

Kudat hole explained

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KOTA KINABALU: A mystery hole measuring a foot in diameter on a road near Kudat on Friday morning is likely due to lightning.

A witness said he saw a light flashing on the earth at the spot at Kampung Rambai-Marabau at about 1.30am when it was raining.

He said he was surprised to find the hole there after sunrise.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) geologist, Felix Tongkul, also said the hole was most probably created by vertical lightning. "This is interesting because normally we only see lightning striking trees," he said.

Tongkul said similar incidents featuring holes on the ground had been reported elsewhere such as in Wichita, Kansas, in the United States. He said this was the first such case to be documented in Malaysia.

"If this theory is true, I believe we should conserve this hole as a natural heritage. Sure, it is in the middle of the road, but we could realign the road. "This would ensure we are able to keep this proof of a unique event where lightning has left its mark on the ground," he said.

Tongkul also dismissed the notion that the hole was so deep that it could not be measured, saying it was proven to be shallow.

He said the dark stripes along the sides of the cavity were created by high voltage in the lightning.

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