

# Preparing for natural disasters saves lives, prevents losses

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Preparing for natural disasters saves lives as well as prevents losses and Sabah can learn from the expertise of the other countries to develop better strategies to minimise the impact of future natural hazards.

"Enhancing understanding and international cooperation is crucial to build resilience, preparedness and effective strategies for Sabah to reduce the impact of future natural disasters," said Tourism, Environment & Culture Minister Datuk Masidi Manjun.

In view of Sabah's tragic magnitude 6.0 earthquake in July, he underlined the importance of providing greater emphasis for natural disaster research to develop better understanding and improve disaster preparedness and responsiveness to minimise damage to property and prevent the loss of lives.

In his speech at the 3rd



Prof Dr Harun (second left) presenting a memento to a seminar participant accompanied by Masidi (centre)

Natural Disaster Seminar 2015 recently, Masidi highlighted that the event paves the way forward for enhancing joint research, cooperation and pooling together expertise, knowledge and discussions to develop suitable so-

lutions to improve preparedness towards natural disasters.

Meanwhile, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) vice chancellor Prof Dr Harun Abdullah said Natural Disaster seminar 2-15 organised by

UMS featured the presentation of 54 research papers on the impact of natural disasters, which gathered 130 local and international participants from Taiwan, Indonesia and Singapore.

"The seminar serves as an

important platform towards strengthening academic cooperation and sharing of technology, expertise to improve preparedness towards natural disasters," he said.

Dr Harun said the event culminated with the UMS Faculty of Science & Natural Resources signing the Letter of Intention (LOI) for increasing collaboration on earthquake with Kao Yuan University of Taiwan.

Organising chairperson Dr Rodeno Roslee said this year's seminar recorded an increased number of participants, noting the LOI signing between UMS and Kao Yuan University would encourage the transfer of knowledge and expertise to improve Sabah's building codes against quakes.

"The delegates of Kao Yuan University are advisors of building codes design in Taiwan and they want to share with us their knowledge and experience so we can improve our building codes and design against earthquakes," he said.

Dr Rodeono said Sabah has no design provision for build-

ings to withstand earthquakes, and underlined the necessity for future buildings to adopt design codes with specific requirements for earthquakes especially for high risk areas.

Commenting on allegations by Deputy Home Minister Nur Jazlan Mohammed on so-called plans of another Sulu invasion, Masidi stressed Federal leaders should be more careful and avoid issuing unverified statements that create confusion and fear which would only bring negative repercussions to the Sabah.

"If you read the entire report, it's actually very speculative; we shouldn't be unduly worried and trust our security forces to defend the country," he told reporters.

Among those who attended the seminar include Malaysian Geological Institute president Datuk Yunus Abdul Razak, UMS dean of the Science & Natural Resources Faculty Professor Dr Baba Musta and UMS director of Science & Innovation Prof Dr Felix Tongkul.