I am a structural engineer working for the Christchurch City Council and had just inspected the CBD this morning, joining the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Team here. The CBD had been cordoned off and the situation is pretty grim here. I had been informed that we might possibly have a Malaysian trapped in the collapsed CTV building and prayer virgil had been held by Malaysians at some local Chinese Methodist Church. Pls continue to pray for this situation since we lost contact with the Malaysian for two days already.

Structural engineers, including myself and those from Auckland and Christchurch were having an earthquake related seminar in Holiday Inn (Which is just opposite to the now endangered Grand Chancellor building) yesterday when we were hit. We were on the 4th floor of the building and literally witnessed the collapsed of nearby masonry buildings.

We need all the support we can get at this moment as fatigue is kicking into all the rescue staff who hadnt had much sleep. We are still hoping for the best. - Vincent Wong

My name is Afida Sohana Awang Soh, a Malaysian working and studying in Christchurch. When the quake happened, I was in the Registrar’s Office in the fifth floor of Christchurch Women’s Hospital. Files and books flew out of the shelves, landing on my head and shoulder, I dived under the table to protect myself from the falling objects. My eyes were just starting to be accustomed to the darkness when the back-up generator suddenly kick started and lights flood the room again.

Just outside my office, patients and staff were in tears. People were still recovering from the last quake in September, and this new one, despite only being 6.3 on the richter scale, is much more violent. Through the window, you can see dust rising up in the sky. The news on the television showed the devastation around town.

We did a ward round to check on our patients, hugged our colleagues who are worried about their loved ones at home, and started moving beds around to make room for possible patient transfer from the Public Hospital that was much more affected by the quake. It was not easy.
The first gut reaction was to get on the phone and call loved ones, but the phone line was jammed. Eyes were stinging and tears were welling, but we had to keep it together for the sake of the patients and other colleagues who are much more affected.

Downstairs, a toddler was brought in, injured by a television that fell on him. Unfortunately, despite all efforts from my colleagues, the child became one of the first casualties of today's (Tuesday) quake.

We turned our outpatients department into a crisis center, and started getting as much supply from around, awaiting the flood of patients that are sure to come. Since I will be on call tomorrow, the management sent me home, to rest and be ready for what is to come tomorrow.

I left my car at the hospital as all the roads around were cordoned, and the traffic was massive. The walk home through Hagley Park South was scary. It felt like I was in the middle of a war zone. Six helicopters landed in the park as I passed by. Bringing in supplies, I am sure. Also to be ready to evacuate patients to Auckland if required, as announced earlier.

I walked into my house, not knowing what to expect. The fire alarm greeted me, and despite my efforts, will not stop wailing its siren. Books, photo frames, CDs and DVDs are strewn all over. Most of my pantry is on the kitchen floor. Broken glasses everywhere. Electricity and water were gone. I called my parents and husband in Malaysia to let them know I am safe. I sat in the middle of the living room with tears that finally came. Alhamdulillah, I am safe. My heart reaches out to those who are hurt and in worse conditions. But I need a place to stay, and rest. I gathered my emergency kit - a sleeping bag, bottles of water, phone chargers, toothbrush and some clothing. And as I was feeling more and more at lost of where to go, my dear friend called and offered his place to stay, and the students invited me to come over for dinner. I called around to check on the Malaysian students. The Canterburians are gathered and they are with plenty of food supply, thanks to Hafiz and Poh Eng from the students' association. Richard, president of Lincoln Malaysian Students’ Association also replied with good news. The medical students gathered themselves together and cooked a big hearty meal for everyone.

Despite all the adversity, people were kind and thoughtful. Here I am, in my friend's living room, trying to invite sleep that is difficult to come. The rumbles keep chasing the sleep away, everytime I try to close my eyes. Outside, the temperature drops, and the drizzle continues. My heart goes to all the Canterburians out there, may Allah protect all of you. - Dr Afida Sohana Awang Soh

Although the quake lasted for a good 10 to 20 seconds, it felt like ages. Walking out of the lecture room was like entering a warzone because parts of the interior were flung everywhere. The aftershocks continued to haunt the whole of Christchurch for the rest of the day. But thank God that we were all fine. - Tony Wong

Im a PhD student at University of Otago, Christchurch and was in my center during the time of the quake. I was in the pantry and was heading back to my room when it all happened. The building started shaking and we literally took cover underneath the door frame.
We've had a few of these before and I was here during the Sept 4 quake as well. It was more violent this time compared to the one last year. Although shorter, the devastation was immense. All the newly replaced cupboards had again toppled and some which were already fastened to the walls came of their hinges. When it was calmer we headed downstairs and it was chaos. As I am in the medical school opposite the hospital I could see the horror of people trying to get to the hospital with cars zooming around and ambulance trying to rush out with their sirens wailing.

Thank god we were safe as there were others who were not so lucky. I'm also thankful that I've a place to stay tonight as many have no homes and it is cold and wet outside. I had lost my house during the quake last year and needed shelter with friends. The Malaysian community has once again done well by linking with those around them and providing shelter and support to those in need. - Dr Amer Siddiq Amer Nordin

I was working today and at 12.51pm (7.51am Malaysian time) the earthquake suddenly occurred at 6.3 richter scale. The whole building was swaying left to right and I screamed and was terrified.

I was having lunch at that time. Massive damages occurred in Christchurch city centre and the public hospital patients have to be evacuated and a church collapsed flat on the ground. Including a big portion of the Christchurch Cathedral Square came down.

It is worst than the big one 7.1 in September because this one is shallower at a depth of 5km near the Lyttleton Harbour. An hour later around 1.51pm another one followed at 4.5 richter scale and smaller aftershocks and then just now at 2.16pm another one occurred while I am sitting in the office typing the message to citizen's blog think this one is around 4.6 or something.

It is really terrifying and I have to wait till July 2012 before I get the indefinite PR and I just wish I can get out of here. - May Loh

Hi there,

I am a second year student at the University of Canterbury which was just recently hit by another wave of earthquake.

I wish to inform you that most Malaysian students at the University of Canterbury are doing fine and most of us are staying together, at least for a few days.

The earthquake happened somewhere during lunchtime and most of us were either done with classes or were about to go to one.

As for me, I was about to get into one of the University buildings when the quake hit Christchurch and the visual experience was scary. Glasses was shaking, buildings were also shaking. But thankfully, most of us had enough time to evacuate buildings and gathered at one of the safer university grounds.

Most students have informed their parents of their condition and so far,
students staying in campus are being well taken care of by their university colleges and for those of us renting outside, we’re staying in groups of 20 in a few of the rented houses.

Lastly, I would like to advise parents not to worry about their children’s safety or well-being as all of us are looking out for one another and Malaysian-associated clubs are also giving out basic necessities such as bread and juices. - Muhamad Ariffudin Ghazali

Hi,
I am a student studying at the University of Canterbury.

Just to share a bad experience I had in this devastating quake. I was having a short nap in the engineering library at noon. All of a sudden, I heard a huge boom and the whole building started to shake so strongly that the books on the racks kept falling down.

There were only three people on the top floor of the building. All of us quickly hid under the tables gripping the wall tightly.

Then, the ceiling just on top of me suddenly fell down knocking my table and landed on a table in front of me.

More and more of the ceiling fell as the shaking continued.

I was so lucky that the ceiling did not fall directly on my head. Fiuu... I survived the huge quake!

After a few minutes, the shaking stopped and all of us tried to find ways to escape from the building. A lot of people could be seen gathering outside the library and a few people got injured by broken glass.

*Attached are some photos I took while I escaped from the library

I am a JPA sponsored student and all of the students here are safe. We are all alright!! - Thanks and regards, Eric Ong Yi Feng

I am a Malaysian living in Auckland but would still like to share about the 6.3 earthquake that struck Christchurch 9 minutes to 1pm today NZ time.

My husband and I were down there on Feb 5 for a holiday and now back in Auckland. We took a photo of the iconic building Christchurch Cathedral before the earthquake and compare it to an after-earthquake photo of the church.

It is a shock to see the heart of Christchurch has toppled and so far 65 people are confirmed dead in the city.

Many more are still trapped under the rubbles. We were thinking what a nice place it is to retire but seeing it being hit twice by major earthquakes is unbelievable and sad.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the people of Christchurch now. - Seng Lip Ferguson from Auckland, NZ