

Indonesia: More research needed on natural radiation exposure

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More research needs to be done on people who live in areas where they are exposed to high natural radiation in Indonesia. - File pic

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The National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) environmental and health studies is vital to understand the impact of radiation exposure on people, according to Antara news.

Eka Djatnika Nugraha, a researcher from the BRIN Metrology Safety Technology and Nuclear Quality Research Centre, said in some places in Indonesia, such as Mamuju in West Sulawesi, people have been exposed to natural radiation.

The level of natural radiation is higher than the global average, at around 2.4 millisieverts per year, for people who live in Mamuju, he said.

"This situation may pose a health risk to the public due to chronic external and internal exposure," Eka said adding Mamuju is an area of high natural background radiation due to the high concentration of uranium and thorium in the rocks and soil in its surrounding.

Because of this, studies on the health of people living in such areas could serve as a potential source of information about the effects of chronic low-dose exposure, he said on Friday.

Eka added in order to obtain scientific evidence on the effects of chronic low-dose radiation exposure on health, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive environmental assessment of the exposure situation in areas of high natural radiation.

Rohadi Awaludin, head of the BRIN Nuclear Energy Research Organisation, said that it is important to know and understand the safety and protection measures against nuclear radiation technology, especially for everyone involved or in contact with it.

"Nuclear radiation technology, including ionization, has been used and applied to various aspects, including industry and health, food, and others. This technology is the answer to the problems we have, but there are also risks that (one) must be (aware of) from this technology," he said.