

Malaysia faces medium-intensity quake probability

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia faces the probability of a medium-intensity earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale even though it is located outside the Pacific Ring of Fire, said a researcher.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Centre for Research Management and Innovation director Prof Dr Felix Tongkul said tremors triggered by the quake would be strong enough to cause damage to buildings and property.

Dr. Tongkul, who is also a professor of geology at the Academy of Sciences Malaysia, said research conducted by UMS and geologists found that Malaysia would not be struck by a strong quake, but merely a moderate quake.

"As we are aware, some areas in the country like Kundasang, Ranau and Lahad Datu, all in Sabah, and Bukit Tinggi, Pahang, had experienced frequent aftershocks following quakes in neighbouring countries. These are potential moderate quake areas, not the whole country," he told Bernama after attending a

national technical seminar on quake and tsunami organised by the Malaysian Meteorological Department (MMD) here yesterday.

Hence, Malaysians should be prepared and not become panicky in an event of a moderate quake, he said, adding that the most powerful quake ever recorded in the country so far was of a medium-intensity measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale in Lahad Datu, Sabah in 1976 which resulted in damage to property and buildings.

Meanwhile, MMD deputy director-general Alui Bahari said Malaysia recorded eight aftershocks following 22 quakes in neighbouring countries in 2012.

He said this was due to Malaysia being a neighbour to countries around the Pacific Ring of Fire.

"The department has studied the impact of quakes and the findings, along with constant monitoring, will enable us to find ways to deal with the situation quickly if the event of a quake," he said. — Bernama