

11 August 2008

**Natural Disaster Updates:****10 Aug, India's Andaman Islands hit by quakes, no damage**

A seismologist says two moderate earthquakes have hit India's Andaman Islands, but no serious damage or injuries have been reported. Ajay Kumar, a seismologist at the Indian Meteorological Department, says local residents were shaken Sunday by magnitude 6 and 5.6 quakes that hit the region within 35 minutes. The remote islands off the east coast of India were among the regions devastated by the Indian Ocean tsunami that hit Dec. 26, 2004. The tsunami, caused by a magnitude 9 earthquake off the coast of Indonesia, killed nearly 11,000 people in India — 3,500 of them in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

<http://ap.google.com:80/article/ALeqM5hmbgFA2LqOLR3cw1AgNmxn1hiZ6gD92FEV2O0>

**Vietnam, 9 August, Flash floods hit north Vietnam, 80 dead or missing**

More than 80 people died or were missing in three provinces of northern Vietnam after tropical storm Kammuri brought heavy rain, landslides and flash floods, the government said on Saturday. The mountainous province of Lao Cai, bordering China, was the most seriously hit with at least 66 people reported missing, it said. The government issued an urgent call for the immediate rescue and evacuation of people from areas vulnerable to flash floods. The National Meteorology Centre said at least five people were missing in Lao Cai's resort town of Sapa, popular with foreign backpackers, but it was not known if any foreigners were among the victims. "Most of the national highways, inter-province roads and local roads have been blocked and work is under way to search for the missing," an official from Lao Cai's weather centre said by telephone. <http://www.reuters.com/article/asiaCrisis/idUSHAN139769>

**Indonesia, 7 August: 6.6-magnitude earthquake causes structural damage**-A strong 6.6-magnitude earthquake rattled Indonesia's eastern Sumbawa island, part of an island chain that forms West Nusa Tenggara province. The US Geological Survey (USGS) said it had registered the Sumbawa island earthquake at 5.7 on the Richter scale. The quake hit at 06:41 (2241 GMT Wednesday, August 6) approximately 31 miles (51 km) northwest of the town of Sumbawa, at a shallow depth of 6.2 miles (10 km), the USGS reported. Despite the relatively powerful jolt, no tsunami was generated. News sources have been reporting various figures on the amount of buildings and houses that were damaged and destroyed, but no concrete numbers have been confirmed. According to Maman Susanto, an official at the Disaster Management Agency who was monitoring reports from Dompu District on western Sumbawa island, more than 240 homes, mosques, shops and schools were damaged.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-indonesiaquake8-2008aug08,0,5519073.story>

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Strong\\_earthquake\\_jolts\\_Indonesia/articleshow/3337239.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Strong_earthquake_jolts_Indonesia/articleshow/3337239.cms)

[http://www.silobreaker.com/DocumentReader.aspx?Item=5\\_888626188](http://www.silobreaker.com/DocumentReader.aspx?Item=5_888626188)

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080807/wl\\_asia\\_afp/quakeindonesia](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080807/wl_asia_afp/quakeindonesia)

**India, 7 August: Dozens killed in renewed flooding across India**-At least 78 people have been killed in monsoon-related flooding across India since Tuesday (August 5), bringing the total number of deaths so far this monsoon season to at least 1,016, the Indian government reported Thursday (August 7). The worst flooding this week has occurred in central and east-coastal India, where rains are expected to continue over the next three days because of a low-pressure area over the west-central Bay of Bengal, according to the Indian Meteorological

Department (IMD). A separate low-pressure trough also remains off India's western coast, bringing sustained rainfall to the states of Maharashtra and Kerala, the IMD said Thursday. The northern state of Uttar Pradesh accounts for 477 deaths, nearly half of those killed in India since the monsoon season began in June. The state reported 23 deaths on Tuesday, three on Wednesday (August 6) and two on Thursday, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs. So far nearly 1.5 million people have been affected by flooding in 11 districts of the state. <http://www.ndmindia.nic.in/flood-2008/floodMonth/floodsAugust.htm>

**China, 7 August: Eleven dead as floods in eastern China subside**-Floods caused by torrential rains that hit eastern China with Typhoon Fung-Wong last week left 11 people dead and affected 2.7 million, but are now subsiding, flood control authorities said. After killing five people in the northern Philippines and two in Taiwan, Fung-Wong struck China's eastern coast on July 31, bringing with it heavy rains that lasted through Saturday (August 2) and caused severe flooding on the Chuhe River, which originates in the center of Anhui province and flows east to meet the Yangtze in the western part of coastal Jiangsu province. Water levels in some areas reached record levels and the city of Chuzhou was reportedly inundated by 20 inches (.5 meters) of water. About 93,000 people were evacuated from the Chuhe's floodplain, according to Agence France-Presse, as the floodwaters soaked about 748,000 acres (302,600 hectares) of land. Overall, 2.7 million people were affected and 11 were killed. The Civil Affairs Ministry has sent a working group to Anhui, which saw the worst damage from flooding. According to Xinhua, about 200,000 people are still fighting the flooding, but 96 percent of the affected land has been drained and the Chuhe fell below the danger level on Friday. The rains caused about US\$356 million (2.44 billion yuan) in direct economic losses. Fung-Wong was the eighth tropical storm to hit China this year and was followed this week by Tropical Cyclone Kammuri, which affected 687,000 people in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in China's south when it made landfall Thursday (August 7), according to Xinhua. No casualties were reported, but Kammuri caused US\$8.7 million (61.2 million yuan) in direct economic losses.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/08/content\\_9036912.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/08/content_9036912.htm)

[http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5jwNE\\_MYLRlqjRV3FB520PmD\\_E48g](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5jwNE_MYLRlqjRV3FB520PmD_E48g)

[http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iKUfm\\_aZv5s1YRIUuRVbywRY5zkg](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5iKUfm_aZv5s1YRIUuRVbywRY5zkg)

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/08/content\\_9057208.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-08/08/content_9057208.htm)

**China, 6 August: Nearly 400,000 evacuated ahead of tropical storm Kammuri**-Tropical Cyclone 10W (Kammuri) has moved inland over mainland China, the Hawaii-based Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) reported. According to the latest Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) warning #12, 10W was still classified as a tropical storm, with sustained winds of 40 knots (46 mph), with gusts to 50 knots (58 mph). This storm is well past its peak strength, and will be dissipating quickly over China, according to the PDC. The forward motion is a quick-paced 16 knots (18 mph), traveling in a westerly direction (270 degrees). The present track takes Kammuri straight inland over China, then ends its life cycle over Vietnam, to the north of Hanoi, the PDC said. Gusty winds, along with heavy, potentially flooding rainfall, will make for inclement conditions along its path. There remains the danger of flash flooding problems, along with mudslides and landslides, although other than locally gusty winds associated with thunderstorms, winds will soon not be an issue, the PDC concluded. Kammuri made landfall at Xitou town, Yangxi County, in southern Guangdong province.

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-08/06/content\\_6910593.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-08/06/content_6910593.htm)

[South China evacuates nearly 400,000 as storm approaches](#)

**Pakistan, 5 August: More than 100 killed in monsoon floods**-More than 100 people had been killed amid flooding caused by severe monsoon rains that hit Pakistan. While the worst damage has been done in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the adjacent Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) that border Afghanistan, deaths and destruction were also

reported in southern Sindh province, as well as the eastern province of Punjab. In NWFP, flash floods have swept away hundreds of mud homes and up to 50 people have been killed in collapsed houses in the provincial capital, Peshawar, and the neighboring Khyber agency of FATA. In addition, 25 people drowned on Monday when three rescue boats capsized near Peshawar, DPA attributed local media as saying. Hundreds of people have been stranded by the floods and military helicopters have been called in to help evacuate people. More than 50 people are still missing in Peshawar, as well, Pakistan-based The News reported. Floods have damaged crops in Peshawar worth millions of rupees (US\$1 equals 72.2 Pakistani rupees), according to the Khaleej Times. DPA reported authorities as saying that the extent of the damage was largely due to the lack of an effective warning system in the area. Deaths were also reported in Sindh and in Punjab, where the relief commissioner at least 82,000 people had been displaced by the destruction of thousands of homes.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/LRON-7H8GB7?OpenDocument&RSS20=18-P>

<http://us.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/asiapcf/08/05/pakistan.flood.ap/index.html>

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/darticlen.asp?xfile=data/subcontinent/2008/August/subcontinent\\_August167.xml&ion=subcontinent&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/darticlen.asp?xfile=data/subcontinent/2008/August/subcontinent_August167.xml&ion=subcontinent&col=)

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=51208>

## News:

**UK: Flu pandemic tops risk register**-The document, commissioned by the prime minister, aims to publicly set out the potential impact of a range of different risks for the first time. BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner said that while officials insist the register was not intended to rank dangers in any kind of priority, it is clear that pandemic flu emerges as the gravest threat to national security. Other issues examined include terrorism and flooding. The launch of the register was commissioned in March. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/7548593.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7548593.stm)

**FEMA close to adopting standard for emergency alerts**-A new report says the Federal Emergency Management Agency is planning to adopt a common alerting protocol as a national emergency warning and alert system as early as next year. In an article on the Federal Computer Week website, Alice Lipowicz says FEMA announced late last week that it is expecting to adopt the Common Alerting Protocol 1.1, which would create a national infrastructure so digital messages could be sent seamlessly to televisions, radios, and computers. "The protocol is an open-source technical standard developed by volunteers seven years ago. It was accepted by the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) in 2004, and later refined by that organization. It has been widely adopted among emergency managers and broadcasters as well as disaster managers at FEMA. It has long been anticipated that FEMA would make it an official standard." Lipowicz says. Under law, participants in the Emergency Alert System (EAS), including broadcasters and emergency managers, will be required to be in compliance with <http://www.fcw.com/online/news/153347-1.html>

**Healthcare emergency managers face stiffer standards**-In the years since 9/11, compliance standards for emergency managers in hospitals and other healthcare facilities have become more comprehensive and stringent. Now a new report says they will face even tougher standards in 2009. An article on the Homeland 1 website says that the Joint Commission, the Oak Brook, Ill.-based organization that accredits the nation's hospitals, has now created a separate chapter for emergency management, and the new chapter of standards will become effective Jan. 1, 2009. These standards will be assembled under one chapter, rather than being scattered through all of the other standards, and many will address new areas in hospital emergency management. Overall, the changes indicate the importance of maintaining an effective healthcare response capability that is intimately linked with response agencies to

provide care and services to the community. But while most hospitals agree with the standards, many are having a difficult time coming into compliance quickly enough. Some of the standards the Joint Commission introduced in 2008, in fact, were postponed to help healthcare organizations come into compliance and therefore won't go into effect till next year.

<http://www.homeland1.com/Emergency-Management-Operations/articles/422004-Healthcare-emergency-managers-face-stiffer-standards>

### **UN warns of food shortages in Nepal**

The UN and the government of Nepal have warned that hundreds of thousands of Nepalese are facing food shortages. A new report prepared jointly by the government and the UN's World Food Program (WFP) says that efforts to distribute food to the needy are being hampered by fuel shortages, strikes, lack of road connectivity and bad weather. Additionally, the cost of rice has gone up by up to 50 percent in one year and the price of cooking oil has gone up 30 percent in six months. The WFP says that 2.5 million Nepalese are in need of immediate food assistance. Most of the affected are in the mid-western and far-western regions of the country. In May, Nepal banned the export of rice and other grains to try to control costs and prevent shortages. The "market and Price Impact Assessment Report," said that some 2.5 million people in rural parts of the country are in immediate need of food assistance and another 3.9 million people are at risk of becoming food insecure due to the rising price of food. Crops across the districts failed by some 20-70 percent during the last harvest.

<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/aug/aug05/news08.php>

<http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/jul/jul29/news04.php>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7542212.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7542212.stm)

### **Hanoi's earthquake map made public**

*VietNamNet Bridge - The Hanoi Department of Construction on August 7 introduced on its website <http://www.soxaydung.hanoi.gov.vn> a map of marking off earthquake-prone areas of Hanoi.*

The 1/25,000-scale map is to serve for designing anti-seismic capacity for projects in the capital city. On the country's seismographic map, Hanoi is located on the eighth-level earthquake-prone regions. According to the Geophysics Institute of the Vietnam Science Academy, Hanoi is possibly subject to earthquakes measured at 6.1-6.5 degree on the Richter scale at a depth of 15-20 km due to the motion of fault zones of the Red and Chay rivers. Experts have set up a Geographic Information System (GIS) with data of the ground motion correlating with the earthquake map of Hanoi, and worked out regulations and guidance for designing anti-seismic capacity for construction works.

Since 2001, the Hanoi Institute of Civil Engineering Science and Technology has provided earthquake data of Hanoi to serve for work on construction, particularly that of high-storey buildings. <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/tech/2008/08/798008/>

### **Events:**

25-29 August, Davos, Switzerland

#### **International Disaster and Risk Conference (IDRC)**

IDRC is the global gathering of government officials, experts and practitioners, representatives from NGOs, the private sector, scientific and academic institutions. The conference will cover recent developments in integrated disaster and risk management, in areas like natural hazards, critical infrastructure protection, pandemics and diseases, technical risks and more. <http://www.idrc.info/index.php?p=236&pagetype=1>

21-23 October 2008, Singapore

## **Disaster Management Response and Recovery Conference**

As Asia's première forum for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, the conference will cover preparedness tactics and contingency planning that focus to:

- Mainstream disaster risk reduction efforts into sustainable development policies
- Build greater capacity for disaster management
- Develop and implement measures to reduce disaster losses
- Build resiliency at every level, utilizing, among others, community-based disaster preparedness and early response approaches
- Improve standby arrangements for disaster relief and emergency response

21-24 October 2008, Hyderabad

### **World congress on Disaster Management**

[www.dmics.in](http://www.dmics.in)

4-8 May 2009, Stresa, Italy

### **33rd International Symposium on Remote Sensing of Environment (ISRSE)**

The 33rd Symposium will represent a major event in the long series of internationally recognized ISRSE meetings. The overall theme of the symposium is the use of satellite- and airborne Earth Observation systems for understanding and managing the Earth environment and natural resources. <http://isrse-33.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

## **Information Resources:**

**Post Nargis joint assessment report:** Cyclone Nargis swept across Myanmar on 2-3 May, triggering a huge sea surge and leaving around 138,000 dead or missing, according to official figures.

- ⊙ At least 138,000 dead or missing
- ⊙ Hundreds of thousands still lack clean water
- ⊙ Damage estimated at \$4 billion

The United Nations says up to 2.4 million survivors are struggling to rebuild their lives in Yangon and the Irrawaddy Delta, the worst affected area. Three months after the cyclone, a joint assessment by the United Nations, Myanmar and Southeast Asian governments said three-quarters of households still had inadequate access to clean drinking water, making water-borne diseases such as cholera and dysentery a constant threat. More than 40 percent of people were found to have little or no food, having lost their stocks in the storm.

Most of Myanmar's casualties were killed by a 12-foot (3.5 metre) wall of water that hit the low-lying Irrawaddy Delta along with 190 kph (120 mph) winds. The dead include 10,000 who perished in just one town, Bogalay, 90 km (50 miles) southwest of Yangon. A joint assessment carried out by Myanmar's government, the U.N. and ASEAN estimated the damage at \$4 billion. The July report also says that 700,000 people were displaced by Nargis, although most of them have since returned home.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/21\\_07\\_08\\_asean\\_nargis.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/21_07_08_asean_nargis.pdf)

Primer on Reducing Vulnerabilities to Climate Change Impacts and Strengthening Disaster Risk Management in East Asian Cities: Climate Resilient Cities

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the UN's International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) has just completed a Primer for city managers in the East Asia region on the risks they face from climate change and other natural hazards and

strategies to deal with these risks. The primer presents unique exercises for cities to prioritize investments and actions based on a risk profile and creating a city information base. Global and regional examples from 20 cities undertaking sound practices in both mitigation and adaptation are offered as practical lessons of experience-these cover King County, New York City, Albuquerque, and Rockville in the U.S.; Makati, Dagupan, Navotas, and Albay in the Philippines; Tokyo, Japan; Singapore; Thua Thien Hue, Hanoi, and Na Dinh, Vietnam; Jakarta, Indonesia; Dongtan, China; Bogota, Colombia; Vancouver, Canada; Milan and Venice, Italy; and London, U.K. The global launch of the Climate Resilient Cities Primer took place at a Green Cities Workshop held on July 14 in Thailand's largest coastal city of Pattaya. The Primer can be downloaded from the following website: <http://www.worldbank.org/eap/climatecities>

**Forum:** On the frontlines of climate change-The Frontlines forum is to explore the experiences in dealing with the effects of climate change of rural or indigenous communities living in small islands, the circumpolar Arctic, high-altitude zones, low-lying coastal areas, tropical forests, desert margins and other vulnerable environments. For many people, climate change is a distant threat but, for these vulnerable communities, it is already a reality. UNESCO's Coasts and Small Islands platform and Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems program launched this Internet-based discussion forum on 12 June in partnership with the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. [http://www.climatefrontlines.org/en-GB/latest\\_response](http://www.climatefrontlines.org/en-GB/latest_response)

**Development Communication Sourcebook:** Broadening the Boundaries of Communication- This book is intended to be a source of knowledge and practical advice for all those involved in development communication, as well as an advocacy piece to promote the discipline to managers and decision makers who have an interest in learning why and when to adopt development communication. [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2008/07/09/000020953\\_20080709145627/Rendered/PDF/446360Dev0CommIns0handbook01PUBLIC1.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2008/07/09/000020953_20080709145627/Rendered/PDF/446360Dev0CommIns0handbook01PUBLIC1.pdf)

**Article: "Megacommunity" to improve responses to disasters.** This approach capitalizes on the very best ideas, ingenuity, and innovation from across the public, private and civil sectors. <http://disaster-resource.com/newsletter/subpages/v246/WhenThereIsNoCavalry.pdf>

**UN/ISDR Highlights** are available on the UN/ISDR website. <http://www.unisdr.org>