

7 Jan 2009

ADPC extends New Year Greetings to all its valued colleagues, partners & friends. We thank you for your support during 2008 and look forward to working with you in 2009 and beyond.

In our continued effort to keep you posted on happenings in disaster risk management, please browse through the first DRM update in 2009:

Natural Disasters:

7 Jan: Bird flu re-emerges in China and Vietnam, one dead

Bird flu re-emerged as a threat in Asia on Tuesday Jan 6 when China reported the disease killed a woman in Beijing and neighboring Vietnam. The cases are the first involving humans in the two countries in nearly a year, and mark a reappearance of the H5N1 virus as Asia moves into the cold winter months that typically favor the spread of the virus. <http://www.intellasia.net/news/articles/health/111255266.shtml>

6 Jan: Bird flu returns to west Bengal in India

Health authorities in India confirmed a fresh outbreak of deadly bird flu after thousands of chickens died. The latest infection is the fourth outbreak of the H5N1 virus in the eastern West Bengal state in the past year. Thousands of poultry perished in the hilly Darjeeling district. The virus spread to 14 of the 19 districts in West Bengal, which has a population of more than 80 million. But India has still not reported any human case of the deadly H5N1 strain of the virus. Officials in the northeast state of Assam last month killed 250,000 chickens to control the spread of the deadly infection, which had sparked fears of a human case after many people were reported sick. The World Health Organization says the H5N1 strain has killed nearly 250 people, mostly in Southeast Asia, since 2003. http://www.nationalpost.com/todays_paper/story.html?id=1146759

6 Jan: Floods affect thousands in Thai south

Seasonal monsoon rains have caused severe flash floods in southern Thailand in the past week, forcing the army to move thousands of people to safety in the provinces of Narathiwat, Phattalung and Yala. According to Bangkok-based The Nation, a heavy downpour has been hitting Narathiwat for about one week, rendering roads impassable and suspending all train services. About 1,000 houses have flooded in the province, where some government offices have also been inundated and closed as run-off from the Sankalakhiri mountain range pours into rivers. Thirteen districts have been affected. In Phattalung province, flash flooding that began Saturday (January 3) has left low-lying districts under about 3.3 feet (one meter) of water. Officials have closed 14 waterfalls to visitors due to safety concerns. In Yala, three districts have been declared disaster zones, with more than 7,600 residents affected since the Saiburi River burst its banks. Residents along the river have been forced to move to higher ground. Some roads are under 6.6 feet (two meters) of water and villagers are using small boats to get around. The regional weather department attributed the disaster to the northeastern monsoon over the Gulf of Thailand and warned residents in low-lying areas to prepare for further floods. Meanwhile, southern Yala, Narathiwat

and Pattani provinces continue to suffer from insurgent violence that has been on the rise in recent weeks.

http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2009/01/05/national/national_30092400.php

<http://216.46.180.242/breakingnews/135690/flash-flood-hits-phatthalung>

http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2009/01/06/national/national_30092492.php

http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2009/01/05/national/national_30092472.php

5 Jan: 6.0 magnitude rocks Pakistan and Afghanistan

Islamabad: A strong earth quake with a magnitude of 6.0 rock Pakistan and Afghanistan in the early hours of Monday. The earthquake occurred in the region of Hindu Kush mountain range and was felt in Islamabad as well. People came out on the streets fearing that houses and buildings would collapse. The US geological survey reported that, 'The 6.0-magnitude quake struck at 3:43 am, around 275 kilometers northeast of the Afghan capital Kabul and near the border with Pakistan. The quake, which struck in the remote Hindu Kush mountain range, was registered at a depth of 190 kilometers.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-01/05/content_10604318.htm

5 Jan: Cold wave leaves 65 dead in northern India

At least 65 people have died across northern India in the first five days of 2009 as a result of severe cold temperatures that sweep the region each year. The cold weather began on Thursday (January 1) and has affected people across northern India, mainly in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttaranchal (Uttarakhand), Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, according to the PTI. Heavy snowfall in Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal have added further trouble to the cold weather in recent days. In some states, authorities have closed schools and ordered public bonfires to help people who do not have shelter survive the cold temperatures. At least 50 people froze to death in northern India last January, most of them homeless people who were sleeping in the open. The previous winter hundreds of people died in severe cold waves.

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http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Cold_wave_continues_in_North_India_18_succumb_to_chill/articleshow/3938698.cms

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Cold_wave_in_North_India_Amritsar_at_1/articleshow/3925844.cms

5 Jan: Floods displace over 5,000 in northern and central Malaysia

More than 5,000 people have been displaced due to monsoon-triggered floods in central and northern Malaysia. In worst-affected central Pahang state police said that the number of people forced to evacuate rose to 3,776 despite floodwaters receding in some districts, the official Bernama agency reported. In Kelantan state in the north, 783 people were displaced and several major roads were flooded. Around 30,000 students in Kelantan were unable to attend the first day of school for this year. Meanwhile, in neighboring Terengganu state, at least 445 people were being sheltered at relief centers. State media said that dozens of relief centers have been set up to shelter the displaced. A spokesperson for the Pahang police flood operations room said that two landslides occurred in the Cameron Highlands, a popular tourist destination. In December, around 30 people were killed in floods triggered by seasonal rains and around 34,000 people were forced to evacuate from their homes in Kelantan and Pahang. Malaysia was also hit by severe flooding in December 2006 and January 2008. The flooding in December left at least 17 people dead and displaced some 90,000 people. Flooding in mid-January displaced around 100,000 people. The government had estimated costs of some US\$343 million in cumulative damages to infrastructure and in aid to flood victims. The monsoon season usually affects Malaysia from around November to February.

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/090105/afp/090105054222int.html>

http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/SE%2BAsia/Story/STIStory_321824.html

5 Jan: Flash floods displace 21,000 in southern Philippines

Flash floods caused by a low-pressure area off the eastern coast of the southern Philippine island of Mindanao have forced more than 21,000 people to flee their homes since Saturday (January 3). According to the Philippine National Red Cross, the floods have been caused by heavy rain resulting from a low-pressure area that developed into a tropical depression locally named Auring. Although the most severe flooding has been reported in Misamis Oriental province, the Red Cross said floods were also reported in Negros Oriental, Bohol, Samar island, Lanao del Norte and Zamboanga del Norte province. The Inquirer said the floods began Saturday after the Cagayan de Oro River overflowed, inundating 27 villages in Cagayan de Oro and Gingoong City, as well as Iligan City in Lanao del Norte province, according to the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC). The archipelago nation has two monsoon seasons and typically sees about 20 typhoons each year that often trigger landslides and floods, most often in the latter half of the year.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20090105-181545/4000-families-evacuated-after-floods>

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/090103/afp/090103073242asiapacificnews.html>

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MUMA-7MZ9SV?OpenDocument&RSS20&RSS20=FS>

4 Jan: Earthquakes in eastern Indonesia

A series of strong earthquakes left at least four people dead and dozens more injured in Indonesia's easternmost Papua province early Sunday (January 4) morning. The first 7.6-magnitude quake struck at 04:43 local time (1943 GMT) around 85 miles (135 km) from Manokwari, Papua, at a depth of 22 miles (35 km), the Associated Press (AP) reported the US Geological Survey (USGS) as saying. It was followed by at least 10 aftershocks, according to the AP. One of the quakes, a 7.3-magnitude quake, reportedly sent small tsunamis into Japan's southeastern coast but there were no reports of damages. Japan's Meteorological Agency said that tsunami waves of four inches (10 cm) to 16 inches (40 cm) hit the coast and warned of possible bigger tsunamis later. About a year ago, in January 2008, a 6.2-magnitude undersea earthquake shook Papua, injuring at least six people.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7811140.stm>

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Strong_quakes_rock_Indonesia_4_killed/articleshow/3932742.cms

News:

China Quake victims' parents sue

A parent's action following the death of school children in collapsed schools during Sichuan Province earthquake. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/23/world/asia/23quake.html?hp>

School districts seeking data on buildings' seismic safety in California

http://www.contracostatimes.com/education/ci_11321495?nclick_check=1

China sets stricter school construction standards

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gdsdpdDB0WaMv_An4A-NvHB_DwmCwD95BK8E80

UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction - Call for nomination

Nominations close on March 18 for the Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction, which will be given in June 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland at the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction, and. The biennial prize has been worth US\$50,000, and is awarded in recognition of significant achievements in DRR that have made real change at community and institutional levels. The award conditions have been revised so that applicants can be nominated by any ISDR System partner. <http://www.unisdr.org/>

Call for contribution

The UNISDR Asia & Pacific is pleased to launch a call for contribution for its annual publication on disaster risk reduction "Disaster Reduction in Asia & Pacific – ISDR Informs: Issue 4, 2008" that will be issued in March 2009 to reflect the status of disaster risk reduction in 2008 in the Asia and Pacific region. Please note that special focus will be placed in this edition on achievements, innovative approaches, projects and activities focusing on Building Resilience to Tsunami. <http://www.unisdr.org/>

Events:

International Conference on Climate Change: Impact and Responses, 9-11 January 2009, Pune, Maharashtra, India <http://c09.cg-conference.com/>

National Conference on School Safety, 29 & 30 Jan 2009, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India
<http://cogssdpe.ning.com/>

9th international conference on Southern Hemisphere meteorology and oceanography, 9-13 Feb 2009, Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre, Australia

The meeting is organised around the broad theme: "Extremes: Climate and Water in the Southern Hemisphere". <http://www.unisdr.org/english/events/v.php?id=3628>

Australian disasters conference 2009: surviving future risks, 10-13 Feb 2009, Canberra, Australia

The Australian Disasters Conference 2009 – Surviving Future Risks – is a major national conference, endorsed by Government, to explore the future disaster risk environment for Australia. The conference outcome is to recommend future ways to enhance mitigation and preparedness measures and build community resilience to meet these new challenges. <http://www.ema.gov.au/disastersconference>

Map world forum, 10-13 Feb 2009, Hyderabad, India

Map World Forum will be a forum to "Converge Ideas and Expand Horizons for Sustainable Planet Earth". It will aim beyond speeches and discussions to find practical ways to protect the earth and improve people's lives. Its mission, therefore, will be to encourage the geospatial family and the society at large to function in ways that protect the Earth's natural environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of present and future generations. <http://www.mapworldforum.org/>

3rd international conference on community based adaptation to climate change, 22-26 Feb 2009, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The primary aim of the conference is to share the latest developments in adaptation planning and practices, priority sectors and measures at different levels and disseminate knowledge among stakeholders and actors. The conference will consist of a two day field visit to community based adaptation projects in different ecosystems, and three days of interactive discussions on different thematic areas. http://www.bcas.net/upcomingevents/cba3_bcas_flyer.....

ICESE 2009 - international conference on earthquake and structural engineering, 25-27 Feb 2009, Penang, Malaysia

The International Conference on Earthquake and Structural Engineering (ICESE 2009) aims to bring together researchers, scientists, engineers, and scholar students to exchange and share their experiences, new ideas, and research results about all aspects of Earthquake and Structural Engineering, and discuss the practical challenges encountered and the solutions adopted. <http://www.waset.org/wcset09/penang/icese/>

Asia megacities forum, 4-6 Mar 2009 (Tentative), Mumbai, India

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and the Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative (EMI), in cooperation with the Government of Maharashtra and Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, are co-organizing the 2008 Asia Megacities Forum to bring to light sound practices in Urban Disaster Risk Reduction (Urban-DRR) that are being implemented by various cities and local authorities in Asia and elsewhere in the world, and which are making a significant contribution to the undertaking of the global agenda of the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Forum will be the opportunity to take stake in the state of the practice and in reviewing regional and global initiatives on urban disaster risk reduction (DRR). It is a venue for documenting, promoting and sharing the efforts and commitments made by local authorities in engaging in Urban DRR. <http://www.emi-megacities.org/?page=events&id=349>

Climate change: global risks, challenges & decisions, 10-12 Mar 2009, Copenhagen, Denmark

The University of Copenhagen is hosting an international scientific congress on climate change under the heading "Climate Change: Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions", 10-12 March 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The congress is organized in cooperation with nine other universities in the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU). The main aim of the congress is to provide a synthesis of existing and emerging scientific knowledge necessary in order to make intelligent societal decisions concerning application of mitigation and adaptation strategies in response to climate change. The congress aims to identify and synthesise the science, technology and policy advances required in order to ensure sustainability of global communities in the current and coming decades. The findings of the congress will be supplementary to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The congress will provide a summary of existing scientific knowledge two years after the last IPCC report. <http://climatecongress.ku.dk/>

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 15 June 2009, Geneva

The goal of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, as the main body of the strengthened ISDR system, is to sustain world-wide momentum to build the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/GP>

Annual Hazards Research and Applications Workshop, 14-17 July 2009, Boulder, Colorado

Since 1975, the Natural Hazards Center has hosted the annual workshop involving close to 400 federal, state, and local emergency officials; representatives of nonprofit and humanitarian organizations; hazards researchers; disaster consultants; and others dedicated to alleviating the impacts of disasters. <http://www.colorado.edu/hazards/workshop/>

Information Resources:

Climate change and children: a human security challenge

Children should be vital participants in the international climate change regime
Publisher: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2008

The study reviews the implications of climate change for children and future generations, drawing on relevant experiences in different sectors and countries of promoting child rights and well-being. It traces in considerable detail the pathways through which shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns create serious additional barriers to the achievement of the child survival, development and protection goals embraced by the international community. The role of children as vital participants and agents of change emerges as a key theme.

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/environment/climate-change&id=41279&type=Document>

White paper: Mobile GIS Speeds Disaster Relief

Natural disasters pose serious risk not only at initial impact but also in their aftermath. Outbreaks of disease and damage to infrastructure can quickly affect public health and the local economy. Armed with experience responding to disasters and knowledge of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, the North Carolina Division of Public Health developed a mobile GIS application that improved its ability to collect information and mobilize aid following natural disasters.

<http://whitepapers.techrepublic.com.com/abstract.aspx?docid=160887>

For archived DRM updates:

ADPC Website:

<http://www.adpc.net/v2007/IKM/EVENTS%20AND%20NEWS/DISASTER/2008/DISASTER-NEWS-2008.asp>

Note: The information has been collated from publicly available information. Although the sources are deemed reliable, the information reported here are topical and are subject to change.

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