

Geological Hazards Programme

Malaysian Youth Perspectives on Earthquakes and Landslides in Malaysia

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The jointly organized inaugural U-INSPIRE Coffee Table Talk Series No. 1 was attended by 60 participants, not only from Malaysia, but also from Asia and the Pacific

The inaugural session of the U-INSPIRE Coffee Table Talk Series was successfully conducted on 24 October 2020. The webinar was co-hosted by the U-INSPIRE Malaysia and Young Earth Scientist (YES) Malaysia with support from the International Science Council Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ISC ROAP), Mineral and Geoscience Department of Malaysia (JMG), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Southeast Asia Disaster Prevention Research Initiative (SEADPRI-UKM), and Asian Network on Climate Science and Technology (ANCST). This session featured two young geologists: Mr. Navakanesh Batmanathan, a research analyst and one of the National Geographic Young Explorers, and Mr. Mohd Farid Abd Kadir, a geologist from the JMG Perak. Both of them are registered members of U-INSPIRE Malaysia.

The webinar started with Mr. Navakanesh giving a basic explanation of the global seismicity and the tectonic map of Southeast Asia, which consists of the Sunda Plate, the Philippine Sea Plate and also the Australian Plate. The Sabah earthquakes on June 2015 and March 2018 were central to the discussion. The recent study done by Mr. Navakanesh on the Sabah earthquakes was also presented, especially on the recent compilation of the active faults in Sabah; the faults behaved very differently on the surface and the sub-surface and could lead to the future seismicity study in the future.

He also brought up the importance of earthquake preparedness and response, especially in Sabah, so that the self-resilience will be improved in the future. The second speaker, Mr. Mohd Farid, focused on the Cameron Highlands landslide. Cameron Highlands is the largest hilltop resort in Malaysia and a tourist hotspot. Agriculture and services are major economic providers to the surrounding communities.

However, geological material, morphology, anthropogenic factors, as well as rain intensity as a triggering factor, and improper management of land has led to severe erosion and landslide events since 1961. The prevention and mitigation initiatives carried out by JMG were shared. He pointed out that the continuous efforts by relevant agencies are needed to ensure all stakeholders and communities are always prepared and aware of the landslide threat in their vicinity.

"The Coffee Table Talk Series is a flagship event organized by U-INSPIRE Malaysia that will provide an opportunity for the Malaysian youth and young professionals (YYPs) to highlight their achievements in their respective fields of work. The platform provided will not be limited to science communication only but is also open to the arts, language, and such fields."