BRIEF ACCOUNT OF PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING SEISMIC HAZARD AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON PREDICTIONS IN CHINA

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As is well known, China is a country with heigh seismic activity. Since liberation in 1949, seismological research has developed rapidly along with economic and cultural progress, with strong support from the government in particular. Studies on earthquake prediction have formed part of this research programme since the Xingtai earthquake (M=7.2) in 1966. From that time, the nationwide seismological redearch programme has advanced step by step, and the necessary procedures for controlling it have been set up.

Through predictions made in the last 10 years, the system has been tested and modified several times in order to meet social demands in our country.

Fig. 1 shows the organizational system for seismic hazard assessment operating in China at the present time. The main principle is to combine professional observations with those made by the masses, and to carry out comprehensive analysis and interpretation of data obtained from both sources. A tentative prediction is issued by the authorities and the warning information is transmitted to the public through the government at different levels.

Fig. 2 illustrates the procedures for analysing data and making a prediction. During the medium-term prediction phase, no information about the expected earthquake should be released. Studies such as checking and evaluating data must be done by scientists. Following this, an alert may be issued and the corresponding measures to mitigate earthquake risks should be taken.

DISCUSSION

Prof. Nersesov asked whether the Director of SSB could change the decision of the provincial government to issue a warning. Dr. Zhu replied that he could not, but that in any case the two authorities would probably be collaborating.