

18 November 2008

**Natural Hazard Update:****17 Nov: 7.3-magnitude earthquake leaves at least four dead on Indonesia's Sulawesi island**

A powerful 7.3-magnitude earthquake (as measured by the US Geological Survey, 7.5-magnitude according to media reports) struck off the coast of Minahasa on Indonesia's Sulawesi island at 01:02 local time (17:02 UTC) Monday (November 17), leaving at least four people dead. The temblor sent thousands of residents fleeing to higher ground. The epicenter was 84 miles (136 km) northwest of the provincial capital of Gorontalo, in Gorontalo province in northern Sulawesi, and around 1,170 miles (1,890 km) ENE of Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. Indonesia briefly issued a tsunami warning which was lifted later. The Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Center also initially warned that the quake had the potential to generate a destructive tsunami along coasts within 600 miles (966 km). According to Reuters news agency, an official at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said that the agency also issued a tsunami alert that was lifted after officials determined that it would not affect the country's southern coast. The Indonesian archipelago sits on the so-called "Pacific Ring of Fire," where seismic and volcanic activities are frequent.

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/081117/afp/081117070401top.html>

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20081117/wl\\_nm/us\\_indonesia\\_quake](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20081117/wl_nm/us_indonesia_quake)

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gCeFe6qrUA2I6TpgBUjMoyp8nthAD94GPL200>

**17 Nov: Thailand braces for more flooding, cold front**

Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) on Monday (November 17) warned provinces across the country to prepare for natural disasters this week. Central provinces are still experiencing flash floods, while heavy monsoon rains are expected to hit the south again later this week as a cold front is expected to arrive in the north and northeast, according to the government. The DDPM said Monday that one district remains flooded in the central province of Sing Buri, three in Ang Thong province and nine in Ayutthaya, where heavy rains brought rivers over their banks earlier this month. Heavy late-season monsoon rains also caused severe flooding in several southern provinces last week, and the government reported Monday that several districts in Chumphon, Surat Thani, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Phattalung provinces remain flooded. According to the Bangkok Post, the flooding in worst-hit Nakhon Si Thammarat caused more than US\$1.5 million (54 million baht) in damages and killed at least two people, while affecting more than 120,000 in 675 villages. Relief operations are continuing for several flood-affected areas of the south. But the DDPM warned Monday that another monsoon system is expected to bring more heavy rain to the south beginning Wednesday (November 19). Thailand's southwestern monsoon season typically runs from May through October, but the steady rain that hit in late October and early November has caused the most sustained flooding this year. Meanwhile, the DDPM also warned northern and northeastern provinces to prepare for a cold front that is due to arrive on Thursday (November 20). A low-pressure system is expected to bring long-lasting cold temperatures that will reach as low as 59 degrees Fahrenheit (15 degrees C). The government said it would declare a state of emergency in any province where the temperatures drops below that level for three consecutive days, although it did not specify the associated hazards.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/SHIG-7LGD9H?OpenDocument>

<http://reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/SHIG-7LGD76?OpenDocument>

[http://www.bangkokpost.com/breaking\\_news/breakingnews.php?id=132078](http://www.bangkokpost.com/breaking_news/breakingnews.php?id=132078)

### **17 Nov: 80,000 evacuated in Vietnam's south ahead of tropical storm**

According to the Hawaii-based Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), Tropical Cyclone 26W (Noul) has moved inland over Vietnam, and into Cambodia from there. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) issued its final warning Monday (November 17), with winds having fallen all the way down into the tropical depression category. Sustained winds were only 30 knots, with gusts near 40 knots, according to the PDC. Wind speeds are expected to continue falling over the next 24 hours, with the old tropical storm coming down into a remnant low pressure soon. Nonetheless, satellite imagery shows that there are some leftover showers associated with this dissipating system, which will bring locally heavy rains, which may cause some flooding in places, the PDC reported. The threat from this former tropical system will be diminishing rapidly as it continues moving over the physical terrain features of Cambodia, according to the PDC. Vietnamese officials evacuated some 80,000 people from high-risk areas as Noul approached the southern coast. More than 24,500 fishing trawlers with some 133,000 fishermen had been called back to shore ahead of the storm. Vietnamese officials have also warned that heavy rains could worsen flooding in Ho Chi Minh city, parts of which have been affected by surging tides over the last week, the AP reported. Northern and central Vietnam were hit by floods earlier this month, leaving at least 84 dead or missing and affecting some 600,000 others. The flooding also caused some US\$370.5 million in economic damages. Flooding was triggered by torrential rains from October 30 until November 4. Some 180,000 houses were destroyed, as well as more than 494,200 acres (200,000 hectares) of rice and vegetable fields.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idINIndia-36532620081117>

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jI5jMaW4fyQYg2hqvNQ5U0ZJtF3gD94GKJ5O1>

### **16 Nov: At least one dead after storms batter Australia's Queensland**

A series of storms lashed parts of Australia's east coast on Sunday (November 16), leaving at least one person dead, damaging houses and leaving hundreds of thousands of buildings without power. The storms hit Queensland's state capital, Brisbane, and the tourist areas of the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. The storms have been described as the worst to hit Brisbane in some 25 years. The storms brought hail, torrential rains, strong winds and triggered flash floods. According to the Associated Press (AP), the storms knocked power out to more than 230,000 homes and businesses along a 112-mile (180-km) stretch of the southeastern Queensland state coastline. More than 58,000 customers still had no power on November 17. Australia's Bureau of Meteorology reported that between 2 inches (5 cm) and 2.75 inches (7 cm) of rain affected the region, which was also hit by wind gusts up to 81 mph (130 kph). "The only thing that has been anything like it is Cyclone Larry," the AP quoted Queensland state premier Anna Bligh as saying. She was referring to the category-5 storm that battered Queensland with 180 mph (290 kph) winds in 2006, which devastated farm towns and flattened sugar cane and banana plantations.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7732696.stm>

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Heavy\\_storms\\_in\\_eastern\\_Australia/articleshow/3723019.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Heavy_storms_in_eastern_Australia/articleshow/3723019.cms)

### **14 Nov: Cyclone to bring heavy rain to southeastern India**

Tropical Cyclone 05B (Khai-muk) is a strengthening tropical storm in the northwestern Bay of Bengal. The Hawaii-based Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) reported Friday (November 14) that the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) warning #4 shows this system moving over the warm waters of the Bay toward the Indian coastline. The latest expectations call for a landfall at some location between Chennai and Visakhapatnam, most likely quite near Machilipatnam, a well-populated coastal town in Andhra Pradesh state. The sustained winds with this warning were 45 knots (52 mph), with gusts to near 55 knots (63 mph). The next JTWC warning (#5) calls for sustained winds increasing to 50 knots (57.5 mph), with gusts

to 65 knots (74.8 mph), according to the PDC. These strong-although sub-typhoon force-winds are building high surf conditions, which are now pounding the affected coastal regions. Winds will begin increasing soon in the area, becoming strong and gusty, causing rough seas for any small craft or boats outside of safe harbor. All marine interests should have found or be quickly seeking wave- and wind-free areas to ride out this storm.

[http://padmin.coe-dmha.org/apdr/index.cfm?action=process3&Sub\\_ID=99&news=25859&pubDate=2008-11-14%2000%3A00%3A00.0](http://padmin.coe-dmha.org/apdr/index.cfm?action=process3&Sub_ID=99&news=25859&pubDate=2008-11-14%2000%3A00%3A00.0)

### **13 Nov: Three dead amid floods in southern and central Thailand**

At least three people have died due to floods triggered by heavy late seasonal rains across southern and central Thailand, Bangkok-based. One person has drowned in the southern province of Surat Thani, while two drowned in the neighboring province of Nakhon Si Thammarat, which has been hit the hardest by heavy rains that began over the weekend and are expected to persist through the next few days, according to the Thai Meteorological Department. The government has warned officials in Surat Thani, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phattalung, Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, Phang Nga, Krabi, Trang and Chumphon provinces to be alert for flash-floods and potential landslides in some areas as a low-pressure system over the south is expected to linger and the Gulf of Thailand is likely to see waves as high as 10 feet (three meters) through Friday (November 14). Officials have installed disaster warning systems in the south and the government of Surat Thani has raised the number of districts declared disaster zones to 15, while Chumphon has six districts under the designation. More than 70,000 people have been affected in 11 districts in Nakhon Si Thammarat, where damage so far has amounted to about US\$800,000 (28 million baht).

[http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2008/11/14/national/national\\_30088396.php](http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2008/11/14/national/national_30088396.php)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/KSAI-7LC3FA?OpenDocument>

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/KSAI-7LC2ZH?OpenDocument>

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/KSAI-7LC7ZB?OpenDocument>

### **13 Nov: At least five dead, up to 14 missing from landslide in West Java, Indonesia**

At least five people were reported killed and up to 14 others are feared dead after a landslide triggered by heavy rains smashed through dozens of houses on Indonesia's main Java island on Thursday (November 13). landslide destroyed 54 houses in Nyalindung village in Cianjur district of West Java province. About 700 residents have been evacuated to safer areas. Many roads were flooded and covered with sludge, making it difficult for heavy machinery to reach the affected area. Hundreds of soldiers, police officers and disaster relief officials were helping with rescue efforts. Pakaya said that residents were helping with the recovery effort by digging with bare hands or using farm tools. According to Reuters news agency, one person died in floods in Bandung regency that displaced more than 1,000 people.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hl82tZ-biw6kenj-Jh0Z5-f-Q-CA>

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hk7G46eRAoHSG1J9BWdA6fLOI0AgD94EL57O1>

<http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/asiapcf/11/14/indonesia.landslide.ap/index.html>

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/081114/3/3s34q.html>

### **10 Nov, Pakistan: Quetta residents fearful of further tremors**

At least 1,000 aftershocks have hit Quetta, capital of Balochistan, and the nearby town of Ziarat since the earthquake of 29 October. Around 300 of the jolts have measured above four on the Richter scale, according to Pakistan's Met Office. Quetta, with a population of some 700,000, has been in a state of panic with residents saying they have seen little peace since the quake struck, killing around 270 people.

<http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/a8a5b122fe91a85e957bb8f66d01b852.htm>

### **9 Nov: Series of ferocious storms in the 2008 hurricane season battered coastal regions from the Caribbean islands up to the southeastern United States**

Fulfilling forecasters' predictions for a high number of strong hurricanes, one storm after another in August and September hit the Bahamas, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, the British Turks and Caicos Islands, and the southeastern United States. Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike followed within weeks of each other. Haiti - the poorest country in the Americas - is ill prepared to prepare for storms or cope with their consequences, and suffered the highest number of deaths when it was hit in turn by all four. It's hard to pin down an exact toll from floods and mudslides caused by a series of storms in August and September 2008 - since many corpses were washed out to sea - but police and local authorities say it was around 700. [http://members.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/CA\\_HUR.htm](http://members.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/CA_HUR.htm)

#### **8 Nov: Floods, landslide leave six missing in Indonesia's Sumatra**

Flash floods and a landslide left at least six people missing in Indonesia's West Sumatra province. The disaster also left hundreds of others homeless. The floods occurred on November 7 after hours of heavy rains, which also triggered a massive landslide in the village of Malalak, Agam district, located about 75 miles (120 km) north of Padang, the provincial capital of West Sumatra. Environmental activists blamed deforestation caused by illegal logging for the flood damage, DPA reported. Landslides and floods are common during the rainy season across the sprawling archipelago. Indonesia's rainy season typically runs from November to March and peaks from December to February.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MYAI-7L83G9?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=idn>

#### **7 Nov: Flooding eases in Vietnam, officials fear disease outbreaks**

The UN said that flood waters have begun to recede in flood-hit Vietnam, but some parts of northern Vietnam, including the capital, Hanoi, remain under water. "After two days of light or no rain, the situation in affected provinces is coming back to normality and there are no changes in damage caused by heavy rain and flooding since 30 October," the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Hanoi said in a statement. The floods in northern and central Vietnam were triggered by nearly a week of heavy rains. At least 17 northern and central provinces were affected by the floods. In Hanoi, the rains were said to be the worst in some 35 years. The death toll from floods across the country has risen to at least 92, including at least 22 in Hanoi. Despite the waters receding, the UN's Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) reported that soldiers continued to reinforce dykes on several rivers that still threaten to overflow their banks. Officials have said that almost 642,000 acres (260,000 hectares) of rice, corn, sugar cane and fruit have been submerged in the northern delta region.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/PANA-7L6HU7?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=vnm>

#### **Recent floods cause over US\$370 million in damages in Vietnam**

According to Vietnamese officials, economic damages from recent floods to hit central and northern Vietnam have caused some US\$370.5 million (VND6.316 trillion) in economic damages (14 Nov). The floods left at least 84 dead or missing, according to officials. Flooding was triggered by torrential rains from October 30 until November 4. Around 600,000 people have reportedly been severely affected by the flooding. Some 180,000 houses have been destroyed as well as more than 494,200 acres (200,000 hectares) of rice and vegetable fields, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) reported. Thousands of livestock have also reportedly drowned. The IFRC says that the situation is particularly acute for people in the northern regions as they were still recovering from Cyclone Kammuri in August, which left more than 160 dead, and Cyclone Hagupit in September, which left at least 41 dead. According to the government of Vietnam, the Central Steering Board for Flood and Storm Control proposed that the government grant US\$16.76 million (VND285 billion) to handle the aftermath of the floods. At least 17 provinces were affected by the floods, with Ha Nam and Ninh Binh being the most affected provinces, while the capital, Hanoi, experienced its worst flooding in some 35 years. Pham Ba Tao, deputy director of the Ha Nam Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, said

that the province almost lost its winter crop. According to the government, total agricultural losses were more than US\$52.94 million (VND900 billion).

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EDIS-7LDN35?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=vn>

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MUMA-7LD86P?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=vn>

### **7 Nov: Six dead in central China landslide**

A landslide in central China on November 7 left at least six people dead. The landslide occurred in Huanxin village in Pingjiang county in central Hunan province. The victims were all from one family. The landslide was caused by "lingering rain" which loosened the hillside. The local government issued a warning to villagers in mountains and near local reservoirs about the possibility of more rain-related disasters. Earlier this month, 10 days of heavy rains triggered floods and landslides that left at least 51 dead and another 43 missing in southwestern China. Local officials and state media reported that parts of the region were hit by their worst floods in more than 100 years. According to Xinhua, over 215,000 acres (87,000 hectares) of crops were affected and the floods have caused US\$100 million (700 million yuan) in economic losses thus far.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MYAI-7L83LE?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=chn>

Recovery in **Bangladesh one year after Cyclone Sidr**, Bangladesh's worst disaster in years, killed some 3,500, injured tens of thousands and displaced 2 million. The storm struck on Nov. 15, 2007, triggering a 5-metre (15-foot) tidal surge. The United Nations said after the disaster that 8.5 million people were affected, a third of whom needed emergency assistance. The cyclone was packing winds of 250 kph (155 mph) when it struck the southwestern coast. The devastation included:

- Over 1.4 million homes destroyed or damaged
- At least 1.25 million livestock killed
- 2 million acres of cropland damaged
- Roads and coastal embankments destroyed

[http://www.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/BG\\_STO.htm](http://www.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/BG_STO.htm)

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/216872/8db90bf43dbd3dd5930b917577f96921.htm>

### **Events:**

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction**

##### **2-4 December 2008**

At the Putra World Trade Centre – PWTC Putra World Trade Centre – PWTC

41, Jalan Tun Ismail

50481 Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIA

3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction has been organised to review the implementation of the HFA in the Asia and Pacific countries. The underpinning theme of the conference is '**Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction; From National to Local**', while the overarching goal would be to exchange the knowledge on practical ways of implementing disaster risk reduction efforts affectively at national and local levels. The objectives of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction would be:

- To review the action taken by the national governments and other stakeholders for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action as a follow up to the Beijing Action for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and Delhi Declaration;
- To ensure an effective follow-up to the decisions taken by the ISDR Asia Partnership, as the operative arms of the Ministerial Conferences, in particular in mapping out and reporting on the implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific;



- To take stock of initiatives taken in various sub-regions of Asia for promoting cooperation and building partnerships for disaster risk reduction among nations, both within and outside the governments, including private and public partnership;
- To share and exchange good practices and lessons learned on disaster risk reduction in various fields including application of science and technology, community based disaster preparedness, public-private partnership and enhance their replication within the region;
- To discuss the preparations towards key global processes for Disaster Risk Reduction such as the Global Platform and Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction as well as contribution to regional forums on disaster risk reduction;
- To develop a vision and roadmap to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones, and engage new stakeholders' investment in disaster risk reduction in Asia, such as the private sector, re-insurance companies etc;
- To facilitate a better recognition of community-based activities and local actions on disaster risk reduction by Governments and promote the mobilization of adequate policy and financial support at the national level to facilitate the effective implementation and replication within vulnerable communities.

As the regional DRR resource centre in the Asia and Pacific, ADPC is a key partner of the conference and would lead six events as given bellow;

1. High Level Round Table 03 (HLRT3): Empowering Local Governments and Community Organizations (CBOs) to Implement Community Based DRR
2. Technical Segment 03 (TS3): Decentralized Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction; Involvement & Empowerment of Local Governments and Non-governmental Organizations for DRR in Asia
3. Side Event A: Reducing Disaster Risk in Urban Areas
4. Side Event E: Reducing Disaster Risk in Urban Areas
5. Side Event F: Mainstreaming DRR into Development: Experiences and lessons learned from the RCC MDRD programme
6. Side Event I: Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction agenda: Science, Institutions, and Policy

For more information: [www.adpc.net](http://www.adpc.net)

### **Australian Disasters Conference 2009: Surviving Future Risks, 10-13 February 2009, Canberra**

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>

### **III International Conference Remote Sensing - the Synergy of High Technologies, 15 – 17 April 2009, Moscow region**

The International Conference Remote Sensing - the Synergy of High Technologies annually held by Sovzond becomes more and more popular in the geoinformational community. The conference is by right positioned in the calendar of the most high-profile events in this industry since this event allows summarizing the year work and shaping further prospects of ERS market development.

<http://www.sovzondconference.ru/2009/eng/>

## News:

**New DRR official appointed:** The Secretary-General has appointed Margareta Wahlstrom of Sweden as Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action in the Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. This new voluntary-funded post, based in Geneva, has been created to step up action and international cooperation on disaster risk reduction, as climate change steadily increases the number and intensity of natural disasters across the globe. Ms. Wahlstrom has 25 years of extensive national and international experience in disaster management and institution building for strengthening capacity for disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

**First Regional public health pre-deployment course (RPHPDC):** In order to build Regional capacity for emergencies, EHA SEARO conducted the first Regional Public Health Pre-deployment Course (RPHPDC), in Jaipur, India, on 14-20 Sep 2008. The target for this course was WHO staff and emergency professionals on the WHO roster. The course was adapted to target Regional needs and experiences, and based on the Global Public Health Pre-Deployment Course (GPHPDC) developed by WHO HAC in Geneva. It was re-designed by SEAR and the Institute of Health Management and Research (IHMR), Jaipur. The objectives of the course were to ensure that participants: The course covered humanitarian context - humanitarian reform, cross cutting issues, and public health in emergencies- prioritization and programming; clarifying public health issues. <http://www.searo.who.int/eha>

### **Sri Lanka, 14 Nov: Two new tsunami centers**

Sri Lankan government has decided to establish two new tsunami warning centers in the country. Media Minister Anura Priyadharshana Yapa said the new centers will be established with the assistance of the German government. The locations of the new tsunami warning centers are not decided yet. According to the Minister a final decision on the locations will be taken after considering the expert opinion. [http://www.colombopage.com:80/archive\\_08/November14153751RA.html](http://www.colombopage.com:80/archive_08/November14153751RA.html)

### **Sri Lanka, 14 Nov: Community credit boosts poorest families**

Many impoverished tsunami-affected families are now taking advantage of a micro-finance system arranged by the Red Cross Red Crescent. In the four years since the tsunami struck, most of the affected families along Sri Lanka's coastline have received some form of help to rebuild their homes and restore their livelihoods. However, it is not uncommon to find that humanitarian assistance programmes have failed to bring lasting benefits to some of the poorest and most marginalized families. One of the key obstacles has been gaining access to loans and financial services via the commercial banking sector. <http://www.reliefweb.int:80/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/FBUO-7LCJ3?OpenDocument&rc=3&emid=TS-2004-000147-LKA>

**India, Nov: Tsunami orphans to get tele-counselling** Tsunami orphans will receive psychiatric tele-counselling in Nagapattanam, Chennai, India. The service is being started in the Annai Sathya government orphanage and will soon be extended to children in all orphanages and government hostels, Psychological Community Health Organisation (PSYCHO). <http://www.hindu.com/2008/11/14/stories/2008111453290300.htm>

### **The first Asian grassroots women's academy on resilience, Cebu City, Philippines**

On the night of October 22nd, the Mayor of Cebu City inaugurated the Grassroots Women's Academy, "Empowering Grassroots Women to Build Resilient Communities for participants of the Asian Grassroots Academy on "Empowering Grassroots Women to Build Resilient Communities." <http://members.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/sfp/12265811965.htm>

## **6 Nov: Rebuilding after the Great Sichuan Earthquake**

On 12 May 2008, the earth beneath the Sichuan Province of western China shifted. It generated a massive magnitude 8.0 earthquake. The three minute earthquake was felt throughout China and Southeast Asia, but the Sichuan Province was hardest hit. The earthquake, combined with aftershocks and landslides, reduced millions of businesses, homes and schools to rubble. Almost 80,000 residents lost their lives, and 360,000 were severely injured. Millions of residents lost everything. <http://www.asmmag.com/features/1289>

**Building national capacity for health in emergencies: DPR Korea:** Following recent emergencies such as the flash floods that occurred in August-September 2007, WHO has been assisting the Government of DPRK in building greater national capacity in health, at the local, provincial and central levels. The Ministry of Public Health has established a disaster preparedness nucleus at the national level comprising of early warning for disease outbreaks, health information and policy/planning units. Additionally, the MOH has also established the two regional logistic supply hubs located in the western and eastern part of the country. WHO provided raw materials for the local production of Mebendazole and Propranolol for use in MoPH's health facilities and for the de-worming campaign with UNICEF in November 2008. WHO DPRK received more than US\$ 10 million in funding from the Republic of Korea in 2008 for Maternal and Child Health and malaria. It also received more than US\$ 1.3 million in CERF funding. <http://www.searo.who.int/>

### **Myanmar-Cyclone Nargis recovery:**

**Early Warning, Alert and Response System (EWARS):** To help detect and prevent any potential outbreaks, an Early Warning, Alert and Response System for Disease surveillance among health partners, was established, which has subsequently been integrated with the Ministry of Health's disease surveillance system. This EWAR system has become a key source of information on disease morbidity and mortality from the field.

**Vector-borne disease control:** WHO has assisted in vector-borne disease control through the various stages of the emergency, from assessment of the dengue situation immediately after the cyclone to preparation of a draft prepared for prevention and control of dengue, and logistical and technical assistance and training for fogging and health promotion measures undertaken by the township government. IEC materials on malaria and dengue prevention were developed and distributed, bed nets were distributed and curriculum was developed for training of volunteers. A massive larviciding campaign was conducted through the network of health workers and community workers of government, UN agencies and NGOs of the health cluster. It has also provided 200 fogging machines and 2000 litres of malathion, and drugs for treatment of malaria.

**Infant feeding in emergencies:** Working in close collaboration with nutrition cluster, WHO is working to promote appropriate Infant Feeding in Emergencies (IFE). This includes promotion of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and promotes relactation in cases of separation, and prevention of inadvertent use and donations of infant formula. Translation and editing of Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies Operational Guidelines is underway. These guidelines will be distributed to the Ministry of Health and the NGOs and other cluster members. A "Joint statement of WHO, UNICEF, Save the Children, IFRC, ICRC on appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding in Current Emergency" has been translated into Myanmar language. <http://www.searo.who.int/>



### **Tsunami early warning system launched in Indonesia**

Indonesia on Tuesday (November 11) launched a new tsunami early warning system aimed at providing faster alerts to a region affected by frequent earthquakes. The new system, called the Indonesia Tsunami Early Warning System (InaTEWS), was built with assistance from foreign countries including Germany, China, Japan, the US and France. According to Reuters, the system is expected to be fully operational by 2010. Indonesia and other countries along the Indian Ocean were hit by a devastating tsunami on December 26, 2004, triggered by a massive 9.0-magnitude earthquake. The tsunami left some 170,000 dead or missing in Indonesia's Aceh province. Indonesia has installed some warning systems since then, but large parts of the country are still not covered. According to Reuters, the new system will use sensors placed on the seabed and shore to relay details of seismic movements to buoys on the surface. The information will then be transmitted via satellite to the tsunami warning center in Indonesia. "We are starting the world's most advanced tsunami early warning system able to issue the quickest possible warnings with a high degree of reliability,".

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MCOI-7LBL5Q?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=idn>

<http://asia.news.yahoo.com/081111/3/3rwf9.html>

### **Californians prepare for mock 'Big One'**

Around 5.2 million people across California took part in what was billed as the largest earthquake drill in US history on Thursday, 14 Nov testing readiness for a devastating seismic disaster. Millions of students and hundreds of police, firefighters and emergency medical service personnel are readying for the event, which will simulate the response to a 7.8-magnitude quake erupting on the San Andreas Fault. Billed the "Great Southern California Shakeout," the drill is designed to show Californians what they need to do to prepare for a massive disaster. The exercise simulates a large earthquake in the densely populated region that leaves 1,800 people dead, 53,000 injured, 1,500 buildings destroyed and causes around 213 billion dollars in damage. [http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20081113/ts\\_alt\\_afp/usquakedisasterdrill](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20081113/ts_alt_afp/usquakedisasterdrill)

### **Information resources:**

**Blog:** Disaster-affected communities are and should be the architects of their own recovery, not merely passive recipients of international goodwill: In these days of saturation coverage when a major disaster hits, we are all familiar with what devastated populations need. Or rather, we think we are. Food. Water. Tarpaulins. Medical supplies, and expertise. All these things are critical. This list, however, has one critical omission: information. It may sound trivial. But as everyone who has ever been caught in an emergency knows, the right information is crucial to being able to make the right decisions. What just happened to me? Which is the nearest open hospital? Is anyone coming to help, and what do I do till I get there? How can I find out what has happened to my family? Is it safe to stay indoors after an earthquake? We need information in order to act. And for people in remote areas of developing countries who may be cut off from help for up to two weeks-as was notoriously the case in Burma - if a disaster strikes, information is literally a life saving resource. <http://www.comminit.com/en/node/279707/bbc>

**Study: Monsoon link to fall of dynasties:** The demise of some of China's ruling dynasties may have been linked to changes in the strength of monsoon rains, a new study suggests.

The findings come from 1,800-year record of the Asian monsoon preserved in a stalagmite from a Chinese cave. Weak - and therefore dry - monsoon periods coincided with the demise of the Tang, Yuan and Ming imperial dynasties, the scientists said. A US-Chinese team report their work in the journal Science.

Stalagmites are largely made up of calcium carbonate, which precipitates from groundwater dripping from the ceiling of a cave. Chemical analysis of a 118mm-long stalagmite from Wangxiang Cave, in

Gansu province, north-west China, told the history of strong and weak cycles in the monsoon - the rains that water crops to feed millions of people in Asia. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7714019.stm>

**Study: Nov 13, Washington: Wind power can alter ocean currents and boost marine life**

A new study has suggested that generating wind power at sea may alter ocean currents and marine ecosystems, bringing nutrient-rich waters up from the depths, which marine life can thrive on. Extracting energy from wind changes regional air currents, which can in turn affect how the nearby ocean circulates, Goran Brostrom of the Norwegian Meteorological Institute in Oslo, told Discovery News. Brostrom has shown in a model that winds swirling at five to 10 meters per second (11 to 22 miles per hour) downwind of large farms are uneven. As they blow over the ocean they can roil the waters, causing upwelling. The change in currents seems small - a nudge of just one meter (3.3 feet) per day - and the wind farms have to be around five square kilometers (1.9 square miles), which only the biggest do. But, Brostrom said that the effect is enough to bring nutrient-rich waters up from the depths, which marine life can thrive on. "I think you will see a large effect over time," he said. "You will get more plankton blooming, and you will see more vibrant life overall at that place," he added. <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/37110>

**Tool:** UNISDR Americas has launched the **HFA-Pedia** at [www.eird.org/hfa.html](http://www.eird.org/hfa.html) as a means to share information on a wide variety of subjects relating to the HFA and disaster risk reduction throughout the Americas. HFA-Pedia, a tool developed by the regional unit based on Media Wiki technology, makes it easy to share and edit your information online, facilitating contributions by anyone interested in DRR.

**Tool:** UNOSAT has produced a satellite image derived **flood map and analysis for Vietnam** (Overview of Flood Waters in the Red River Delta Region). The map has been produced in the context of the International Charter Space and Major Disasters and can be downloaded from [http://www.unosat.org/asp/prod\\_free.asp?id=96](http://www.unosat.org/asp/prod_free.asp?id=96)

**Tool kit:** Compilation of community risk assessment methods on the ProVention Consortium tool kit [www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=39](http://www.proventionconsortium.org/?pageid=39)

**Declaration: 8 Sep 2008: New Delhi Declaration on the impacts of climate change on human health**  
We, the Health Ministers of Member States of the WHO South-East Asia Region participating in the 26th Health Ministers Meeting in New Delhi, appreciate the efforts being made by countries and partners in the South-East Asia Region for addressing the challenges posed by global warming and climate change. However, we are concerned about the potential adverse impacts on health, which could be sudden, unpredictable and irreversible and thus overwhelm the response capacity of the health sector and jeopardize progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in general, and the health-related Millennium Development Goals, in particular. [http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/SDE\\_NDDS.pdf](http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/SDE_NDDS.pdf)

**Website:** Global Alliance for Disaster Reduction: The website was created to promote and facilitate capacity building for all aspects of disaster reduction (e.g., floods, severe windstorms, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, landslides, global climate change). Power point files of notable past and present events are available for downloading, use, and sharing. [www.gadr.giees.uncc.edu](http://www.gadr.giees.uncc.edu)

**For archived DRM updates:**

**ADPC Website:**

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

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