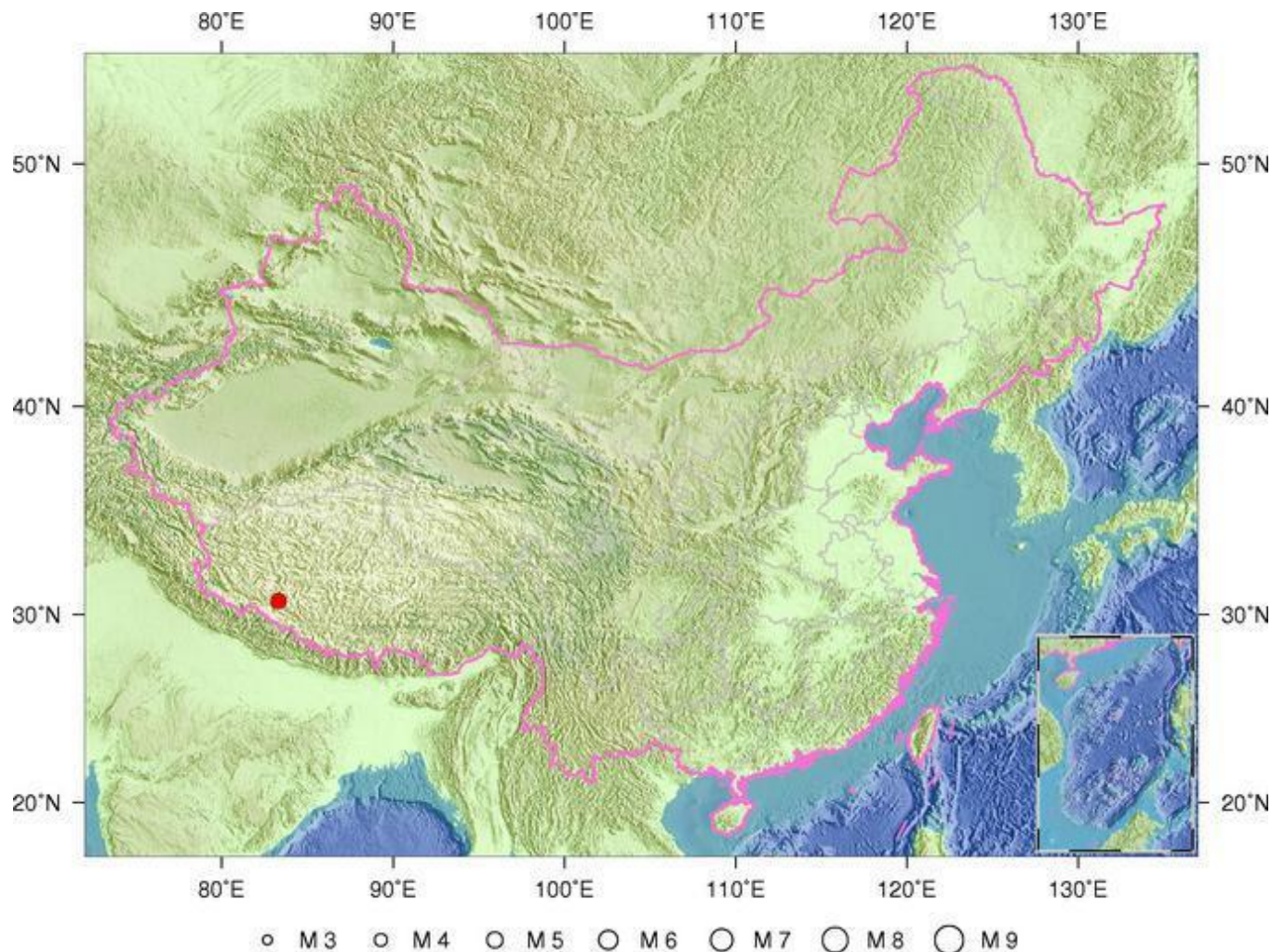


## 5-magnitude quake hits Tibet; no casualties reported



A 5.0-magnitude earthquake jolted Zhongba County in Tibet on Wednesday, February 1, 2017. [Photo: China Earthquake Administration]

A 5.0-magnitude earthquake jolted Zhongba County in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region at 6:07 p.m. Wednesday (Beijing Time). No casualties were reported.

The epicenter was monitored at 30.67 degrees north latitude and 83.34 degrees east longitude. The quake struck at a depth of 8 km, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center.

The epicenter, 124 kilometers from the county seat and 757 kilometers from Lhasa, is in an uninhabited zone and therefore the moderate quake caused no injuries and death of people and livestock, Wei Xince, deputy county governor, told Xinhua by phone.

Local authorities were checking damages to roads and makeshift livestock pens in the summer pasture.

Zhongba, which is in the western-most of Xigaze prefecture and borders Nepal,

covers an area of 45,900 square kilometers and has a population of 24,800. It has an average altitude of over 5,000 meters.

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## China sees rising traffic as holiday nears end

China's transport system saw rising traffic Wednesday as millions of people started to return to work after the week-long Lunar New Year Holiday.



Passengers wait for trains at the Nanchang West Railway Station in Nanchang, capital of east China's Jiangxi Province, Feb. 1, 2017. (Xinhua/Peng Zhaozhi)

Some 9.7 million passenger trips were estimated on Chinese railways on Wednesday, year-on-year growth of 9 percent, as the week-long holiday draws to a close Thursday, according to China Railway Corporation.

Traffic on expressways around major cities also increased, leading to rising congestion.

During the New Year holiday, hundreds of millions of people go back to their hometowns to meet relatives and old friends, and as Chinese people become more affluent and keen to travel, pressure on the transport system is huge.

Data from the China National Tourism Administration showed some 27.4 million visitor trips were made in China Wednesday, up 14.1 percent year on year.

Tourism revenue reached 34 billion yuan (about 4.96 billion U.S. dollars) on the day.

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## Caroline Lucas: Vote tonight is a body blow in fight against extreme Brexit



1 February 2017

**\*Lucas: "Watching so many Labour MPs troop through the yes lobby with the Tories was truly disheartening."**

Caroline Lucas, the Green Party co-leader, has responded to Parliament's vote in favour of triggering Article 50 tonight. In the vote on the second reading of the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill tonight, 498 MPS voted in favour of triggering Article 50 and 114 MPs voted against. [1]

Lucas said:

"Tonight's vote is a body blow for the fight against the Government's extreme Brexit, and has handed the Tories a massive advantage.

"Watching so many Labour MPs troop through the yes lobby with the Tories was truly disheartening. The Conservatives are set to benefit hugely from rushing through this vote with as little dissent as possible and it's given them far more opportunity to morph a narrow referendum result in favour of leaving the EU into an overwhelming mandate to depart from the world's biggest trading zone, wrecking our social and environmental protections along the way.

"It's now down to MPs to work across party lines to amend this Bill and attempt to avoid the very real dangers of Britain falling off the Brexit cliff edge. As the co-leader of a party that stands for environmental, social and economic justice, I could not support a government offering no assurances to EU nationals living in Britain, threatening the funding of our public services, and planning to end our membership of the single market and customs union. In the coming weeks I'll be standing up to this Government's extreme Brexit plans at every stage – and doing all I can to protect our hard won environment and social protections."

**Notes:**

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/feb/01/article-50-debate-vote-bill-pmqs-theresa-may-jeremy-corbyn-ivan-rogers-to-give-evidence-to-mps-about-why-he-quit-as-uks-ambassador-to-eu-politics-live>

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## **Follow up on flooding**

I am pursuing the issues of whether the following actions would help reduce local flood risk. This includes asking the authorities what progress they have made on the possible projects beneath. I would be interested in local comment on what is needed.

1. Bund water containment on flood plain by the Emm
2. Emm deepening and widening of water course in Wokingham and Winnersh
3. Dredging of River Loddon at Loddon Bridge
4. Containment of Loddon with higher banks at Loddon bridge roundabout
5. Raising of road at Loddon bridge roundabout
6. Increased water retention capacity in safe areas in Shinfield and Arborfield
7. Further measures around Emmbrook School
8. Measure to contain water which currently can reach homes in Earley
9. Larger measures being considered for the course of the Loddon more generally

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## **Press release: Pollution of brook costs Evesham food processing company over £59,000**

Walsh Mushrooms, a mushroom packaging and distribution company operating at the Vale Park industrial estate in Evesham, appeared in Cheltenham Magistrates' Court yesterday (31 January 2017) and pleaded guilty to an offence of polluting the nearby Battleton Brook with the effluent of rotting mushrooms.

The company was fined £50,000, ordered to pay costs of £8,888.16, along with a £170 victim surcharge.

The prosecution was brought by the Environment Agency, following reports of pollution of the brook in April and May in 2015. The company was charged with one offence contrary to Regulations 12 (1) (b) and 38 (1) (a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.



On 24 April 2015, an Environment Agency officer visited the Battleton Brook in Evesham following a report it had turned black with a foul odour. The officer found the brook heavily polluted with organic matter, causing low levels of oxygen. Some frogs and a significant number of invertebrates downstream of Vale Park had been killed as a result of the pollution incident.

Officers, along with staff from Severn Trent Water Limited, identified the source of the pollution as a skip full of decomposing mushrooms on the Walsh Mushroom site, which was leaking into a surface water drain. Investigations of the drainage system suggested this had been ongoing for a number of days. Walsh Mushrooms were advised to remove the skip, undertake a cleaning operation, and conduct a full inspection of the site drainage system.

The Environment Agency stated that the company had failed to carry out the site drainage survey within a reasonable time after 24 April 2015. As a result, on 14 May 2015, officers attended the premises of Walsh Mushrooms again to examine the site drainage system and discovered that similar effluent was continuing to flow into it.

A representative of the company was interviewed and accepted that no training had been given to staff regarding the function or maintenance of the site drainage. No training had been given to staff regarding pollution risks associated with storing waste on the site. The company had failed to carry out any environmental risk assessments since it began operating at Vale Park in 2000.

The company, which had no previous convictions, expressed remorse for the incident. It acknowledged its failure to carry out environmental risk assessments or give appropriate training to company staff. The company stated that it had co-operated with the Environment Agency's investigation and taken steps to remedy the issues at the site. These included the monthly sampling of fluids from the on-site inceptor, the training of staff and the storage of waste mushrooms in leak-proof containers.

Following the outcome of court proceedings, an Environment Agency spokesperson said:

Walsh Mushrooms failed to conduct any assessments of the risks their operations posed to the environment. They did not understand or maintain their drainage system and they failed to provide any training for staff on how to recognise or deal with pollution incidents. As a result of these failings, they caused significant damage to the brook. We will always seek to take action against those whose actions results in pollution of our rivers.

Many companies in the food processing industry fail to appreciate that food wastes can be highly polluting and cause serious damage to the environment. By following sensible environmental management procedures businesses will be better placed to comply with relevant

legislation and reduce the risks damaging our stream and rivers.

If members of the public notice any signs of pollution in a river, stream or lake please report it to our Incident Hotline 0870 80 70 60.