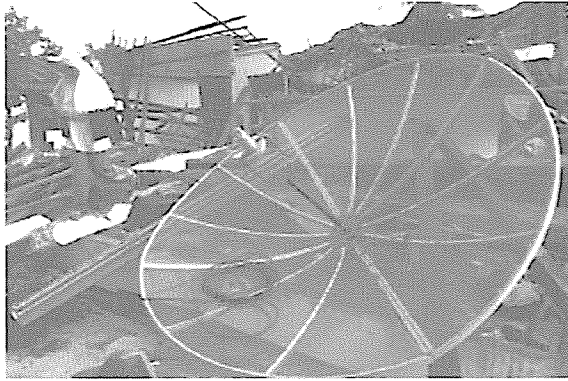


News of the Profession

Devastating Earthquake Strikes Sumatra

A powerful earthquake and numerous aftershocks struck the Indonesian Island of Sumatra on June 4, 2000. The main shock, with an initial Richter magnitude of 7.9, hit at about 11:30 p.m. local time, when most residents were asleep. More than 400 aftershocks have been recorded.



Residential damage in Bengkulu, Sumatra Island (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak).

The worst-affected area is the Bengkulu province on Sumatra's west coast. The earthquake's epicenter was beneath the Indian Ocean, approximately 60 miles from Bengkulu, off the west coast of Sumatra. Bengkulu province has a population of about 1.4 million people, with about 260,000 living in Bengkulu town. The earthquake was felt as far away as Jakarta (310 miles southeast of the epicenter) and Singapore.

Many buildings in Bengkulu town have been damaged, including the provincial governor's office and the local parliamentary building. Electrical systems, water supplies, public transportation, and communication systems have all been heavily damaged in the area. Rescue efforts have been hampered by damage to lifelines, the closure of the airport, and heavy rains and flooding that have occurred after the earthquake.

So far, at least 120 people have died and about 1,300 have been injured. Witnesses reported widespread panic in Bengkulu and said hospitals were overwhelmed with injured people. Doctors in Bengkulu were struggling with a shortage of beds, medicine, and blood, and were treating victims in hospital parking lots. In addition to the damage in Bengkulu, 90 percent of the houses on the tiny island of Enggano, which is located close to the epicenter and has a population of 1,500, collapsed in the earthquake.

Indonesia's islands are often hit by earthquakes. At least 34 people died last month when a magnitude 6.5 earthquake hit central Sulawesi and some neighboring islands. The worst earthquake to hit Indonesia in the last decade was in December 1992, when a magnitude 7.0 event and a subsequent tsunami killed about 2,500 people on a string of eastern islands, including Flores Island.



Residential damage on Enggano Island (photo: BBC News web site).

Announcements

Urban Design in Kocaeli Earthquake Area

The ITU Environment and Urbanism Research Center in Istanbul, Turkey is organizing a workshop on the urban design issues of communities located in areas stricken by the Kocaeli earthquake. It will be held August 14-26, 2000 in Istanbul. By gathering many experienced lecturers from different countries, this workshop aims to provide the main principles of planning and design of an "earthquake-resistant" environment. By having workshop participants of diverse backgrounds and origins, an interdisciplinary study will be developed. The workshop organizers hope that the analysis and planning of the Kocaeli area as a case study will provide a realistic experience for the participants that can be transferred to other earthquake stricken areas of the world.

The main themes of the workshop lectures will be: analysis of the problem, limitations and potentials of the area; appropriate building types and technologies; and planning and design of new settlements. Depending on the participants' background and experience, new discussion topics can be added to the program. The workshop is open to all professionals and students of urban planning, urban design, environmental sciences, and civil engineering. The cost of the workshop is \$450 and covers lectures, nine days of accommodation at a university hostel, lunches, refreshments and receptions.

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