

## Geology professor Dr Felix clocks out to retirement



KOTA KINABALU: Professor Dr Felix Tongkul, probably Sabah's most well-known geologist, clocked out to his retirement as Director of Natural Disaster Research Centre at the Faculty of Science and Natural Resources, University Malaysia Sabah (UMS), yesterday (Wednesday).

Asked what he considered was the greatest geological event in his career, he said:

"Mapping the geology of Maliau Basin was one of the toughest and satisfying work I did. It was the toughest because of its remoteness."

"We had to spend several weeks walking along the unchartered Maliau River and its tributaries to map the rock units and location of the waterfalls. We had to climb numerous waterfalls to continue upstream," he recalled.

The answer was quite a surprise because Daily Express expected him to cite the strong 5.9 Richter-Scale quake on June 5, 2015 which killed 18 people on Mt Kinabalu.

Didn't that strongest quake ever recorded in Malaysia shock him?

"Not really. I expected something like that would happen," he said.

Asked why he had expected something like that to happen, Tongkul added:

"This is expected based on the return period of earthquake in the Ranau area, which is approximately 25 years for earthquake with magnitude above 5. Previous recorded earthquakes were in 1991 and 1996, although the 2015 earthquake was much larger than I expected."

Asked what he thinks is Sabah's greatest geological masterpiece and why, he said:

"The location of Sabah right at the juncture of three tectonic plates - the Eurasia, Philippines and the Australia plates - colliding with each other since 100 million years ago produced the magnificent geology of Sabah, where we have uplifted ancient oceanic crust, such as Mt Tambuyukon and Mt Tavai in Telupid, uplifted deep water sediments, such as the Crocker and Trusmadi Ranges, uplifted shallow water sediments, such as Maliau Basin, the volcanoes, such as those in Tawau Hills and magma intrusion such as the Mount Kinabalu granite."

Source: <https://www.subscriber-dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?id=163921>