

7.3-magnitude earthquake strikes off Peru; tsunami threat issued

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Lima: A powerful earthquake struck off Peru's coast early today, prompting a US agency to issue a tsunami threat message for parts of the country and neighbouring Chile.

The US Geological Survey reported that the temblor had a preliminary magnitude of 7.3. There have been no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The epicentre was 42 kms south-southwest of Acari, with the earthquake hitting at 4:18 am local time at a depth of 12.1 kms.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre said that "hazardous tsunami waves are forecast for some coasts."

A statement says that tsunami waves reaching 0.3 metres to one metre "above the tide level are possible for some coasts of Peru." It also says waves are forecast to be less than 0.3 meters for the coasts of Chile.

- AP