



IISEE Newsletter



Aug 31, 2026

International Institute of Seismology and Earthquake Engineering BRI Japan

Number **237**

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Sympathy for the Victims of the Earthquakes in Colombia and Indonesia

By IISEE

It is with great sadness that the extensive damage was caused by the deep earthquake (M7.4) that struck Colombia on August 10, 2026 (UTC), as well as the earthquake (M7.7) that struck Flores Island, Indonesia, on August 14, 2026 (UTC).

We would like to express our heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives and our sympathies to those who have been affected by the earthquakes.

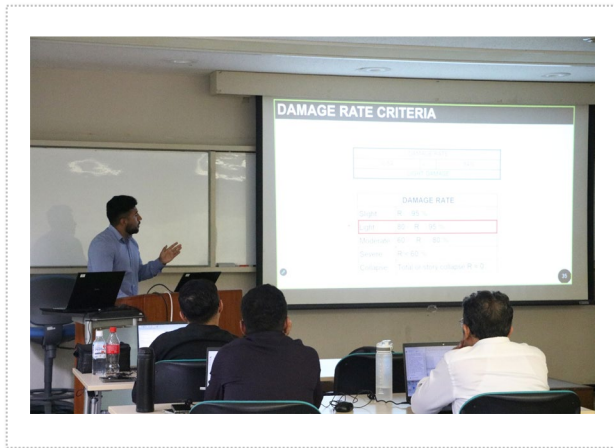
We also pray from the bottom of our hearts for the earliest possible recovery of the affected areas.

The international training programs on Seismology and Earthquake Engineering began in 1960. Since then, 48 participants from Colombia and 155 participants from Indonesia have completed the programs. We pray that they and their family will be safe in these difficult times.

The Interim Presentation of the Individual Study

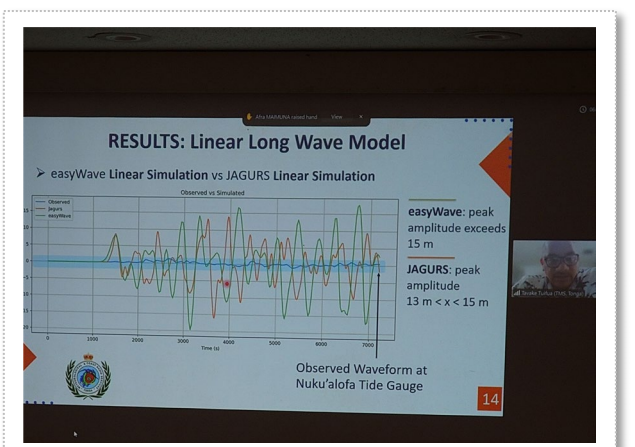
By Mai Ito, Chief Research Engineer

On June 24, the Interim Presentation for the Earthquake Engineering Course was held in the IISEE Hall. Seven participants presented the progress of their individual study research for their master's reports. Among them, two participants who are conducting their research at universities outside IISEE gave their presentations online. Following valuable discussions and feedback from supervisors and participants, they will continue their research with enthusiasm toward the successful completion of their master's reports.



By Saeko Kita, Chief Research Scientist

On June 25, the Interim Presentation for the Seismology and Tsunami Courses was held in the IISEE Hall. Ten trainees took their progress in their own individual study and very active discussions took place among the participants. Several individual studies apply machine-learning techniques to geophysical analyses. With cooperation and friendship, the trainees are working hard to complete their master's theses.



Report on Kansai Study Trip (July.7-10, 2026)—Strengthening Seismic Disaster Risk Reduction Countermeasures for Critical Buildings Course—

Lessons from the Kansai Study Trip

Mr. GOMEZ GARCIA Juan Jose

National Center for Disaster Prevention (CENAPRED), Mexico

Each of the experiences and lessons gained throughout the course has been exceptional. However, the study trip to the Kansai region was the highlight of the program and a key opportunity to understand the Japanese approach to seismic disaster risk reduction.

Arriving in Kobe, after learning about its history during the lectures, created the feeling of being in a place shaped by tragedy and resilience. It invited reflection on the relationship between human beings and nature, and on the importance of understanding natural phenomena to reduce disaster risk.

Our first visit was to E-Defense, where we saw its three-dimensional shaking table, capable of reproducing motion with six degrees of freedom. The explanations and tour of the facilities showed how technological innovation and scientific research contribute to understanding earthquake effects, improving structural safety, and reducing risk.

The following day, we visited the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution. Through testimonies and stories, we were able to understand the human dimension of disaster. More than once, I felt a lump in my throat while listening to people who had lost everything overnight but found the strength to rebuild their lives and cities. Their experiences showed the importance of transforming pain into knowledge and preserving memory so future generations can be better prepared.

Finally, visiting the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge was impressive. Standing at the top of one of its towers felt like being above the world, not as if conquering nature, but as if witnessing the result of human knowledge, technology, and discipline working together to understand it, adapt to it, and build more safely.

It was an unforgettable experience that gave the course content a real, technical, and human dimension, reinforcing the importance of learning from the past to build more resilient societies.



Fig. 1. E-Defense

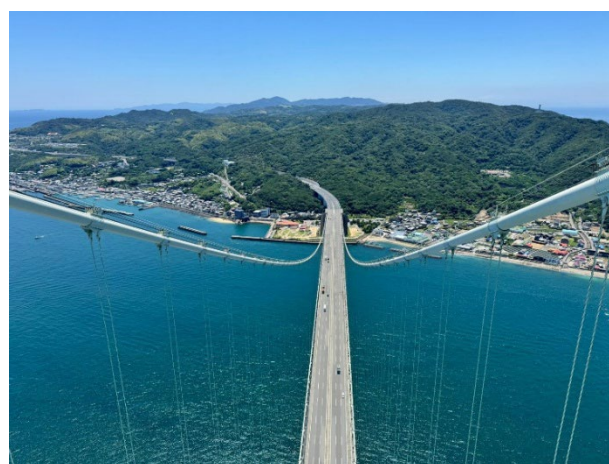


Fig. 2. Akashi Kaikyo Bridge

The Road to Recovery: Lessons from Kobe

Ms. CRUZ Jessa Marie

Department of Public Works and Highways, Philippines

The Kansai Study Trip helped me see disaster risk reduction from a different perspective.

Aside from learning about Japan's seismic engineering and disaster management practices, what stood out to me was how they continue to preserve the memories of the Great Hanshin Earthquake. Visiting the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution made me realize that preserving the memories of past disasters is also part of disaster preparedness. Through the stories, photographs, and personal experiences of the survivors, they continue to remind people of the importance of being prepared.

Another takeaway from the study trip was Japan's commitment to Build Back Better. They did not simply rebuild what was lost. They studied the causes of the damage, improved engineering practices, strengthened disaster management systems, and passed these lessons on to future generations. Seeing how research, education, and engineering came together to improve resilience gave me a greater appreciation of the effort behind creating safer communities.

As a structural engineer from the Philippines, I hope to apply these lessons in my own work. This study trip reminded me that resilience is not only about designing stronger structures but also about learning from past disasters and using those lessons to improve future projects.



The Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution preserve the memories and lessons of the Great Hanshin Earthquake to promote disaster preparedness and resilience.



The "BE KOBE" monument symbolizes Kobe's resilience and recovery, reflecting the city's determination to build back better after the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake.

The Third “Strengthening Seismic Disaster Risk Reduction Countermeasures for Critical Buildings Course” Closed

By IISEE

On July 23, we held a closing ceremony for the IISEE Training Course “Strengthening Seismic Disaster Risk Reduction Countermeasures for Critical Buildings”, which began on May 29.

The closing ceremony was held at JICA Tsukuba. Following congratulatory speeches by Mr. Azegami, Deputy Director General of JICA Tsukuba, and Dr. Fukuyama, President of the Building Research Institute, each participant received certificates of completion from both organizations. At the ceremony, Ms. ABRIL CABRERA Lizeth Yurany, a participant from Colombia, gave a speech on behalf of the participants.

During the training period, the participants attended the lectures enthusiastically and learned the standards for maintaining the functionality of buildings and measures to be taken before and after a disaster. They also created action plans to be utilized in their home countries. Through site visits, they were able to exchange views and built closer relationships with Japanese engineers.

We expect the participants to make use of the knowledge they acquired in Japan and contribute to reducing earthquake damage and improving disaster prevention measures in their home countries. We also hope that they will continue international exchanges with Japanese engineers and researchers they met through this training program.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the lecturers who cooperate with this training program and to everyone who kindly supported us during the site visit.



Mr. AZEGAMI Tomohiro,
Deputy Director General, Tsukuba Center,
Japan International Cooperation Agency



Dr. FUKUYAMA Hiroshi,
President of BRI

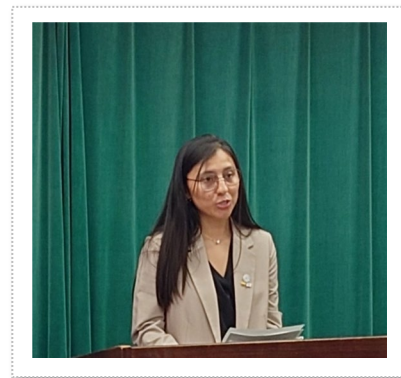


Group Photo

Closing Ceremony Remarks

Closing Ceremony for the Knowledge Co-Creation Program – Strengthening Seismic Disaster Risk Reduction Countermeasures for Critical Buildings

By Lizeth Abril, Civil Engineer from UNGRD – Colombia



Dr. Hiroshi Fukuyama, President of the Building Research Institute;

Mr. Tomohiro Azegami, Deputy Director General of Tsukuba Center,
Japan International Cooperation Agency;

Distinguished guests, instructors, colleagues, and fellow participants, good morning.

It is a great honor to speak today on behalf of all participants at the closing ceremony of this Knowledge Co-Creation Program.

First, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Japan, JICA, the Building Research Institute, and all the experts who generously shared their knowledge, experience, and dedication throughout the last two months.

This program has been much more than a technical course. It has been an opportunity to understand how science, engineering, innovation, and public policy work together to reduce disaster seismic risk and protect people's lives.

Through lectures, technical visits, and discussions, we learned about seismic hazard assessment, structural evaluation of existing buildings, retrofit technologies, structural health monitoring, rapid post-earthquake inspections, and business continuity planning. These experiences have given us practical tools that we can adapt and apply according to the realities and needs of our own countries.

As engineers, researchers, and public officials, we all share a common responsibility: transforming knowledge into action. The value of this program will not be measured only by what we learned in Japan, but by how we use this knowledge to strengthen safer, more resilient, and more sustainable communities when we return home.

On behalf of all participants, I would also like to thank Mom Koyano for her constant guidance, patience, kindness, and support throughout every stage of this program. Her commitment has made this experience not only well organized, but also truly memorable for all of us.

Finally, I hope that the friendships and professional relationships built here will continue long after this course ends. The challenges of disaster risk reduction are global, and international cooperation remains one of our greatest strengths. I sincerely hope that the collaboration between Japan and our countries will continue to grow through future technical exchanges, research, and joint initiatives.

Thank you once again to Japan, JICA, BRI, our lecturers, and everyone who made this program possible.

It has been a privilege to learn from you.

Arigatou gozaimashita.

Final Presentation held on July 30th and 31st

By Dr. Yushiro Fujii, Director of IISEE

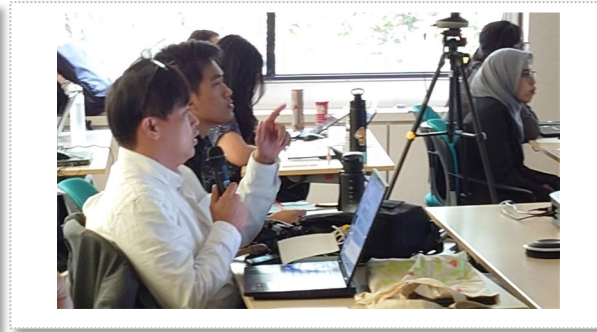
Over two days starting on July 30, we held the final presentation sessions for the 2025–2026 One-Year Training Program's individual study research. The final presentation sessions were jointly organized by the three courses—Seismology, Earthquake Engineering, and Tsunami Disaster Mitigation—and featured presentations of research findings from the master reports.

First and foremost, we are very pleased that all participants who had been receiving individual studies outside the BRI returned safely to Tsukuba, and that all 17 participants were able to present in person on the day of the event. We would also like to thank the supervisors from outside the BRI for participating online. Both days of the final presentation session featured excellent presentations and lively question-and-answer sessions, making the event very fulfilling. I would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to the supervisors, advisors, and staff for their cooperation. I would also like to thank Prof. Tamura, Program Director of the GRIPS DMP Program, for attending in person on both days and for delivering remarks on the final day.

As you all know, on July 28—two days before the final presentation sessions—an M6.8 earthquake struck Kumamoto, claiming 38 lives and causing significant damage, including the collapse of homes, the explosion at the commercial facility, the collapse of factory chimneys, and extensive damage to infrastructure such as roads, railways, and water mains. Looking to the rest of the world, on June 24 (local time), two major earthquakes measuring M7.2 and M7.5 struck Venezuela in quick succession, claiming the lives of more than 6,000 people; the full extent of the damage remains unclear. This August, a deep earthquake measuring M7.4 struck Colombia, causing significant damage, including the collapse of buildings. Furthermore, in the Flores Island, Indonesia, damage caused by a M7.7 earthquake has been reported. Amid these circumstances, as professionals involved in earthquake and tsunami disaster prevention, I believe we have no choice but to do our utmost in the areas where we can make somethings—namely, training and research.

To all participants: While we are experiencing a string of hot days here in Japan, please take care of your health and do your best to complete the training program. By the time this newsletter is issued, I imagine that you will have finished your master reports and synopses and will be heading out on your field trip to the Tohoku region. Please be careful with your safety and enjoy the study trip.





(Short Report) Tsukuba Chibikko Hakase 2026

By IISEE

In Tsukuba Science City, where the BRI is located, an event called “Tsukuba Chibikko Hakase” is held during the summer vacation for elementary and junior high school students, allowing them to learn while having a fun as they visit about 40 research institutions and facilities.

At IISEE, we held a permanent exhibition featuring models illustrating the deep subsurface structure beneath the Pacific Ocean and around the Japanese archipelago, as well as lectures for elementary and junior high school students on the characteristics of earthquakes and how buildings shake. The participating children built model buildings using straws and styrofoam boards, and observed firsthand how the way a building shakes varies depending on its shape and the characteristics of the seismic motion.

We hope this event will help provide the participating children with an opportunity to think about a future filled with dreams and hopes.



Business Trip to Uzbekistan (Full Report)

By Takumi Hayashida, Chief Research Scientist

In last month's newsletter, we briefly introduced our business trip to Uzbekistan at the end of April. In this issue, we would like to share a more detailed report on the visit.

The 16th Asian Seismological Commission (ASC) was held at the AZIMUT Grand Hotel in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from April 26 to 29. Dr. Hara and I attended the conference on behalf of IISEE. The ASC is held every two years, and this was IISEE's first in-person participation since the 12th ASC, held in Chengdu, China, in 2018 (For details, please see IISEE Newsletter No. 158).

More than 300 participants from 32 countries attended the conference. The conference featured 22 technical sessions and more than 300 presentations. I presented a poster entitled "Development of a Low-Cost Microtremor Observation and Analysis System" in the session "Imaging Earth's Structure: From Shallow Subsurface to Deep Crust." One of the most impressive aspects of this year's ASC was that the session "Earthquake Engineering and Infrastructure Resilience" featured the largest number of presentations, highlighting the interest in earthquake engineering within the conference.

As far as we know, six presentations were given by IISEE former participants, including Dr. Harsh Gupta (1966–1967 S-course), the Founder President of the ASC, and Dr. Lok Bijaya Adhikari (2002–2003 S-course; 2013 G-course), the Chair of the Nepal Seismological Association. We were especially pleased to learn that Timur Mamarozikov (2024 C-course) received both the Best Presentation Award for Young Scientists and the IASPEI Early Career Scientist Award in this ASC. We warmly congratulate him on this outstanding achievement.

In addition to the technical sessions, the conference organizers arranged several memorable technical visits, including tours of seismic observation facilities and a visit to the memorial commemorating the devastating 1966 Tashkent earthquake. These activities provided valuable opportunities to deepen our understanding of seismicity and earthquake observation in Uzbekistan.

IISEE also set up a booth as the only official sponsor from Japan. Many researchers particularly from Central Asia, visited our booth. We were delighted to see strong interest in IISEE's training programs, especially among young researchers, making the conference an excellent opportunity to introduce our activities and strengthen our network in the region.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to Dr. Ilkhom Alimukhamedov (2002–2003 S-course) and all the members of the organizing committee for their efforts in hosting such a successful conference.

You can watch footage of the event on the conference's official YouTube channel below (we're in the video).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-LyS49TOuE>



A street corner in Tashkent



At the memorial to the 1966 Tashkent earthquake



IISSE alumni dinner



Timur-san at the award ceremony

Catching Up with Former Participants — Part 4

Hakim Bechtoula

Course participated: 1996-1997 Earthquake Engineering Course
Director, National Earthquake Engineering Research Center, Algeria

On October 10, 1980, a devastating earthquake struck the Chlef region, marking a tragic yet decisive turning point in Algeria's history. This event triggered a nationwide awareness of the urgent need to understand and control seismic risk. In direct response to this critical necessity, the National Earthquake Engineering Research Center (CGS) was established. Operating under the authority of the Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning, and the City, the CGS has since become the scientific and technical pillar—continuously evolving—of Algeria's national strategy for earthquake protection.



The CGS transforms its expertise into tangible actions with direct impact on public safety and national development.

•Rapid Field Intervention:

Beyond its research role, the CGS is an operational response force. Following the Mila earthquake, multidisciplinary teams (seismic hazard, microzonation, geotechnics, earthquake engineering) were rapidly deployed to assess damage and risks, demonstrating its capacity to respond to national emergencies.

•Expertise for Major National Projects:

The CGS provides technical support for landmark infrastructure projects. It conducted studies and tests for the Great Mosque of Algiers and evaluated the seismic performance of stadium grandstands, including those in Tizi-Ouzou and 5 July Stadium, ensuring the safety of tens of thousands of spectators during major events.

•Continuous Professional Training:

The CGS plays a key role in knowledge dissemination by organizing advanced training programs for engineers and technicians on the RPA 2024, as well as on complex topics such as landslides, soil liquefaction, and experimental methods in structural dynamics.

•Research and International Cooperation:

To remain at the forefront of innovation, the CGS actively engages in international research. It publishes scientific studies and collaborates with leading institutions, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), to exchange expertise and integrate global best practices.

By transforming cutting-edge research into evolving construction codes, practical expertise, and specialized training, the CGS does not merely protect buildings—it saves lives. Its role is essential to ensuring public safety and fostering sustainable and secure development across the country, today and for future generations.

Ameer Hyder

Course participated: 2003-2004 Seismology Course

Chief Seismologist, Pakistan Meteorological Department, National Tsunami Center in Karachi

I am working as a Chief Seismologist in the Pakistan Meteorological Department at the National Tsunami Center in Karachi. Currently, my main area of work is the supervision of the following:

- Installation of GPS (GNSS) stations throughout the country.
- Installation of broadband stations throughout the country.
- Sharing Data with the International Network of Early Tsunami Warning and Modeling.
- Selecting sites for seismic observatories.
- Assisting with building code.
- Assessing hazards in the building sector.
- Monitoring developments in the field of Seismology throughout the world.
- Research related to earthquake prediction.
- Earthquake soil amplification measurement.

- Imparting training to the department's staff, who are involved in analyzing daily seismic data, and the day-to-day operation of seismic stations at Karachi.

I am in charge of the Research and Development Seismic section of the National Seismic Monitoring Centre. I was fully involved in the establishment of a network of 10 Seismic Broadband Stations for the Pakistan Meteorological Department as a technical officer.

- To monitor earthquake data from the WWSSN instrument
- To calculate the magnitude of an earthquake on reactor scale.
- To compile the Earthquake Bulletin.
- To supply seismic data to the end user.
- To provide earthquake information to electronic media, the government, and NGOs.

Najeeb Ahmed Amir

Course participated: 2001-2002 Seismology Course

Director, National Seismic Monitoring Centre (NSMC), Islamabad, Pakistan

I am working as the Director of the National Seismic Monitoring Centre. I am dealing with some international projects with China, Turkey, and Oman for the upgrading of the network. Recently, we established a Geophysics Station in Karachi, in which we installed a gravity meter, a magnetic meter, and GNSS. I completed my course in 2001-2002 in Seismology at BRI.

Rodolfo C. Cabael

Course participated: 1987-1988 Earthquake Engineering Course

Vice President for Finance, Global Renewable Energy Development Services, Inc. (GREDS), the Philippines

After my early retirement in 2002 from the Phil. National Oil Co.- Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) Geothermal Division, having been employed as Project Coordinator for the World Bank funded Leyte-Cebu / Leyte-Luzon Interconnection Projects, I worked as a freelance Civil/Structural Engineer doing structural design and project management. In 2021, together with my co-retirees from PNOC-EDC, we formed the Global Renewable Energy Development Services, Inc. (GREDS). Aside from being in charge of Finance, I also assist in the structural design and project management when needed.

GREDS was organized to provide end-to-end services as a project integrator to companies involved in the development and/or operation of renewable, i.e., geothermal, wind, solar, and hydro energy, or conventional energy and industrial plants. We provide solutions—from land acquisition to plant operation—ensuring precision, reliability, and sustainability. Our tailored solutions and collaborative approach drive innovation, problem-solving, and operational efficiency for every client.

Visit to IISEE by Former Participants

By IISEE

On July 29, IISEE welcomed two former participants, Mr. Wijayanto from Tsunami Disaster Mitigation Course (2009-2010) and Mr. Octantyo Ardian Yudhi from Seismology Course (2019-2020).



Recent publications

By IISEE

1. **Sasajima, R., Shibazaki, B., Iwamori, H., & Yoshida, K. (2026)**

Modeling the Absolute Stress Field in the Forearc in the Northeast Japan Region Before and After the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake. Prog Earth Planet Sci 13, 44

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40645-026-00833-8>

Outline: Following the 2011 Tohoku-oki earthquake, the dominant focal mechanism in the offshore forearc of northeastern Japan shifted dramatically from reverse faulting to normal faulting. This study elucidated the mechanisms underlying the formation of the stress field in the offshore forearc and the changes in those mechanisms triggered by the 2011 Tohoku-oki earthquake.



Contact Us

The IISEE Newsletter is intended as a go-between for IISEE and ex-participants.

We encourage you to contribute reports and articles to this newsletter. Please let us know your current activities in your country.

We also welcome your co-workers and friends to register on our mailing list.

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