

HAARETZ

Massive Quake in Israel 'Only a Matter of Time,' Experts Warn

Israeli geologists are warning that Israel is overdue for a 'disastrous earthquake' - but the country is dramatically underprepared. Schools and hospitals built before the 1980s would likely be wiped out

Sam Sokol / Feb 6, 2023

Israel is overdue for “a major and a disastrous earthquake,” a prominent Israeli geologist told Haaretz on Monday, only hours after a powerful 7.8 magnitude quake hit southern Turkey and northern Syria, toppling hundreds of buildings and killing at least 3,500 people.

[...]

Although Israel is expected to send an emergency aid mission to Turkey, it is far from ready for dealing with such an event within its own borders, said **Dr. Ariel Heimann**, a senior researcher at the **Institute for National Security Studies** and a former senior researcher at the Geological Survey of Israel.

“One hundred percent we will have such an earthquake. A major and a disastrous earthquake in Israel is a not a question of if, it’s only a question of when,” he warned, but Israelis are simply “not prepared enough” for that day.

According to **Heimann**, many structures erected prior to the mid-1980s, including schools and hospitals, are unlikely to hold up during an earthquake, while the public has not been sufficiently prepared to survive such an event.

“The population believes that in a case of an earthquake somebody will come to rescue you and in such a disaster we do not have enough rescue teams and rescue forces to rescue everyone,” he said, calling on people to prepare bottled water, conserved food, flashlights and transistor radios

“It’s not that we didn’t do anything or we did zero percent but if you would [compare us to] a country that is 100% prepared for that, we are around 25-30,” he added, calling on the government to begin “strengthening building infrastructure [such as] bridges, buildings, hospitals, schools and so on as much as possible year after year, day after day.”

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