

Life inside DU female halls following a quake

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Photo: Courtesy

A 5.7-magnitude earthquake jolted the capital and surrounding areas on Friday, triggering panic among people across the city.

It is no different for the students living in five female dormitories of Dhaka University, with multiple dormitory buildings facing minor structural damage due to the tremor.

AT A GLANCE

Several cracks reported at Ruqayyah Hall

Four students injured at Kuwait Maitree Hall

Cracks in six washroom pillars and a room at Shamsunnahar Hall

Minor structural damages across four buildings at Sufia Kamal Hall

Minor cracks found at Bangamata Hall, house tutor's residential area declared unsafe

At Ruqayyah Hall, several residential areas in the hall -- which houses thousands of students -- developed visible cracks.

At Aparajita Building -- home to around 600 students -- one room on the third floor was damaged. The Shapla Building, residence of nearly 540 residents, reported cracks in three rooms.

The 7 March Building -- one of the largest, accommodating about 1,578 students -- experienced strong shaking but remained structurally stable.

Hall representatives yesterday said there were no serious casualties, although many students felt dizzy or disoriented from the shock.

Students described moments of chaos as the building shook and hundreds rushed outside. Several residents later reported feeling dizzy or unwell from the shock.

Meanwhile, Nishita Zaman Niha, general secretary of Bangladesh Kuwait Maitree Hall Union, said four students were injured, including one who suffered a major leg fracture.

She said minor cracks appeared in several buildings. In the main building, where around 700 students live, plaster fell off in the canteen and other areas, while the Shikder Monoara Bhaban -- housing 62 students -- was declared safe by engineers.

Jannatul Ferdaous Munni, a Philosophy student, said she panicked during the tremor while studying in the reading room. "There was shouting everywhere. I thought the building was collapsing. In the rush, I slipped on the stairs and fell," she said. Doctors have advised her 15 days of bed rest.

Dr Mahbuba Sultana, provost of the hall, visited all damaged areas and checked on the injured student. "The buildings are old, but engineers confirmed there is no immediate danger. We're doing our best to comfort the students," she said. Security has been increased, and gates will remain locked only at night, with the main gate open.

At Shamsunnahar Hall, resident Marzia Zahan Momo said the tremor caused panic but no injuries. "Some areas developed cracks, and the chief engineer came to inspect everything," she said.

Sanzida Masud Momo, general secretary of the hall union, reported cracks in six washroom pillars in the Mid and Honours Buildings, one damaged room on the fifth floor, and plaster falling from several areas.

The Extension Building near the kitchen also developed cracks. The hall accommodates nearly 1,400 students, with around 96 on each floor.

Herem Akhter Era, social welfare secretary of Sufia Kamal Hall Union, said the hall's four buildings sustained minor structural damage.

Prattyasha Building had cracks in one room; Pradipta Building saw damage in seven rooms and one common space; Prattay Building experienced cracks in two rooms and a corridor.

Each room houses six to eight students, while the only legal guest room accommodates 25 girls temporarily until they receive permanent rooms, she added.

The hall's provost Prof Salma Nasrin said engineers had checked all buildings. "By the grace of Allah, all my students are safe. There is no cause for concern, and the authorities will take the best steps for their safety," she said.

At Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall, VP Tasnim Akhter Alif Nabila said minor cracks were found, but there was no major structural damage. However, the chief engineer declared the house tutor's residential area unsafe due to the age of the building.

She added that all students were safe and no injuries occurred.