



Jamaica's vulnerability to earthquakes and tsunamis will take centre stage at a symposium to be held at the Terra Nova All Suite Hotel as part of Earthquake Awareness Week 2013 activities.

The conference, which will be held on Thursday, January 24, will explore the country's response and preparedness mechanisms.

The event, which will be held as part of activities to mark Earthquake Awareness Week 2013, is being staged by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) for its stakeholders and partners. It will involve discussions about the country's Tsunami protocol, as well as the sharing of findings about the country's vulnerability to earthquakes.

Earthquake Awareness Week, which is being observed from January 20 to 26 under the theme: '7.8 Wi ready...Yuh Ready?' will commence on Sunday (January 20) with activities focused on churches across the island. A message is to be read at services and congregants are also to be sensitised about the hazard of earthquakes.

On Monday (January 21), activities will focus on families, encouraging them to prepare family emergency kits and communication plans. The activities will be held under the theme: 'Earthquake Ready Families: Earthquake safe Communities'.

The following day, Tuesday (January 22), the focus will shift to schools with an island-wide "shake down" encouraging all schools to conduct earthquake drills at a convenient time throughout the day.

The business community, on Wednesday (January 23), is being encouraged to hold lunch time sensitisation sessions or drills under the theme: 'Protect your business and employees'.

An earthquake awareness seminar will be staged for the media on Friday (January 25); while a community sensitisation session and awareness desk in Montego Bay, will close the week.

Director General of ODPEM, Ronald Jackson, speaking at a recent press conference to launch the week of activities, at the agency's headquarters in Kingston, informed of other initiatives for the period, including the production of three earthquake public service announcements (PSAs).

These are to be voiced by 'Earthquake Ambassadors', artiste, Alaine; TV personality and actor, Christopher "Johnny" Daley; and dub poetry group, Nomaddz.

"We will also be utilising the Jamaica Urban Transit Company (JUTC) bus and our own ODPEM bus for advertising with an earthquake ad that will be on buses beginning January 20 and run for a period of six months," Mr. Jackson said.