

Indonesia: Earthquakes hit Ternate and Poso

Monday 25 March 2019, by [PANGESTIKA Dyaning](#), [SANGADJI Ruslan](#) (Date first published: 24 March 2019).



The US Geological Survey's website shows three earthquakes in North Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, and Maluku on March 23 and 24. (JP/-)

A 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck Ternate Island in North Maluku on Sunday morning, the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) reported.

The earthquake hit the area at 11:37 a.m. local time, with the epicenter located 139 kilometers west of the Jailolo Sea at a depth of 10 km. The BMKG stated that the earthquake was located 1.68 degrees north latitude and 126.37 degrees east longitude.

The US Geological Survey's (USGS) website also reported the earthquake, recording that it had a magnitude of 6.1, with its epicenter located in Bitung, North Sulawesi.

The head of the volcanology center for the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry, Kasbani, said the earthquake was measured at scale III of the Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI) by the Karangetang Volcano Observatory Post in North Sulawesi.

The Awu and Dukono volcano observatory posts in North Sulawesi and North Maluku, respectively, also felt the earthquake. Both posts recorded it at scale II of the MMI.

Kasbani explained that the area around the earthquake's epicenter was made up of alluvium soil and tertiary sediment. The earthquake felt stronger around the area due to loose-rock formations.

"This earthquake is related to Mayu's ridge subduction activity," he said, adding that it was not strong enough to cause a tsunami.

Kasbani reminded the public to remain calm and be alert in case another earthquake hits.

"Do not trust information from dodgy sources, and stay calm during this situation," he said. So far, no casualties have been reported.

Meanwhile, an earthquake also struck Poso regency, Central Sulawesi, on Sunday. The 5.7-magnitude earthquake hit the area at 9:32 a.m. local time, with the epicenter being 53 km west of the regency at the depth of 10 km.

The head of the BMKG, Palu Cahyo Nugroho, said another earthquake had impacted the area eight times until the afternoon.

"The earthquake does not have the potential to cause a tsunami," Cahyo said.

The USGS' website reported a 5.4-magnitude earthquake in Central Sulawesi, with its epicenter on land. It also recorded a 4.7-magnitude earthquake on March 23 not far from the one in North Sulawesi. It said the earthquake's epicenter was 141 km northwest of Tobelo in North Maluku.

The spokesperson for the Poso administration, Armol Songko, told The Jakarta Post that there were no casualties.

"Parishioners were fleeing from churches when the earthquake hit," he said.

Armol also reported that several churches in Labone village, Pamona Utara subdistrict, suffered minor damages while temples in Meko village were heavily damaged.

"None of the residents are vacating their homes. They are just sitting outside in anticipation of another earthquake," he added.

The earthquake in Poso was also be felt by Palu's residents who live approximately 250 km from its epicenter.

Resident Tegar, 21, who lives on Jl. Kijang, admitted that he had frantically escaped from his house due to the tremor.

On Sept. 28, a 7.5-magnitude earthquake hit Palu and Donggala, triggering a tsunami and soil liquefaction.

The disasters killed over 2,000 people with about 5,000 being reported missing.

The National Disaster Mitigation Agency said the quake was caused by a Palu-Koro thrust fault that stretched from Palu to Teluk Bone. The Palu-Koro fault was very active and its movement might have caused a submarine landslide that triggered the tsunami. (evi)

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Arya Dipa contributed to this report from Bandung, West Java.

P.S.

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<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/03/24/earthquakes-hit-ternate-and-poso.html>