

10 JUN 1997

Kinabalu

IS MOUNT KINABALU GROWING?

KOTA KINABALU, June 10 (Bernama) -- Geologists claim that the majestic Mount Kinabalu, Southeast Asia's highest peak, is growing at the rate of five millimetres a year.

The established height of the mountain, regarded by locals as a sacred mountain, was 4,101 metres (13,455 feet), measured 87 years ago.

But if the claim that the mountain is growing by five millimetres a year is true, then simple arithmetics would tell that the present height of the mountain is 4,101.435 metres (about 13,456 feet and five inches).

That's five millimetres multiply by 87 years plus 4,101 metres.

But measuring the exact height of a mountain as majestic as the Kinabalu would not be as easy as multiplying and adding figures on the calculator and that is why the Institution of Surveyors, Malaysia (ISM) is embarking on a technical expedition to height the mountain.

The project, called ISM Project Kinabalu '97, is organised in collaboration with the Sabah Land and Survey Department and Sabah Parks.

The project's organising chairman, Ho Kin Wong said the expedition, using advance satellite technology from June 23-27, is aimed at re-establishing or confirming the summit's true height in the nearest millimetres possible.

"This effort comes after a lapse of 87 years when the height was fixed at 4,101 metres and the mountain has since said to have grown," he said in a statement.

Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee and several VIPs would also be ascending the mountain on June 24 and would perform the heighting the next day. A traditional sacrifice ceremony will also be held prior to actual heighting.

A contest to guess the new height of the mountain had also been launched, offering prize money totalling RM120,000 and the result will be known by June 25.

The new height of the mountain however, is expected to be proclaimed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in August. -- BERNAMA

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