

## DISASTER

Continued from Page 1

magnitude. Thus a reading of 7.5 reflects an earthquake 10 times stronger than one of 6.5.

Scientists said Monday's quake may have occurred along part of the same fault system that caused the Whittier Narrows earthquake.

But unlike the much stronger Landers quake, Monday's quake was located much closer to a heavily populated area. Landers is about 90 miles east of downtown Los Angeles; Monday's was centered in Northridge, only 20 miles to the northwest.

Scientists said Monday's quake showed that timing and location can be just as important as magnitude — and that Southern California doesn't need a Big One to suffer heavy losses.

Now comes another problem: aftershocks.

Seismologists said there was a 50-50 chance of a magnitude 5 aftershock in the next week and a one-in-four chance of a magnitude 5.5 aftershock. The odds of a magnitude 6 aftershock in the next week were 1-in-10.

Monday's quake, like others before it, helped push two mountain ranges higher and shrink the San Fernando Valley.

"The big picture is, it's sort of smashing the San Fernando Valley together," said Jim Mori, a U.S. Geological Survey seismologist.

Mori said it will take a few days for scientists to gauge how much the quake raised the Santa Monica and San Gabriel mountains, which create the San Fernando Valley.

## INTERNATIONAL

Continued from Page 1

For many international students, American culture is dramatically different from their own. Magid Shirzadegan, an international student adviser, said that oftentimes international students may learn the language but are not taught the behaviors or the norms of U.S. society.

"I know how to write and how to speak, but I felt very much unprepared for the slang," said Evelyn Santana, a French graduate exchange student.

In the American classroom, Santana notices a lax learning environment. "Students are more relaxed in class, physically, with their feet on the chairs, and they call the teacher by their first name," Santana said.

Santana is also surprised by the accessibility of teachers during office hours. In France such a policy is virtually unheard of during the beginning years of college.

International student adviser Ginny Stark counsels many students about "getting used to a different system of studying and learning with different expectations."

One of the biggest cultural differences that international students experience is in the system of education. Many students are used to a system in which there is hardly any open discussion or debate in class. Tests and essay writing throughout the year are not common.

Senior Duffy Youm, who is from Senegal, said, "You can do whatever you want until the end of the year." However, the entire year is based solely on a final exam.

Youm, assistant director of the International Student Association, said that the system of education in Senegal is highly competitive. The country of Senegal has only two universities for 7.5 million people.

From the time that students begin their undergraduate degrees, they are placed on a track of classes that they complete every year; there is no such thing as choosing classes or having an undeclared major.

Gurung, also used to a system in which classes can last for two years, said she does not see as much teamwork between classmates as she did in India or Nepal. She finds that in the United States, "If one student knows something, that student doesn't want to part with it because he feels if he does that, then the other person would know something that he knows without any effort."

Typically, Stark said many foreign students are amazed by the friendliness of Americans. However, she said they find dis-

couragement in some Americans' inability to remember a new person's name the day after they meet.

Many students have American acquaintances, but Stark has been told by foreign students that it can be hard to develop friendships with Americans.

International students often make close contacts with other foreign students. From the beginning of International Orientation and throughout the year, they can find a very active international community that stages events for international students to participate in.

Some international students tend to socialize within a circle of international friends.

"I don't see this as a problem; there are a good number of us that want to reach out to the community," said Chia Wei Shing, director of the International Student Association.

Shirzadegan, once an international student from Iran, uses what he believes to be an African saying to characterize the maintenance of cultural identity in a foreign country.

"When a cheetah goes in the water it will get wet," Shirzadegan said, "but when it comes out of the water it still maintains its spots."

Many international students may not return home to their country or visit their families for several years. Youm, for example, returned to Senegal during the winter break for the first time in four years. Communication to his home is through letters and expensive phone calls.

"Instead of feeling better after a telephone conversation, you feel worse because that is the only link you have," Gurung said.

"Isolation is one of the big problems to help them overcome," said Peter Briggs, an international student adviser who supports and counsels international students. Briggs recognizes that international students may withdraw within themselves and reject the American culture.

Peer assistants are available to international students through the Office of International Education and Exchange, which can aid them in many ways. Currently, 10 students serve as peer assistants, many of whom were once international students themselves.

During winter term, the peer assistants will conduct four workshops to address common interests: "Friendship and Romance," "Career Development," "Gender Roles," and "Communication Outside the Classroom."

A host family program is organized by the Office of International Education and

**'The U.S. has got a very good reputation for its system of education.'**

— Sunita Gurung,  
International student

Exchange to help provide communication, support and a place for a home-cooked meal.

Many international students come to the University and lose their support system; some international students don't return to their homeland for several years. The host family program matches international students with families in the community that are willing to share their homes.

The host family and international student connection can be very strong.

"I was very surprised when my host family gave me a big hug — it was a big shock to me," Shing said, taken aback by the physical nature of American culture.

American families often remain in touch with their international students after they leave the University and some travel to the foreign country to visit. Spanish exchange student Irene Gandara, a junior, went home to Quito, Ecuador, for the winter break and took her host family's teen-age daughter with her.

Throughout the year, the International Student Association as well as other organizations on campus provide events for international students to participate in. On a weekly basis it organizes a social forum, the International Student Coffee Hour.

Many foreigners are shocked by American casualness in conversation. Shirzadegan, who is from Iran, said, "My major culture shock was how freely people could discuss politics and take it for granted."

The International Student Association also organizes International Week in April, which provides a week-long series of events to celebrate internationalism. One of the highlights of the week is a dinner and an international performance; the event draws many University students, who feast on dishes from a variety of countries.

Gurung was sent to India to be educated; when she began school, it was not common for girls to be educated in Nepal. She came to the United States for the opportunities that education would provide for her.

"The U.S. has got a very good reputation for its system of education. When you apply for jobs (in Nepal), you'll definitely be one of the first applications because you've got the brand name of the U.S.," Gurung said.

# THIS WEEK



# JAN. 18-23

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