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Powerful quake hits Indonesia

By ROBIN McDOWELL

Jakarta, Sept. 12: A massive earthquake hit Indonesia on Wednesday, triggering a tsunami in the town of Padang and warnings for much of the Indian Ocean region, meteorological officials said. The tremor caused tall buildings to sway in a least four countries. The underwater quake had a magnitude of 8.2 and hit at about 6.10 pm, the US Geological Survey said. A wave of up to three metres was reported to have hit Padang about 20 minutes after the quake, said Mr Suhardjono, a senior official with Indonesia's meteorological agency, who goes by only one name.

Several buildings were damaged and at least one car showroom totally collapsed, according to the news portal detik.com, which said people were



searching to see if anyone was inside. The quake was centred 105 km southwest of Sumatra island at a depth of 15.6 km, the USGS said.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre issued a tsunami warning. "Earthquakes of this size have the potential to generate a widespread destructive tsunami that can affect coastlines across the entire Indian Ocean Basin," it said. (AP)