

Deaths surpass 300 in major Peruvian quake

by UPI

LIMA -- A major 7.9 magnitude earthquake in southern Peru killed more than 300 people and injured nearly 1,000 others, government officials said Thursday. The National Institute for Civil Defense said on its Web site that 336 people had been killed in Ica, about 175 miles south of Lima, and 827 others were injured. One death was reported in Lima. The quake, which hit at 6:41 p.m. was about 25 miles under the surface and centered 90 miles south of Lima. It triggered minor wave action but tsunami warnings and watches issued at the onset were canceled. The quake was felt for 2 minutes, Peruvian media said, and more than 100 aftershocks were recorded, CNN reported. Peruvian President Alan Garcia ordered his nation's 100,000 police officers to report to duty as he declared a state of emergency in Ica. The coastal town of Pisco, about 160 miles south of Lima, was badly hit and electricity was lost, Gen. Luis Palomino, head of the Peru's national civil defense institute, told CNN.

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