

Falling boulders, foaming rivers panic villagers

KOTA KINABALU: Panic gripped villagers living around the foothills of Mount Kinabalu when boulders and rocks began rolling down close to their homes.

Some said they were preparing to evacuate as rivers flowing from the mountain began to foam up.

Some reported seeing hundreds of dead fish floating.

Landslides have also been occurring over the past 24 hours at Kampung Kiau.

The Meteorological Department recorded a 3.2-magnitude earthquake near Ranau at 6.05pm.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) geologist Dr Felix Tongkul said the landslides and foam on rivers were the after effects of Friday's earthquake.

He said a heavy downpour dislodged boulders, rock and soil that were earlier loosened by the earthquake.

He said landslides could "dam up" rivers flowing down from

Those living downstream of these rivers should take extra precautions as flash floods could occur.

Dr Felix Tongkul

Mount Kinabalu and that this could lead to a disastrous situation.

"Those living downstream of these rivers should take extra precautions as flash floods could occur," Dr Felix added.

On the foams, Dr Felix said this could be an indication of a high concentration of minerals from the mountain leaching into the rivers.

He said a team of chemists from the university would head to Kaung and nearby villages to collect water samples and study them.



Restless: Kampung Kiau residents looking at Mount Kinabalu. Panic gripped the villagers living around the foothills of the mountain when boulders and rocks began rolling down close to their homes. — Bernama