

Dozens of Aftershocks Rattle Kamchatka, Volcano Erupts After Powerful Earthquake

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The Kronotsky Nature Reserve in Kamchatka. Yevgeny Denges / kronoki.ru

Dozens of aftershocks shook Russia's Far East on Thursday following a powerful magnitude 8.8 earthquake off the Kamchatka Peninsula that triggered tsunami alerts across the Pacific as far away as California and Peru.

Wednesday morning's quake struck 149 kilometers (93 miles) southeast of the regional capital Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, according to Russian geologists. The most severe damage was reported on the nearby island of Sakhalin, where a tsunami swept through the port town of Severo-Kurilsk, flooding a local fish processing plant.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, it was the [most powerful](#) quake since the 2011 earthquake that triggered the devastating tsunami in Japan. Seismologists have warned that aftershocks of up to magnitude 7.5 could continue in the coming days and weeks.

By 9 p.m. local time Thursday, more than 90 aftershocks had been [recorded](#) off Kamchatka's coast, ranging between magnitudes 4.0 and 6.7, a regional seismic station reported. Authorities [said](#) there was no renewed tsunami threat.

Related article: [‘God Help Me’: Kamchatka Residents Recount Massive 8.8 Magnitude Earthquake](#)

Kamchatka, known for its active volcanoes, geysers and rugged wilderness, is a popular tourist destination. Local media [reported](#) that national park authorities in the region closed off a number of areas for tourists due to the risks of landslides and rockfalls.

The Klyuchevskaya volcano, Eurasia's highest and most active, began erupting overnight Wednesday following the quake, an event not uncommon after major seismic activity. Satellite images [showed](#) lava flow, and geologists [reported](#) hearing explosive eruptions.

Experts at the local Institute of Volcanology and Seismology [said](#) the eruption currently does not pose any danger to people but urged tourists to exercise caution when approaching it for sightseeing.

In Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, officials on Wednesday [declared](#) a local state of emergency and opened temporary shelters for residents unwilling to return home due to the ongoing aftershocks. Some locals [left the city](#) for countryside dachas as tremors continued.

Meanwhile, Japan's weather agency lifted a tsunami advisory on Thursday that had been issued after the magnitude 8.8 earthquake, saying there was no longer any threat to coastal areas.

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