

# Powerful earthquake shakes west Afghanistan a week after devastating quakes hit same region

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**Online Desk:** A powerful 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck western Afghanistan on Sunday, just over a week after strong quakes and aftershocks killed thousands of people and flattened entire villages in the same region.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the latest quake's epicenter was about 34 kilometers (21 miles) outside Herat, the provincial capital, and eight kilometers (five miles) below the surface.

There were no immediate official reports of possible casualties or damage.

The earthquakes on Oct. 7 flattened whole villages in Herat, in one of the most destructive quakes in the country's recent history.

More than 90% of the people killed a week ago were women and children, U.N. officials reported Thursday.

Taliban officials said the earlier quakes killed more than 2,000 people across the province. The epicenter was in Zenda Jan district, where 1,294 people died, 1,688 were injured and every home was destroyed, according to U.N. figures.

The initial quake, numerous aftershocks and a second 6.3-magnitude quake on Wednesday flattened villages, destroying hundreds of mud-brick homes that could not withstand such force. Schools, health clinics and other village facilities also collapsed.

Besides rubble and funerals after that devastation, there was little left of the villages in the region's dusty hills. Survivors are struggling to come to terms with the loss of multiple family members and in many places, living residents are outnumbered by volunteers who came to search the debris and dig mass graves.