Tsunami hits Indonesia after 7.5 magnitude earthquake, houses swept away, families missing in Pa

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A patient is evacuated from a hospital following a strong earthquake in Poso, central Sulawesi, Indonesia, Friday, Sept. 28

Jakarta: A city in Indonesia was hit by tsunami after a strong 7.5 magnitude earthquake, The Associated Press has reported, quoting geophysics agency.

A spokesman for Indonesiaâ€™s geophysics agency says a powerful Sulawesi earthquake caused a tsunami, apparently after the agency lifted a tsunami warning.

Hary Tirto Djatmiko confirmed to The Associated Press that a tsunami occurred. He said the agency was still collecting information and would release it after confirming its accuracy.

Indonesia Tsunami

Indonesian TV showed a smartphone video of a powerful wave hitting the provincial capital, Palu, with people screaming and running in fear.

Powerful earthquakes jolted the Indonesian island of Sulawesi on Friday, destroying houses and killing at least one person. An official said widespread damage was expected and urged people to stay outdoors because of the danger of strong aftershocks.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the strongest quake had a magnitude of 7.5 and was centered at a depth of 6 miles (10 kilometers) about 35 miles (56 kilometers) northeast of the central Sulawesi town of Donggala. It briefly triggered a tsunami warning.

An official with the local disaster agency, Akris, said â€œmany houses have collapsed.â€•

â€œIt happened while we still have difficulties in collecting data from nine villages affected by the first quake,â€• he told The Associated Press. â€œPeople ran out in panic.â€•

Television footage showed people running into the streets. Woman and children wailed hysterically in a video distributed by the National Disaster Mitigation Agency, which also released a photo showing a heavily damaged department store.

- AP