

Major quake hits New Zealand

by UPI

GISBORNE, New Zealand -- A major earthquake struck the northeastern coast of New Zealand Thursday, causing extensive damage in the city of Gisborne, local media reported. There was no immediate report of fatalities from the 8:55 p.m. quake, which government officials said measured 6.8 on the Richter scale, TV New Zealand said. Gisborne Mayor Meng Foon told Radio New Zealand 10 people had been treated for minor injuries and damage was extensive, with the collapse of three historical buildings housing retail and apartments. Gisborne Hospital reported minor water damage, but otherwise little disruption in operation, TV New Zealand said. The city lost power for about 40 minutes after the quake but was mostly restored, the New Zealand Herald reported. The mayor ordered the city locked down and called in off-duty police to secure the city. No tsunami warning was issued for the coastal city, CNN reported. State geologists said the epicenter was below the ocean 35 miles southeast of Gisborne.

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