

Opinion: Panama's disaster readiness needs more than faith

When	No date given
Where	Panama
Source	prensa
Published	2026-10-21 12:45-05:00
Discovered	2026-10-21 14:00-05:00
Link	https://www.prensa.com/opinion/plan-de-emergencia-nacional-dios-proveera-y-que-la-tierra-no-tiemble-fuerte/

Summary

A La Prensa opinion column by a philosophy teacher argues that after the 9 October earthquake Panama relies too much on improvisation and citizen solidarity instead of real prevention, school safety and accountability.

Details (summary of the article)

In an opinion column in La Prensa, a philosophy teacher reflects on how prepared Panama really was for the 9 October earthquake. She describes drills that lose value when alarms depend on mains electricity, emergency exits are blocked, locks fail and reported hazards such as dangerous trees wait months for a technical evaluation that never arrives in time. Teachers evacuated students calmly, she writes, yet it is easier to question their reaction than to ask why previously reported risks were ignored. She criticises officials who declare "everything is under control" without verifiable building inspections, and the turning of tragedy into spectacle with hastily written songs and social-media posts that fade when the next trend arrives. While praising citizens with little money who collect donations, she insists community generosity cannot replace the State's obligations and calls for accounting of what resources existed and how they were used. She notes the contrast in schools, where staff and families can organise raffles and events but basic repairs wait on budget allocations. With the national holidays approaching, she argues patriotism should also mean demanding prevention and accountable authorities, since faith is not a risk-management plan or a building code.

Original (es)

Plan de emergencia nacional: Dios proveerá y que la tierra no tiemble fuerte

La solidaridad ciudadana sostiene a las comunidades, pero la seguridad escolar y la respuesta ante desastres exigen prevención, recursos y autoridades que rindan cuentas.