

9 killed in 7.0-magnitude quake in SW China

Death toll from the 7.0-magnitude earthquake which struck a remote area in southwest China's Sichuan Province Tuesday night has risen to nine, the information office of the provincial government said on Wednesday.

Photo taken on Aug. 8, 2017 shows a view in a hotel after earthquake in Jiuzhaigou County of southwest China's Sichuan Province. [Photo/Xinhua]

As of 5 a.m., the quake has left nine people killed, 164 others injured.

At least five of the dead were visitors to the popular tourist destination of Jiuzhaigou in the epicenter of Zhangzha town, Jiuzhaigou County.

The earthquake jolted Jiuzhaigou County at 9:19 p.m. Tuesday (Beijing Time), and the epicenter was monitored at 33.2 degrees north latitude and 103.82 degrees east longitude. The quake struck at a depth of 20 km, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center (CENC).

Jiuzhaigou, or Jiuzhai Valley, is a national park known for spectacular waterfalls and karst formations. More than 34,000 people visited the tourist attraction on Tuesday.

So far, 31,500 tourists have been relocated to safe places.

The local government has organized tourist coaches and private-owned vehicles to rush to the affected areas to help transport the stranded tourists.

Power, communication and water supply in the county seat have basically recovered.

So far, Jiuzhaigou County has dispatched more than 90 emergency vehicles and 1,200 personnel to participate in the rescue work.

The county also sent consultants to hotels, rural inns and streets to offer possible counseling service for tourists.

The quake was felt in the provincial capital Chengdu about 300 km south of the epicenter, and other regions in the neighboring provinces of Gansu and Shaanxi.

Sichuan is a quake-prone region. In May 2008, an 8.0-magnitude earthquake struck Wenchuan and killed more than 80,000 people. In 2013, a 7.0-magnitude quake hit Lushan, killing 196.