

WORLD



Boulders falling as a vehicle negotiates a road during an earthquake in Bauko, Mountain Province, the Philippines, yesterday. AP PIC

7.1 MAGNITUDE

POWERFUL QUAKE JOLTS PHILIPPINES

4 dead and 60 hurt as tremors collapse buildings in northern Luzon

MANILA

A POWERFUL 7.1 magnitude earthquake struck the northern Philippine island of Luzon yesterday, killing four people, damaging buildings and sending strong tremors through the capital here.

Two people were killed in Benguet province, one in Abra province, and one more in another province, Interior Secretary Benjamin Abalos said.

Sixty people were injured.

The quake struck about 11km southeast of the town of Dolores at a shallow depth of 10km, ac-



Emergency crew conduct rescue operations outside collapsed building in La Trinidad, Benguet, the Philippines, yesterday.

REUTERS PIC

ording to the United States Geological Survey data.

“Despite the sad reports about the damages caused by the earthquake, we are assuring quick response to those in need and affected by this calamity,” President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said.

The quake hit close to the Marcos family’s political stronghold.

Renato Solidum, director of the state seismology agency, told

DZRH radio station that strong aftershocks were expected.

Abalos said 173 buildings were damaged and 58 landslides reported, with 44 of the 60 injured in Abra province.

A hospital in Abra province was evacuated after the building partially collapsed but there were no casualties reported there.

Abra Vice-Governor Joy Bernos posted photos of the dam-

aged Abra hospital on Facebook, which showed a gaping hole in its facade.

Other photos showed hospital beds, including one with a patient, being wheeled across a road and evacuated hospital staff.

The quake also damaged heritage buildings in the city of Vigan, known for its old Spanish colonial architecture, on the west coast of Luzon.

Tourist Edison Adducul said he was taking photos of the Bantay Church Bell Tower in Vigan when the quake struck, shaking the tower for up to three minutes.

Senator Imee Marcos said several churches were damaged.

“The antique bricks and coral stones fell down from the Bantay Bell Tower,” she said.

The quake was also felt here, where people were forced to flee from the 30th floor of one building, and the city’s metro rail systems were halted at rush hour. **Reuters**