

Title:

Geological Disasters in Japan

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Abstract:

As huge geological disasters in Japan, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995 and the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 are still fresh in our memory. For recent 400 years, there are thirty nine geological disasters with more than 1,000 casualties. Among them, six huge disasters killed more than 10,000 people. The worst one is the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 with more than 140,000 casualties mainly by fire and collapse of buildings. About 20,000 people died by the Meiji Sanriku Tsunami in 1896, the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, and the Houei Earthquake in 1707. Tsunami by huge slope collapse of the Unzen-Mayuyama Volcano into the Ariake Sea in the Kyushu Island in 1792 also killed more than 15,000. Yaeyama Tsunami attacked Sakishima Islands in Okinawa Prefecture and killed more than 12,000 people in 1771. The most popular trigger of them is earthquake and volcanic activities. Heavy rain by Typhoon or seasonal rain front etc., are in no way negligible as trigger of slope failures. As disasters type, tsunami is most terrible, fire and collapse of buildings, slope failure, tidal wave and flood follows. In Hokkaido, more than 3,000 people died by geological disaster in recent 300 years. The three worst are Tsunami by the collapse of the Oshima-Oshima Volcano in 1741 (1,467 casualties) and that by the collapse of the Komagatake Volcano in 1640 (700 casualties), the Taisho Volcanic Mudflow in 1926 (144 casualties). Disaster by volcanic activities is one of the features in Hokkaido. Comparing with small-frequent disaster and large-rare one, while measure for the former tend to be carried out anyway, that for the latter tend to be put back and “The danger past and God forgotten”. We have to promote disaster mitigation for them at all times.