

Earthquake guard equipment for Weija-Gbawe

By Jennifer Ansah

THE government has installed a \$3,000 earthquake guard (EQ) equipment at Weija in the Weija-Gbawe municipality in the Greater Accra Region to detect signals of earthquake and tremor.

The equipment is used in recording and monitoring seismological activities, as well as evacuation drills, and comes with a complete software server to prompt early signals of disaster.

The first to be introduced in the country, the equipment has also been installed at the office of the National Disaster Management Organisation

(NADMO) and the Ghana Geological Survey Authority (GGSA).

Earthquake zone

Other places earmarked for the installation of the equipment are the Peduase Lodge, Legon, Ayimensah and other earthquake-prone areas in the country.

The exercise forms part of the government's effort to give serious attention to early warnings and signals of earthquake and landslides, following the recent rock fall on the Accra-Aburi road and the earth tremor experienced at Weija and its surrounding communities.

Speaking to the *Daily Graphic* on the sidelines of a sensitisation workshop on disaster management in Accra, the Station Manager at the GGSA, Mr

Nicholas Opoku, said Ghana was adequately prepared for any future earthquake or earth tremor in the country.

Earth tremor

He said the series of tremor occurrences in parts of the Greater Accra Region over the years were signals of a looming earthquake of a greater magnitude in the future.

He recounted that the country experienced two earth tremors on January 13 and March 2, 2019, with magnitudes 2.8 and 3.9 on the Richter scale.

Mr Opoku said those events followed the tremor felt on March 24 and December 9, 2018, both with magnitudes 3.3 on the Richter scale.

EQ Guard

The Operator of the EQ Guard equipment, Mr Kazuo Sasaki, said the equipment, which came with a complete software server, could save about 80 per cent of lives during a disaster.

He urged Ghanaians, especially people living in earthquake zones, to run for cover, hide under tables or cover their heads during an earthquake.

He said an earthquake was a natural phenomenon which human beings had no hand in controlling or preventing, stressing that the impact could be controlled.

Mr Sasaki said one way to reduce the impact of an earthquake was through recording and monitoring seismological activities which could help forecast earthquake eventualities.

Besides, he said, what was most needed was to put in place early warning systems which were able to give off an alarm should an earthquake be imminent.

UNESCO

The Professional Officer for Natural Science at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Mrs Melody Boateng, said the organisation promoted scientific exchange and helped to establish effective early warnings system for different hazards such as landslides, earthquakes, floods and drought.

In the development of response plans and awareness campaign, she said, the UNESCO mission was happy to play an instrumental role in supporting the installation of earthquake guards in

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The government has installed a \$3,000 Earthquake Guard equipment at Weija in the Weija-Gbawe municipality in the Greater Accra Region to detect signals of earthquakes and earth tremors.

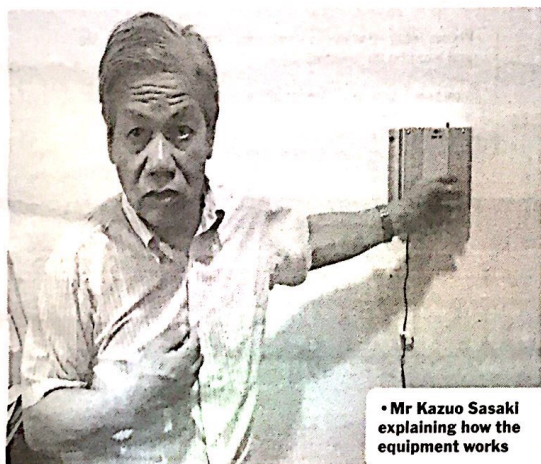
Accra.

Mrs Boateng said UNESCO would also interact with stakeholders and residents living in disaster zones to deepen education on earthquake disaster prevention.

NADMO

The Weija/Gbawe Municipal Coordinating Director for NADMO, Mr Adu Boahene, for his part, commended the government for the initiative, as it would facilitate NADMO's operations and help save lives.

He said NADMO, in collaboration with the assembly, would help sensitise the public to the importance of the equipment and its operations in the detection of earth tremors and earthquakes in the community.



• Mr Kazuo Sasaki explaining how the equipment works



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EDITORIAL

Installation of earthquake guard device timely

IF you have keenly followed foreign news for some time, you would have seen, heard or read reports of the atrocities that earthquakes have caused elsewhere in the world.

People have died, some seriously injured with countless property destroyed.

In the last 12 months, Ghana has had a mild foretaste of this disaster and even though it was nowhere close to what other countries have experienced, it sent shivers down the spine of everyone that felt it.

We speak of the earth tremors on March 24 and December 9, 2018 and subsequent ones that happened on January 13 and March 2, this year.

We recall publishing stories

about these incidents and topping it up with editorials through which we called on the government to put proactive measures in place to avert the disaster.

At long last, an earthquake guard device that detects signals of earthquakes and tremors has been installed at Weija in the Weija-Gbawe Municipality in the Greater Accra Region.

The equipment, the first of its kind in the country, records and monitors

seismological activities and evacuation drills and has a software server to provide early signals of impending disaster.

For effective management, it has also been installed at the offices of the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) and the Ghana Geological Survey Authority (GGSA).

We understand some other places, including Peduase Lodge, Legon, Ayi Mensah, and other earthquake prone areas in the country, have

been inspected for installation of the devices.

We at Ghanaian Times are elated about this development and commend the government and the stakeholders involved for taking this life-saving proactive step.

It is undisputed that earthquakes are natural phenomenon that cannot be controlled but with this device in place, we could have some leverage and reduce the impact.

That said, there is every

need to ensure that the \$3,000 equipment does not become a white elephant but officers of the requisite office are trained to use the devices.

Also, there should be awareness creation amongst residents of the places the devices have been installed so that when warnings of impending disasters are circulated they respond accordingly.

We are happy that technology is being deployed to solve problems and urged stakeholders to keep abreast of new developments so that we can consolidate efforts being made.

Once again, we commend the government for this timely intervention.