

5-magnitude quake hits Tibet; no casualties reported

A 5.0-magnitude earthquake jolted Zhongba County in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region at 6:07 p.m. Wednesday (Beijing Time). No casualties were reported.

The epicenter was monitored at 30.67 degrees north latitude and 83.34 degrees east longitude. The quake struck at a depth of 8 km, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center.

The epicenter, 124 kilometers from the county seat and 757 kilometers from Lhasa, is in an uninhabited zone and therefore the moderate quake caused no injuries and death of people and livestock, Wei Xince, deputy county governor, told Xinhua by phone.

Local authorities were checking damages to roads and makeshift livestock pens in the summer pasture.

Zhongba, which is in the western-most of Xigaze prefecture and borders Nepal, covers an area of 45,900 square kilometers and has a population of 24,800. It has an average altitude of over 5,000 meters.

Index of Eight Core Industries (Base: 2004-05=100) November, 2016

The summary of the Index of Eight Core Industries (base: 2004-05) is given at the

Anoop Srivastava takes over as secretary Tribal Affairs

Shri Anoop Kumar Srivastava, an IAS officer of 1981 batch of Assam-Meghalaya Cadre has taken over the charge of Secretary in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs

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The Scottish Conservatives have said they will talk “constructively” with the SNP ahead of the budget process, so long as it drops its plan to make Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK.

Shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said there were serious concerns within the business community about plans to increase tax, something backed up today by the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, who described the plans as “dangerous”.

With the introduction of a large business supplement – as well as council tax increases and a refusal to adopt UK Government income tax threshold changes – the SNP will make Scotland’s workers and businesses pay more tax than anywhere else in Britain.

In contrast, the Scottish Conservatives want rates to be the same and, when possible, lower than in the rest of the UK.

The party has consistently argued that lower taxes would increase the tax base, meaning more receipts for government without hitting people in the pocket.

And with new powers arriving at Holyrood, the performance of Scotland’s economy has never been more pivotal in providing cash for public services.

Stage one of the budget process will take place in Holyrood tomorrow.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

“We will talk constructively with the Scottish Government’s about its budget plans – so long as it abandons its bid to make Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK.

“Derek Mackay needs someone on board to ensure this vital process goes through.

“It’s the most significant budget in Scottish Parliament history, and we don’t believe he should side with other opposition parties in hiking taxes for workers and businesses.

“Instead, he should come round to the idea that by lowering taxes – or at least keeping them in line with the rest of Britain’s – he will boost the tax base, and help the economy in the process.

“And at a time when the economic performance has never been more significant for public services, the Scottish Government has to prioritise growth ahead of left-wing student politics.”

[News story: Defence Minister meets poppy producing veterans going for gold](#)

The Poppy Factory employs 27 disabled veterans in Richmond to produce poppies and wreaths for the Royal Family and the Royal British Legion, but not content with making 12.5 million poppies last year, they are now looking to gold-plate their award-winning employment scheme.

They are also the country’s leading employability organisation for disabled military veterans, providing a free service to veterans with a medical condition or impairment across England and Wales to get back into work.

Having helped almost 700 people into employment since 2010, the charity won the Ministry of Defence’s Employer Recognition Silver Award last year for demonstrating great support to the Armed Forces community, and one of Deirdre Mills’ key goals in her new role is to go for gold this year.

As part of the Armed Forces Covenant, which the government enshrined in law as a promise from the nation to ensure that the Armed Forces community are not at a disadvantage, the annual Defence Employer Recognition Scheme encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same – and the Poppy Factory is certainly doing that.

Defence Minister Earl Howe said:

From helping veterans across the country overcome adversity and get back into work, to empowering those who have inspired me here in Richmond today to contribute to such an honourable cause, the magnificent work of the Poppy Factory is a credit to the Armed Forces Covenant and I’m thrilled to see Deirdre is driving for even more success.



Earl Howe with Poppy Factory CEO Deirdre Mills.

Their new CEO Deirdre Mills enjoyed a successful career in the British Army herself before getting involved in charity work.

She said:

Our support is really making a difference, whether it be providing career advice or meeting the more complex needs of some of the hardest-to-help individuals in society. There is also a growing number of disabled veterans who are being referred to us by other organisations; this is both testament to the quality of our work and indicative of the growing number of military charities that are now working together to produce the best results.

We are working hard to accommodate and champion the needs of disabled people and a Gold Award will really help us demonstrate this to our donors and the public – we need to secure over £2m in sustainable funding each year to provide our life-changing service.



Earl Howe met Gary Lock, an ex Serviceman from 4 Battalion Royal Regiment of Wales.

Amongst those who Earl Howe met today was Gary Lock, an ex Serviceman from 4 Battalion Royal Regiment of Wales, who has been working at the factory since September. Suffering from a serious hip injury, Gary got in touch with the Poppy Factory looking for employment.

He said:

I really enjoy coming to work, and it's great to have a laugh and a joke while you're doing something that's making a difference.