Quake Prone Indian Cities

What is the issue?

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> According to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS), 29 Indian cities and towns, including Delhi and capitals of nine states, fall under "severe" to "very severe" seismic zones.

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How zoning is done?

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- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has classified different regions in the country into zones II to V, taking into consideration earthquake records, tectonic activities and damage caused,
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- The NCS, which records earthquakes and carries out studies pertaining to micro-zonation of cities, comes under the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
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- The NCS has also carried out micro-zonation of cities like Delhi and Kolkata to study the possible impact of earthquake in these mega cities.
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- Seismic micro-zonation is the process of subdividing a region into smaller areas having different potential for hazardous earthquake effects.
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What are the available zones?

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- Zone II is considered the least seismically active, while Zone V is the most active.
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- Zone IV and V fall under "severe" to "very severe" categories respectively.
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- Zone V includes the entire northeastern region, parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, parts of north Bihar and the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago.
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- The Himalayan arc, stretching from the upper Assam region to Jammu and Kashmir, is known to be a high seismic zone.
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- Parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Sikkim, northern Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat and a small part of Maharashtra fall under Zone IV.
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- Delhi, Patna (Bihar), Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir), Kohima (Nagaland), Puducherry, Guwahati (Assam), Gangtok (Sikkim), Shimla (Himachal Pradesh), Dehradun (Uttarakhand), Imphal (Manipur) and Chandigarh fall under seismic zones IV and V.
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- The cities in the Indo-Gangetic belt fall within reasonable limits of the Himalayas. So repercussions are bound to be felt there
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What is the way ahead?

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- New earthquake observatories will come up in the country by March next year. At present, there are 84 observatories.
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- This is being done to detect and record earthquake parameters more accurately and identify possible precursors of tremors.
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Source: Business Standard

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