Lombok is known for pristine beaches and mountains. Hotels and other buildings in both locations are not allowed to exceed the height of coconut trees.

Indonesia is prone to earthquakes due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. In December 2004, a massive magnitude 9.1 earthquake off Sumatra triggered a tsunami that killed 230,000 people in a dozen countries.

- (With AP inputs)