



Left: Debris crush a car outside the Christchurch Catholic Cathedral after an earthquake rocked Christchurch, New Zealand, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2011. The 6.3-magnitude quake toppled tall buildings and churches.

Below: In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, people walk through a street partly covered with rubble.



Earthquake strikes New Zealand

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Police say the death toll in the earthquake that devastated a New Zealand city has risen to 76, with 238 people still missing. Police Superintendent Dave Cliff told a news conference that 76 bodies had been brought to a temporary morgue in Christchurch, and that he expects the number to rise as search teams pore through the thousands of buildings damaged in Tuesday's 6.3-magnitude quake. Cliff said 238 people are

still missing. Officials have cautioned, however, that not all of the people listed as missing should be assumed dead. Hundreds of foreign crews of specialists in picking through dangerously unstable wreckage were arriving in Christchurch, adding to local police and soldiers and allowing teams to head for smaller buildings not yet checked. Police superintendent Russell Gibson said early Thursday that the last survivor rescued had been pulled out at 2 p.m.

local time Wednesday, and no trapped survivors had been found since. Gibson said the operation had become one of body recovery but rejected suggestions that rescuers were abandoning hope of finding more survivors. The true toll in life and treasure was still unknown, but the earthquake already was shaping as one of the country's worst disasters.



Above: Fifteen-year-old Kent Manning, left, and his sister Libby, 18, react with their father, who asked not to be identified, after they were told by police that there was no hope of finding Kent and Libby's mother alive in a collapsed building following a 6.3-magnitude earthquake Tuesday, in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Right: Vehicles move through flooded roads in South Brighton. The quake killed dozens of people in one of the country's worst natural disasters.



Mark Baker/AP

Kelly James takes photos of her destroyed house in central Christchurch, New Zealand. Tuesday's magnitude-6.3 temblor collapsed buildings, caused extensive other damage and killed dozens of people in the city. The powerful earthquake struck one of New Zealand's biggest cities at the height of a busy workday.

