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[Aerospace] NSPO Taiwan's Satellite Pictures Show the Danger of Avalanche Lakes
[Aerospace] NSPO Taiwan's Satellite Pictures Show the Danger of Avalanche Lakes (Chinese Version)

udn.com (2009/08/14) and The Liberty Times E-paper (2009/08/24) The National Space Program Office (NSPO), NSC, presented the images taken by Formosa Satellite 2 (FS2) and warned of the danger of the avalanche lakes induced or worsened by Typhoon Morakot. NSC notified that the number of barrier dams was apparently increased, some of which had even stored up large volume of water. If these dammed lakes burst, the downstream habitants would be endangered.

Satellite Picture of Taimali River in Laulau Mountain area
taken by FS2 / Udn journalist Shao-ping LUO

NSPO, which former President Teng-hui LI commissioned Professor Hann-min SHA to incorporate in Hsinchu Science Park in 1911, had succeeded in projecting three satellites. The assembly, test, component R&D and monitoring were carried out in NSPO. FS2 was internationally praised for its strong capacity. It had contributed terrain images for understanding the natural catastrophes including Indian Ocean Tsunami, Sichuan Earthquake in China etc.; this time, it also captured images of the landslides and dammed lakes after 88 Flood. During the last five years, its data had been cited by more than one thousand institutes from sixty-five countries. With the advantage of its twice detour around the earth per day, more valuable images which greatly helped us understand our landforms, were recorded. FS3, launched on 16th-Apr., 2005, carried with the mission of global climate monitoring, taking down the data about melting status of the glaciers in polar regions and the temperature and climate changes. Besides, the design of the single rocket with six satellites (with one projection, six satellites were sent to different locations at once) as well as the fact that most of its components were made in Taiwan, made FS3 specially significant.

FS2 passed Taiwan once a day at noon, taking and sending back images of Taiwan terrain for about one to two hours. The data after Morakot were analyzed by Spatial Information Research Center (SIRC), NTU; Disaster Prevention Research Center (DPRC), NCKU; Center for Space and Remote Sensing Research (CSRSR), NCU; and Formosat-2 IADC, NTNU, together, showing that the avalanche lake in Caoling, Kukeng Twonshio, Yunlin County, was very dangerous, for more landslides were observed near the lake comparing with the image taken last December, even though the size was not significantly larger. As for the possible avalanche lakes in Kaohsiung and Pintung were not successfully taken yet, and hence no analysis result was available. It was reminded, however, that some suggested avalanche lakes might be mere mudslide pools, and hence not instantly dangerous, but they needed strict monitoring as well.

The second stage plan of NSPO was to build FS5. It was expected that all the components, the R&D, the assembly and the test could be completed in Taiwan. The second stage plan would be due in 2018, and hopefully FS5 could be launched in 2014.

Further Information:
NSPO website
NTU-SIRC (temporary link error)
NCKU-DPRC
NCU-CSRSR
NTNU-Formosat-2 IADC (temporary link error)
udn.com 2009/08/14 (Chinese)
The Liberty Times E-paper 2009/08/24 (Chinese)

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