



## TRINET NEWSLETTER

### *APRIL 2008*

*Sun + Seawater = Salt*

Every one of us knows about the Salt Satyagraha: the march to Dandi by Gandhiji in March 1930, and the march to Vedaranyam led by Rajaji a month later. Picking up a handful of salt from the sea shore was a mark of defiance of the British Raj, a peaceful method of protest that influenced many. Those who have been on the East Coast Road in TN near Marakkanam or driven to Vedaranyam or Tuticorin would have noticed mountains of salt as far as eye can see – the product of toil that few of us see or appreciate; and what is more important, controlled by the availability of sun and seawater.

Salt is an integral part of human food consumption, essential for human well being though it can be a double edged sword. It is a basic taste and is involved in regulation of the water balance in the body. Too little of it, and the muscles begin to protest and one feels tired. Too much of it can result in increased blood pressure, apart from other ills. The increased consumption of processed foods, especially chips and pickles rich in salt is of great concern today. But edible salt accounts for just about 17.5% of the total production (Wikipedia: Salt); the other industrial uses being in processes such as in setting dyes, in the pulp and paper industry and in making soaps and detergents.



Salt production in India is an ancient affair, not surprising with some 7500km of coastline and being located in the tropics. India is the third

largest producer of salt in the world with an average annual production of about 157 lakh tonnes with sea salt making up about 70% of the salt production in the country. Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are important sea salt producers. The private sector plays a dominant role contributing over 97% of the salt production, while the public sector contributes the rest. The co-operative sector contributes about 7% whereas the small-scale sector (less than 10 acres) accounts for nearly 30% of the total salt production in the country. There are about

### *CHANGES*

TRINet has transitioned into "**The Resource and Information Network: for the coast**".

TRINet (Tsunami Rehabilitation Information Network), set up in March 2005 in the aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami, has been serving both as a platform for deliberations on the rehab of the coastal communities affected by the tsunami, and as a provider of information on tsunami rehabilitation in the country through its website ([www.trinet.in](http://www.trinet.in)), Weekly News Roundup, and the monthly TRINet Newsletter.

Three years after the Indian Ocean tsunami, the focus has changed from rehabilitation to long term development of the coastal zone. For the last year, TRINet has been increasingly focusing on coastal issues including providing information and support to those working on long term development issues from the perspective of the coastal communities whose livelihoods depend extensively on access to coastal resources. TRINet, as "*The Resource and Information Network: for the coast*" will henceforth serve as a platform to highlight such issues.

The Weekly News Roundup that has been focusing on tsunami rehab news, has in the last year, slowly shifted its focus to coastal issues in general though tsunami related news will continue to be featured. The same goes for the monthly newsletter.

"Alayathi", the Tamil newsletter is now produced by BEDROC ([www.bedroc.in](http://www.bedroc.in)) Nagapattinam. The electronic version will continue to be available on the TRINet website.

Please visit our website [www.trinet.in](http://www.trinet.in) for more information.

11,000 salt works, mostly in small sector, engaged in the production of salt. The total area under salt production is about 5.0 lakhs acres. The salt manufacturing activities provide direct employment to about 1 lakh persons. (Salt Industry: [http://dipp.nic.in/industry/content\\_industries/SALT%20INDUSTRY.htm](http://dipp.nic.in/industry/content_industries/SALT%20INDUSTRY.htm))

Salt works having an area of more than 10 acres are covered under the provisions of Salt Cess Act, 1953. Salt works having an area up to 10 acres set up by individuals or group of individuals are



exempted from the provisions of the Salt Cess Act, 1953. Salt, an “essential item” is a Central subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution and all aspects of the salt industry are controlled by the Central Government through the office of the Salt Commissioner. But working conditions of the salt workers come under the purview of the state government.

### The production process

Vedaranyam follows a labour-intensive (around 10,000 people work in Vedaranyam's pans alone) traditional salt crystallisation process known as Visagam Brine Stagnation technique.



This goes with the topography of the district - the coastal area is at a lower level than the sea - allowing for greater intrusion of sea water during high tide, minimising the use of motor pumps. The sun

does the rest of it, condensing and crystallising the salt.

Workers manually flatten the floor with clay and sand to stabilise it. For every acre of salt crystalliser, salt farmers who use ocean water as raw material need to prepare 11 acre of reservoirs. The saline water is then brought in through channels, passing through reservoir, condenser and crystalliser before it becomes salt. En route, gypsum and Epsom are collected as by-products. A lot depends on the preparation of the pits for their proper disposal.

<http://www.indiatogether.org/2005/feb/eco-saltpans.htm>

When the tsunami struck on 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2004, it was off-season for the salt workers on the Tamil Nadu coast and so there was no loss of human life. The season runs from January to October here: salt manufacture is possible only when there is no rain and there is plenty of sun. However, tons of salt stored by those hoping for a better price were washed out and salt pans were filled with debris and slush which had to be cleaned out before the pans could be prepared for the next season.

Post tsunami, there has been extensive focus on the coastal zone, especially with regard to coastal livelihood associated resources and activities. Salt manufacture too has been targeted though there have already been a number of studies and reports on this industry. The earlier focus had been mainly on Gujarat, the state leading in the production of salt. The BoBP-IGO and the Salt Commissioner's Office did a one-year study of salt workers in India with the results being presented at a National Workshop in 2006. Recommendations from that study are given in the box.

### Recommendations of BOBP-IGO on salt workers:

- Create a data base on salt workers. Undertake a full census. Register all salt workers.
- Guarantee employment, fix minimum wages.
- Improve workplace amenities, such as access to potable drinking water, mobile clinics, protective gear, sanitation, rest sheds. Strengthen awareness on family planning. Recruit health workers from the salt workers' community.
- Set up a group insurance scheme. Improve and widen credit access.
- Set up child crèches and schools. Mobilise NGOs for the purpose.
- Modernise the industry without marginalizing small-scale salt units. Standardise production techniques. Improve power supply.
- Set up salt parks in select locations.
- Strengthen infrastructure for storage and transport of salt, with jetties, and efficient rail rakes.

*Bay of Bengal News, Vol IV(7), March 2006.*

[www.bobpigo.org](http://www.bobpigo.org)

The government of India has a housing scheme called the Namak Mazdoor Awaaz Yojana where 90% of the cost of the houses is to be borne by the government and 10% by the Salt Manufacturers/State Government/ NGOs/ Labourers themselves. But who are the salt workers? Are they only those who work in the salt pans or does the list include the packers and loaders and such others too? Who of these are the most vulnerable? Considering that the majority of those who work in the salt pans are socio-economically backward and mostly illiterate; and considering also that working in the salt industry is reportedly considered even by the workers as undignified work, various levels of intervention are obviously required for the improvement of the conditions of workers in this industry. Recently, a consultation was held at Chennai to present a study commissioned by the UNDP on the “Socio-Economic conditions of salt workers in Tamil Nadu”. The Salt Commissioner pointed out that unlike in Gujarat, the holdings in Tamil Nadu are very small and it is difficult to go in for mechanization and hence the labour intensive production units continue. One way is to promote consolidation of holdings so that mechanization, at least partly, could be encouraged. Discussion brought out the fact that it is also difficult to get exact numbers of people employed in this industry as they are mostly contract labour and the work is seasonal.

### Some health issues:

- Higher rate of keratitis, especially among the men and women engaged in scraping work (<http://www.aravind.org/amrf/major.asp>)
- Higher prevalence of hypertension because of absorption of salt through the skin, especially those with damaged skin because of ulcers, injuries at work etc. (Haladiya et al. In Current Science, Vol 87 (8): October 2004.)
- Chronic cough, tuberculosis and general malnutrition
- Occupational health issues did come down with the use of personal protective equipment (<http://www.icmr.nic.in/annual/2005-06/hqds/eoh.pdf>) but how many have access to such equipment or are willing to use them?

The discussions also pointed to the need for improving access to health care services. NGOs working with salt pan workers shared their concerns about reproductive tract infections in women as well as the other well known occupation related health issues including keratitis, ulcers, etc. At the occupational level, some of these could be tackled by providing personal protective equipment and training in their usage. For those leasing out small pans, access to safe working credit as well as reasonable marketing systems need to be looked at just as other safety net measures including comprehensive insurance packages, identification cards and alternate livelihood training need to be made available. The last is probably most important considering that the salt pans located near towns and industrial areas are being swallowed up for 'development', well known in the case of Mumbai, and happening even in a place like Tuticorin which is the leading salt producing district in Tamil Nadu. Not just anthropogenic development appears to be a threat to the salt pans and the salt industry but also natural phenomena. The news item last week, "Rain destroys salt pans in Vedaranyam" (<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/25/stories/2008032556710100.htm>) said that "The unusually heavy rainfall in the last one week has destroyed the salt pans that were ready for production on the Vedaranyam coast in the

district." Is it because of climate change – where there are extreme events that cannot be forecast; or something else?

Whatever it is, there is no doubt but that we need to look seriously not only into the issues at the workplace especially for salt pan workers but also into possible impacts of global warming and sea level rise on this livelihood of carried out at the edge of the sea that can be easily disrupted by vagaries of changes in climate, especially unseasonal rains.

#### Further Reading:

1. Socio-economic status of workers in the salt industry in India: a report. By Dr Y S Yadava, Rajdeep Mukherjee and Ram Mundhe. BoBP-IGO, 2006
2. Working and Living Conditions of Salt Workers in India: <http://labour.nic.in/ss/WorkingandLivingConditionsofSaltWorkersinIndia.pdf>
3. This video is about Oxfam's work in Vedaranyam, a major salt producing centre in Tamil Nadu that was affected by the tsunami. It also gives a quick overview of the work that goes into the initial aspects of salt manufacture. [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam\\_in\\_action/impact/success\\_stories/tsunami\\_saltpan.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/impact/success_stories/tsunami_saltpan.html)
4. Reclaiming Childhood: A case study of child care centres for the Children of Salt Pan Workers: SEWA, June 2000. [www.sewasearch.org](http://www.sewasearch.org)

(Photos courtesy NCRC'S Collection)

### Letter from the A&N Islands

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands were badly affected by the earthquake and tsunami in 2004. While the official reports mention 3513 people as dead or missing, unofficial reports put the toll much higher. The islands tilted and many areas went under water; one of the islands was split into three. The Nicobar group was much more affected, being closer to the epicentre. The tribal communities there are quite aware of earthquakes and their traditional houses are built to withstand earthquakes.

Despite the diverse backgrounds and lifestyles, the government decided to build a single type of house for all – with the houses in the Nicobars being on stilts as the only variation. The materials were to be completely imported from the mainland – 1200kms away; and the cost of inter-island transport means that the average cost per unit is some Rs 10 lakhs.

Deliberations at a TRINet Workshop at Chennai in 2006 and the report "Assessing Post-tsunami housing reconstruction in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands: A People's Perspective"

| Name of the Islands | No. of Permanent Shelters to be Constructed by |      |     | TOTAL |
|---------------------|--|------|-----|-------|
|                     | CPWD   | APWD | NGO |       |
| South Andaman       | -  | 214  | 609 | 823   |
| Little Andaman      | 965  | 908  | 100 | 1973  |
| Car Nicobar         | 3941   | -    | -   | 3941  |
| Teressa             | 506  | -    | -   | 506   |
| Katchal             | 315  | -    | -   | 315   |
| Kamorla             | 518  | -    | -   | 518   |
| Nancowry            | 269  | -    | -   | 269   |
| Chowra              | 346  | -    | -   | 346   |
| Little Nicobar      | 111  | -    | -   | 111   |
| Great Nicobar       | 995  | -    | -   | 995   |
| Total               | 7966   | 1122 | 709 | 9797  |

HTTP://WWW.AND.NIC.IN/SHELTERP/ISLANDWISE.HTM accessed on 24 March 2008

highlighted the importance of vernacular housing especially in the Nicobars and the issues being faced by the islanders. The fact is that very little information comes out from the islands except what is available on [www.and.nic.in](http://www.and.nic.in) which looks as if all's right with the reconstruction programme (Construction of permanent shelters in A&N

Islands: Status report as on 29.02.08 <http://www.and.nic.in/shelterP/tgtshelter/Note%20of%20permanent%20shelter%20290208.pdf>, albeit on the slow side and despite the Supreme Court saying that possibility of construction of houses/huts in the traditional manner and design, using climate-friendly material, such as timber, should be explored (<http://judis.nic.in/supremecourt/qrydisp.asp?tfnm=29079>).

Here is a letter that provides some additional perspectives on what is really happening in

## **LABOUR PAINS: MEN AT WORK**

The islands, today, are dotted with construction sites, rising smoke, dust and debris of old buildings and construction material for new buildings. "Old location", "new location", "permanent shelter" and "temporary shelter" are the new additions to the social geography of the islands. Of all the other measures involved in disaster management, the most visible and talked about is the construction of "permanent shelters." At an early stage, the government rejected the idea of giving money to the people to build their own houses the way they wanted. The idea of making materials available at a low cost was also rejected as the government thought it fit to build disaster resistant shelters in modern colonies the likes of which the islanders had not seen before. It was of little consequence that the people did not like the materials being used, the designs of the houses or the locations and layouts of the new colonies. Fishermen sitting kilometres away from the sea not being able to earn their daily bread would have to consolation of not dying in another tsunami when and if it struck the islands. Similarly with shopkeepers away from their shops and farmers away from their farms and plantations.

For this, a lot of rebuilding work was subcontracted by the CPWD. As a result, today, even to begin understanding how these houses are being built is a complicated process. At any given temporary shelter construction site there are on an average three different contract companies, one constructing the shelter, one making the roads and another looking after sanitation. In the shelter itself, there is usually one contractor and company making the foundations and another working on the superstructure. Any answers as to when the shelters will finally be complete would involve all the involved companies and a cumulative assessment of the multiple deadlines.

### **Some important issues here**

- Outside contractors, outside labourers – addition to floating labour population – straining over-stressed resources
- Difficulties in getting tickets to travel in the islands – large number of tickets are issued by contractors for their labour
- Monitoring those travelling to restricted tribal areas: many more labourers than tribal passes - few labourers travelling in their own name

In a hypothetical situation, if there is another earthquake or a tsunami in the islands, the government will have absolutely no record of who were the labourers in the islands at the time. It would not be ludicrous to suggest that none of the people whose tribal passes have been issued by contractors are still in the

islands. In case of another disaster, the names of all the labourers would not make it to the treasured lists of dead and missing just like the names of so many non-tribals living in tribal areas for years before the tsunami did not make it to any lists.

Unofficially, some CPWD officials say that islanders, especially the Nicobarese are not used to working in the heat or for long hours. On the other hand, mainland labourers are much more used to being overworked and do not mind working long hours in the sun. I infer some other reasons for preferring labourers from mainland as well. Once they are here, they would be dependent on the contractors for everything and they are less likely to create any problems or protest.

### **Conditions in which the labourers work**

- They come here on 3-6 month contracts
- Living conditions are very poor but running away is not easy. No tickets are issued to labourers by the officers at the jetty without the contractor's approval or a medical certificate.
- Few complain because the lower than minimum wage they earn is still more than what they earn on the mainland

I met one such group of labourers working at the permanent shelter site at Onge tikree in Little Andaman. Hailing from different parts of the country they all chose to seek opportunities in Bombay and had been working as labourers and daily wagers in Bombay for many years. Then one day they seemed to have landed a lucrative job opportunity when a contract company told them they would be taken to Sri Lanka to work in the tsunami reconstruction work there. They were promised bank accounts, ATM cards and a lump sum payment of 15,000 rupees on reaching the site. Instead, they were brought to the Andaman and Nicobar islands and sent to Little Andaman Island, where they have been working for the past three months without being paid their wages or any money except 100-200 rupees per week as allowance. They eat from the ration given by the contractor and live on the site in the half finished permanent shelters. Drinking water is brought from a nearby ditch. Their identity cards and documents had been kept by the contract company at the time of travelling. The officials at the ticket counter did not issue tickets to labourers without the permission of the contractor or a medical reason so running away and going back was not a simple proposition. All of them did not even want to run away. They just wanted to be given what was due to them and better living conditions and food.

The story of Raju (name changed) is probably similar to the story of many youth like him. He contracted malaria and was in the Hut Bay Hospital for 13 days. No body from the contract company helped him during this time. When he went back to work, he was too weak. The contractor advised the supervisor to throw him out. When I met him, he was being asked to pack off and leave by the supervisor. Without any money, identification proof and weak from his illness, Raju had nowhere to go. I gave him some money and told him to reach Port Blair and contact me. The supervisor helped him to reach Port Blair where he contacted me as I had given my number to the labourers when we had visited them. With the help of the Human Rights Law Network in Port Blair, I arranged for him to go back to Mumbai. Contacting his mother in Mumbai, we learnt that he was just fourteen. The matter was reported to the Child Welfare Committee and the child line who arranged for him to be sent back to Mumbai. On investigation, the Child Welfare committee in Mumbai realised that this was a regular practice

and the contractor had sent another batch of 20-25 children to work in the Andamans. All of them were told they were going to Sri Lanka.

The matter has been reported to the labour commissioner and the child line. It is for the administration now to admit some embarrassing truths and take action to improve the lot of the labourers. Usually this would mean the problematic bunch would get sent back and the contractor would be issued a notice to which he might or might not respond. The files will lie in an administrative cupboard and gather dust till another case being reported leads to another notice copy being attached to the first one. Terrible working conditions and children doing hard labour are real truths that need urgent and strict attention.

The reason for writing this is to circulate information on the many human rights violations that are going unchecked. The matter must be taken up at higher levels and organisations and individuals who can help should get involved.

***Manak Matiyani is an independent film maker who's been working in the islands for a year. He can be contacted at [manakmatiyani@gmail.com](mailto:manakmatiyani@gmail.com)***

### *Coastal News Snippets*

Foreign aided water projects: A number of water resources projects are under implementation with assistance from external funding agencies. A list of the ongoing projects under implementation with assistance from external funding agencies is available with this release. No Project for building sea wall along the coast line is presently under implementation with assistance from external funding agencies. However, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to provide Technical Assistance to the States of Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra in preparing technically, economically, environmentally and socially viable investment proposal to address coastal erosion problems and introduce procedures for sustainable coastal protection and shoreline management under the Sustainable Coastal Protection and Management Project. This information was given by the Minister of State for Water Resources, Shri Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav in response to a question by Shri Amitava Nandy in the Lok Sabha today.

<http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=35895>

1.50 lakh acres earmarked for coastal corridor: Visakhapatnam: An area of 1.50 lakh acres is earmarked for the coastal growth corridor project in Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts. As part of first phase, 603.58 square kilometres is identified between

Visakhapatnam and Kakinada for investments in various infrastructure projects. Infrastructure and Investment Corporation of AP (INCAP) is now busy with exercises for working on the project and extend it up to Nellore in next phase. Meanwhile, expressing concern over large-scale displacement of fishermen due to various projects, Forum for Better Vizag in a memorandum submitted to Minister for Infrastructure and Investment M. Venkataramana Rao stated that violation of Coastal Regulation Zone rules were depriving the fishing community of their rightful access to sea and robbing them of their livelihood.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/06/stories/2008030653740500.htm>

Marinas set to dot Goan coastline: Panaji, March 3 The leisure tourism sector in the state is all set to have marinas - ports within a sheltered harbour where boats and yachts are anchored and services geared to the needs of recreational boating are found - by next year, thus attracting large section of elite population possessing small and medium-sized pleasure vessels, from and outside the country. The marinas are most frequently located along the banks of rivers connecting to lakes or seas and may be inland, sometimes up to as much as twenty-five kilometers from the river's mouth.

[http://www.navhindtimes.com/articles.php?Story\\_ID=030416](http://www.navhindtimes.com/articles.php?Story_ID=030416)

3 chemical storage firms get MPCB notice: In a development with widespread repercussions for chemical storage tank terminals, the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) has issued a show cause notice to at least three companies, including Aegis Logistics, Chemical Terminal of Trombay and Sealord Containers for not obtaining environmental and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearances for setting up storage tanks and handling of hazardous chemicals. D T Devade, legal officer for MPCB, said, The notice which is based on the salient features of Mohite's report has asked the companies to show cause as to why their activities should not be stopped and whether competent authorities should be directed to disconnect electric and water supply to the storage tanks of these firms.

[http://www.business-standard.com/common/news\\_article.php?leftnm=1&subLeft=1&chklogin=N&utono=315821&tab=r](http://www.business-standard.com/common/news_article.php?leftnm=1&subLeft=1&chklogin=N&utono=315821&tab=r)

Plea for measures to protect beauty of beaches: Nagercoil: The district administration and the Pollution Control Board should initiate urgent measures to safeguard the natural beauty of various beaches in the district. The chairman of Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage, R.S. Lal Mohan said that though 17 lakh domestic and international tourists have visited the land's end in 2007 alone, the maintenance of the town and particularly the beach were much to be desired. Factors such as open defecation, regular burning of plastics on the beach front and vandalising of the coast by the vested interests continued to scar the beauty of the beach. Construction activities were going on in close proximity to the ocean, in clear violation of the Coastal Zone Regulation norms.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/06/stories/2008030657000600.htm>

Campaigns on conservation of coral reef planned: Tuticorin: Coral reef conservation in the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve is set to get an impetus, with stakeholders planning an array of campaigns this year, the 'International Year of the Reef.' The Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute, affiliated to Manonamiam Sundaranar University, will join hands with the district administration, the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust and the Gulf of Mannar Marine National park and bring out posters highlighting the importance of coral reef ecosystem in the Gulf of Mannar. The posters, numbering 20,000, will be pasted in villages that dot the 140-km coast, from Tuticorin to Rameswaram, and in government offices and educational institutions in Tuticorin and Ramanathapuram districts.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/06/stories/2008030650830300.htm>

Politicians line up for salt pans: Mumbai: It may turn out to be the biggest haul of land lolly in Mumbai's history, with some of the

state's leading politicians in the frontline to get their share. At stake are 5,500 acres of suburban salt pans, eight times the size of the defunct mill lands in central Mumbai. Builders have been circling this land for years now, waiting for controls on these eco-sensitive tracts to be loosened. Now, according to highly placed sources in government and real estate circles, 'a big policy announcement' on the fate of these pristine tracts is expected in the next few months. The state government has chalked out a plan to carve up the land between three parties - the centre, the state government, and the developer. The lessee of the land will be eased out by offering him monetary compensation. There will then be no need to give him a share in the development. There is also a move to increase the floor space index (FSI) to 2.5 for the salt pans which, ironically, fall under the stringent Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), which prohibits any construction close to creeks, mangroves and the high tide line.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Mumbai/Politicians\\_line\\_up\\_for\\_salt\\_pans/articleshow/2841323.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Mumbai/Politicians_line_up_for_salt_pans/articleshow/2841323.cms)

Sundarbans to be developed as global tourist destination: Kolkata: The West Bengal government is keen on developing the Sundarbans, world's largest mangrove forest, into a global tourist destination by preserving its rich eco-diversity. A detailed master plan was being prepared to accord the global status to the Sundarbans, already identified as UNESCO's world heritage site, state tourism secretary Bijoy Chatterjee told PTI here. Chatterjee said that a study had been conducted by the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) late last year on development of coastal tourism and a master plan made for developing the Sundarbans delta. Since the site was environmentally fragile, steps were being taken to prepare the detailed master plan for developing the area without disturbing the wild life, Chatterjee said.

<http://www.newindpress.com/NewsItems.asp?ID=IEP20080303051506&Page=P&Title=Nation&Topic=0>

MoEF apprised of violations of CRZ: Mangalore: The probe, ordered by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), into the complaints against the Mangalore Special Economic Zone (MSEZ), may have some positive impact on the ecologically sensitive mangroves of the region. It has been recommended to the Ministry that Coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ) be demarcated afresh to protect the mangrove areas. The technical sub-committee constituted by the Ministry has brought to light the violations of CRZ. The findings of the sub-committee were discussed at a recent meeting of another committee of experts. Subsequently, it was recommended to the Ministry that the MSEZ be restrained from

going ahead with phase II of the project. The minutes of this meeting, which was made available on the website of the Ministry, stated: "The Regional Director of Coastal Regulation Zone, Government of Karnataka, showed certain areas in the CRZ close to Mangalore Port, abutting Jokatte Railway crossing. The mangrove areas are being filled up for reclamation."

<http://www.thehindu.com/2008/03/08/stories/2008030858280300.htm>

#### Scrap Sethusamudram project, says NGO:

Tuticorin: The Coastal Action Network, a non-governmental organisation, has urged the Government to scrap the Sethusamudram project, arguing that it is "uneconomical and threatens the socio-economic status of thousands of fishermen." It organised an interaction of scientists and experts with reporters here on Monday to discuss the scientific impact of the project. Commander John Jacob Puthur, a retired naval officer, said the project would be unviable, as a huge sum was needed for maintenance. "The dredging being carried out will not be of any use, since the pit will get easily refilled with silts as both sides of the alignment are occupied by loose sand," he said. The expenditure on maintenance of dredging, pegged at Rs. 20 crore and claimed to reduce to Rs. 14 crore in five years, was "false" and "meant to fool the public," he said. "The calculation has been made without any regard for sediment dynamics."

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/11/stories/2008031158680300.htm>

#### FCRI conducts workshops for women of coastal areas:

Tuticorin: The Fisheries College and Research Institute, Tuticorin, conducted separate workshops on 'Coastal aquaculture technologies' and 'Judicious utilisation of aquatic resources for the empowerment of women', here on Wednesday. The programme on 'Coastal aquaculture technologies' was organised for the benefit of Scheduled Caste youth of Vembar region in the district. V.K. Venkataramani, Dean, FCRI, said that the beneficiaries were given on-farm training in aquaculture economic activities such as cost effective shrimp hatchery technology, lobster rearing, crab fattening, seaweed culture and shrimp brood stock maintenance. As part of the other programme, training was given to a total of 50 officials of Departments of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry and members of non-governmental organisations on topics like fish processing technology, preparation of value-added products such as smoked tuna, fisheries economics and credit plan preparation.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/14/stories/2008031450320200.htm>

#### 27 locations in India can harness wind power:

New Delhi: There are 27 locations in the coastal areas of India that have the potential

for harnessing wind for power generation. This was revealed subsequent to wind surveys carried out at 71 locations in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, Lakshadweep, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The minister also told the House that the strategy for promoting wind power projects through private sector investment is being continued during the 11th Plan, by providing various fiscal incentives such as concessional import duty on certain components of wind electric generator, excise duty exemption, ten years' tax holiday on income generated from wind power projects, the benefit of accelerated depreciation, and loans from Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA).

[http://www.domain-b.com/industry/power/20080315\\_power.html](http://www.domain-b.com/industry/power/20080315_power.html)

#### Chemical hub on West Bengal island will damage environment:

Kolkata, March 18 A citizen's expert committee has slammed the West Bengal government's dream chemical hub project on the Nayachar island on Hooghly river, saying it would cause serious ecological damage. Nayachar, a 47 sq km island on the Hooghly river in East Midnapore district, has been selected as the likely place for the proposed chemical hub in West Bengal. The state government settled for Nayachar after being forced to move from Nandigram, the first site chosen for the chemical hub. The committee, formed by city-based environmental activists, said that Nayachar is an estuarine shoal and any structural intervention on the land would imperil its delicate ecology. The citizen's expert committee has been formed by a city-based voluntary organisation Society for Direct Initiative for Social and Health Action (DISHA) and Teachers and Scientists against Maldevelopments (TASAM), which are jointly working on developing coastal ecology across West Bengal. The committee comprises eminent river scientists, professors of marine science, agricultural research and chemical technology, the former deputy director general of Geological Survey of India (GSI) and others. Questioning the economic viability of the chemical hub project, National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) member Harekrishna Debnath said that over 250,000 people earn their livelihood at Nayachar, about 160 km from here, by fishing. "West Bengal contributes 200,000 tonnes of fish every year which generates an export revenue of about Rs.10 billion (Rs.1,000 crore) annually," Debnath said, adding that the fishing community would stand to lose their livelihoods if the project came up.

[http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/enviornment/chemical-hub-on-west-bengal-island-will-damage-environment\\_10028700.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/enviornment/chemical-hub-on-west-bengal-island-will-damage-environment_10028700.html)

Orissa considering measures to fight sea erosion: Bhubaneswar, March 18: Orissa government is considering measures to cope with the problem of sea erosion at Pentha and Satyabhaya areas in Kendrapara district and Penthakata locality in Puri. The necessary measures were being considered as per the recommendations given by an expert from Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, according to Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Manmohan Samal said in the State Assembly on Tuesday. R. Sundaravadivelu of IIT, Chennai had visited the three places to assess the damages caused due to coastal erosion, Samal said. He further said that the State government had already identified a total of 328 coastal villages as tsunami-prone. These villages were situated within 15 km distance from the sea and were spread over 22 Blocks of six coastal districts, Samal said. As regards the tsunami-prone villages, Samal said the Orissa State Disaster Mitigation Authority (OSDMA) was preparing plans for these villages to cope with tsunami. He further informed that the State government had also submitted a proposal of Rs. 609.40 crore to the Central government for strengthening of saline embankments, establishment of cyclone shelters, plantation along the coastline and creation of mangrove forests.

[http://www.kalingatimes.com/orissa\\_news/news2/20080318-Orissa-considering.htm](http://www.kalingatimes.com/orissa_news/news2/20080318-Orissa-considering.htm)

52,000 people living in danger zone: survey: Kollam: 10, 904 families comprising more than 52,000 persons are living in disaster-prone areas along the 37-kilometre-long coastline of

the district, a survey has found. 57 per cent of them live just 50 metres away from the edge of the sea. The survey, a joint programme of Carithas India and the Quilon Social Service Society (QSSS), was formally released by District Collector A. Shahjahan at a function here on Monday.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/25/stories/200803251680300.htm>

NHRC seeks status report on fishermen Kendrapada, March 19: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought for a status report on the socio-economic condition of traditional marine fishermen along the coastal villages in the wake of promulgated prohibition on fishing. The rights panel also sought for a report on the measures initiated by the state government to compensate the fishermen community's loss of income following the turtle conservation programme. There have been further reports of debt-ridden fishermen committing suicide since past one year the panel also asked the administration to let it know on the disturbing trend. Caught in vicious cycle of debt, there were instances of marine fishermen from seaside villages committing suicide in past years that had brought to sharp focus the dwindling livelihood stakes in fisheries-regulated coastal villages in coastal Orissa. As is the practice, the state government in a bid to curb high mortality of these marine species prohibited fishing activity within a seaward radius of 20 km from Gahirmatha marine sanctuary from 1st November-31 May in accordance with sections 2, 7 & 4 of Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act (OMFRA), 1982.

[http://www.thestatesman.net/page\\_arcview.php?clid=9&id=222849&usrsses=1](http://www.thestatesman.net/page_arcview.php?clid=9&id=222849&usrsses=1)

## *Tsunami Rehab Progress*

### *Tamil Nadu Livelihoods*

Banks' concern over non-repayment of loans by fishermen: Nagapattinam: Managers of several commercial banks in the district are keeping their fingers crossed on collection of loans advanced to fishermen for purchase and repair of boats that were damaged in the December 2004 tsunami. A senior bank official told *The Hindu* on Saturday that as per the directions of the government all commercial banks joined together and advanced liberal loans to fishermen for purchase of new mechanised boats. As many as 520 loans were sanctioned to the tune of more than Rs.35 crore. The cost of each mechanised boat was Rs.20 lakh and the government provided a subsidy of Rs.5 lakh for each boat purchased by fishermen. The balance amount of Rs.15 lakh was given as loan. The official said most

of the borrowers were yet to repay their loans and the banks were now running after the borrowers to collect the dues. The banks were not in a position to seize the mechanized boats due to various legal formalities that had to be followed. It was also a tough task to locate the boats purchased by the fishermen.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/02/stories/2008030251360300.htm>

Livelihood support scheme for tsunami-hit: Chennai: Livelihood support items worth Rs.34 lakh were distributed to the tsunami-affected at a function here on Thursday. Beautician kits, wet grinders, fish carts, mobile bunks, ice boxes, umbrellas, 'murukku' machines and a van were distributed to over 800 tsunami-affected people at the Slum Clearance Board office on Kamarajar Salai. The items were

distributed as part of the ADB-assisted programme to provide livelihood support to the tsunami-affected at HLL, Thiruvanniyur Kuppam, Semmancheri, and the Marina coastal slums. Formation of Self-Help Groups, revolving funds for SHGs and skill training are among the other components of the livelihood project. Other major projects include eco-friendly auto rickshaws, solid waste management, establishing community-development stores and provision of three-wheeler luggage carrier, according to a press release.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/07/stories/2008030759780500.htm>

Alternative livelihood project for tsunami victims launched: Cuddalore: The Commissionerate of Town Panchayats, with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank, has launched the Tsunami Emergency Assistance Project (TEAP) to provide alternative livelihood to the people of the coastal town panchayats in the State. P. Velusami, Livelihood Specialists (TEAP), Directorate of Town Panchayats, told reporters at Parangipettai on Wednesday that an allocation of Rs. 12.44 crore had been made for the project. For its implementation, a total of 50 coastal town panchayats in 12 districts had been identified. These were categorised as "worst damaged" and "partly damaged" town panchayats. Nineteen worst affected town panchayats were spread over five districts of Kancheepuram, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, and Kanyakumari. The objective of the project was to form self-help groups to promote alternative livelihood measures. As many as 3,387 SHGs, comprising 60,966 members, had been constituted in these town panchayats and Rs 4.64 crore as revolving funds and Rs. 5 crore as economic assistance had been released so far. These SHGs had chosen trades such as gold covering (or manufacturing artificial jewellery), manufacture of sanitary napkins, solar-dried fish, fish pickles and fast food production, and mud crab fattening. For standardisation and development of the projects, expertise from reputed institutions such as the National Institute of Fashion Technology had been sought. As regards Killai and Parangipettai

town panchayats in Cuddalore district, the mud crab fattening was catching up well.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/13/stories/2008031352240300.htm>

Women SHGs form a federation at Akkaraipettai: Nagapattinam: The Madurai-based People's Development Association (PDA), a non-governmental organisation that is carrying out relief and rehabilitation activities in the tsunami-hit Nagapattinam district, is also working for the economic uplift of the women in the affected areas. The PDA has formed 132 women's groups in 16 villages so far in three categories – Fisher women's group, agricultural women's group and landless women's group. The women's groups are now engaged in viable income-generating economic activities including making of thatches, readymade garments, vermin-compost manure preparation, cashew processing, fish auctioning, cattle rearing, maintenance of coconut groves, pickle making, mobile phone servicing, etc. He said that the PDA was not only helping to form women self help groups (SHGs) but also guiding the SHG members to form a federation. Based on this concept, 'Sadhanai Paravaigal', a federation was formed by 29 women's groups with 553 members at Akkaraipettai.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/10/stories/2008031058730600.htm>

Biometric technology used for issuing identity cards: Chennai: In a bid to monitor and evaluate livelihood activities of self-help groups (SHGs) benefited under the tsunami emergency assistance scheme, the Commissionerate of Municipal Administration (CMA) has launched a pilot project in the city to issue identity cards using biometric technology. Camps for recording fingerprints and facial images of the SHG members are in progress at the Tiruvottiyur and Kathivakkam municipalities. The CMA's project coordinator S. Murugesan said the use of biometric technology envisaged collection of unique and authentic information about the beneficiaries. It would help the CMA to monitor and review the progress of SHGs that have either received training or loans or revolving funds in the tsunami affected areas.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/30/stories/2008033050060100.htm>

### **Housing**

Community hall for tsunami-hit inaugurated: Chennai: Slum Clearance Minister Suba Thangavelan on Wednesday inaugurated the community hall built for tsunami affected families living in HLL Nagar in Tondiarpet. HLL Nagar has over 1,000 tenements built on 5.27 acres donated by Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) for the tsunami-affected. Ashok Gupta, HUL executive director, inaugurated a nursery school in the complex. He said the initiative

was part of the firm's corporate social responsibility mission. A ration shop was inaugurated by Debjit Rudra, HUL Regional Manager (South).

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/27/stories/2008032758470400.htm>

Tsunami shelter handed over: Kancheepuram: A tsunami shelter, constructed at a cost of Rs.50 lakh by the TTK Group, at Paramankeni Kuppam in Lattur Block was formally handed over to the local body on Saturday. Declaring open the building, Chengalpattu MP A.K.

Moorthy called upon residents to make best use of the facility, which had been built with technical assistance from the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai. Director, TTK Group, J. Srinivasan said the shelter was designed taking into consideration safety requirements such as strength and wind velocity.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/09/stories/2008030958410800.htm>

Healthcare centre opened at Pazhaverkadu:  
CHENNAI: KPMG Foundation, a body set up by KPMG International, commissioned two desalination plants and a healthcare centre at Pazhaverkadu in Tiruvallur recently as part of its initiative to rehabilitate tsunami victims. According to a press release, the project was started with the assistance of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), which offered consulting services, and charitable trust Aim for Seva. They have been working together to enhance medical care and drinking water facilities in tsunami-affected villages across the State. The two facilities would yield 1,000 litres of potable water per hour using reverse osmosis technology. This would supply drinking water to about 700 families in the neighbourhood of Thirumalai Nagar and Vairam Kuppam in Tiruvallur district.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/31/stories/2008033158140200.htm>

Allotment of tsunami houses to be verified:  
Nagapattinam: The district administration has initiated verification of permanent houses allotted to tsunami victims following complaints that genuine families were being deprived of the facility. A random check on the allotment by non-governmental organisations at Andanapettai, Saveriyar Nagar and Mahalakshmi Nagar, among other places, revealed malpractices in the distribution of houses. The team, which inspected 717 houses, found that 96 of them were allotted to persons who were not affected by the tsunami and, in some cases, to two persons of the same family. Fortunately, the houses were yet to be occupied. The district administration immediately took possession of the 96 houses and cancelled the allotment orders. Official sources told The Hindu that 32 genuine beneficiaries were allotted houses on Monday. Door-to-door verification of the allotted houses would start soon.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/04/stories/2008030450300200.htm>

Tsunami-hit entitled to shifting charges:  
Kancheepuram: Beneficiaries of the scheme to replace houses vulnerable to natural calamities along the coast with disaster-resistant dwelling units are entitled for one-time shifting charges and reimbursement of monthly rent for 12 months. Enquiries reveal that Collectors of coastal districts, other than Chennai and Tiruvarur, had identified a total of 52,569 houses located within 1,000 metres from high

tide line (HTL) and 200 metres from backwaters, as vulnerable to natural calamities. They had suggested that the houses be replaced with disaster-resistant dwelling units under the World Bank-assisted Emergency Tsunami Reconstruction Project (ETRP) and financial assistance from the Centre. Apart from funding the construction of new houses, one-time shifting charges of Rs.1,000 would be extended to the beneficiaries who were also entitled to a monthly rental reimbursement of Rs.500 for 12 months from the date on which they handed over possession of vacant land to the contractor. It was obligatory on the part of the beneficiaries to raze the old structure and level the site before handing it over, official sources said.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/03/stories/2008030374120800.htm>

NGO hands over 192 tsunami houses:  
Nagapattinam: Care India, a non-governmental organisation, on Sunday, handed over 192 permanent houses built at a cost of Rs.4.50 crore to the tsunami-hit families of Madavaimedu village in Sirkazhi taluk in the district. R.N. Mohanty, Director of Care India, who presided over the function, handed over the keys of the houses to the Collector, Tenkasi S. Jawahar. The Collector said that in all 15,278 houses had so far been built and handed over to the tsunami victims in various parts of the district out of the target of 19,976 houses. Mr Jawahar said that a new cement road was being laid at a cost of Rs.93 lakh in Madvaimedu coastal village and Rs.5 lakh was being spent for providing power supply.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/11/stories/2008031157590300.htm>

First phase of work for fishing harbour under way:  
Karaikal: The preliminary work for establishing a new fishing harbour at a cost of Rs.40 crore in Karaikal in the Union Territory of Puducherry has started and the first phase of work costing Rs.18 crore is under way, according to senior officials of the Public Works Department here. The officials, who inspected the progress of the work, told The Hindu on Monday that natural stones (huge granite stones and boulders) were being brought from Tindivanam in Tamil Nadu and were being laid for a stretch of 400 metres from the shore into the sea for establishing the new fishing harbour. The first phase of the work would be completed in a few months and the second phase costing Rs.22 crore would begin from June or July this year. A cross-section of fishermen of Karaikal told that the new fishing harbour would improve their economic condition as most of the villagers were affected by the tsunami three years ago.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/12/stories/2008031252270300.htm>

Work soon on fishing harbour: Nagercoil: The Central Government had decided to set up fishing harbours at Colachel and Thengapattinam and the work would begin soon, said Tourism Minister N. Suresh Rajan. Speaking to presspersons here on Wednesday, he said the State had sent proposals to the Centre for the projects in Kanyakumari district. The Colachel project would be implemented at Rs 27.10 crore and the Thengapattinam scheme at Rs.38.10 crore. Construction of these harbours is a dream of fishermen. Because of absence of such harbours, there is social tension between the fishermen of Kerala and Kanyakumari district. Migration of fishermen from the coastal villages of the district, particularly Colachel, one of the worst affected areas in tsunami, could be stopped, residents said.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/13/stories/2008031350200100.htm>

73 houses handed over: Cuddalore: Two non-governmental organisations, Bless and Plan International, have built 73 permanent houses, each costing Rs. 3 lakh, for the tsunami-affected people of Agaram coastal village in Parangipettai town panchayat near here. Collector Rajendra Ratnoo handed over the keys to the children of these families at a function held at Parangipettai on Wednesday. The tenements were built in two clusters and named Sakthi Nagar (48 houses) and Valampuri Nagar (25 houses). Mr. Ratnoo said that a sum of Rs. 25,000 had been allotted for providing streetlights in these habitations. The town panchayat would soon send a proposal for construction of link roads, estimated to cost

Rs. 10 lakh, to the government. Roland Angerer, country director, Plan International (India), said that the district administration had extended unflinching support in providing basic amenities such as drinking water and electricity.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/20/stories/2008032050350300.htm>

Reconstruction of SCB tenements back on track: Chennai: The demolition of the Slum Clearance Board (SCB) tenements near the Marina beach, which is a component of the project to reconstruct 7,000 tenements between Nochikuppam and Srinivasapuram, is back on track, according to officials. The project had been repeatedly delayed by problems in enumeration of beneficiaries. Officials alleged that landlords who had taken over multiple tenements and let them out on their own were responsible for the delay. Residents have expressed apprehensions in various fora that they would be shifted to tenements on the outskirts of the city. Several rounds of talks were held with ministers and officials. Tentative lists of beneficiaries have been put up and disputed for more than a year. Consensus has been reached and temporary shelters would be constructed in two months, an SCB official said. The design is ready and tenders would be called for shortly. Priority was given to the tsunami-affected in the list of beneficiaries. Those who were shifted out, as they could not produce documents or proof of length of stay, had given written consent, he added.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/21/stories/2008032159580500.htm>

### *Andhra Pradesh*

Spanish aid for tsunami victims: Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh: As part of a project for tsunami victims, the Spanish Red Cross will provide Rs. 1.13 crores for the provision of basic facilities like storage of fish products, provision of ice boxes, platforms for drying fish etc. As part of it, 12 drying platforms and 10 storage sheds will be

constructed and 500 ice boxes supplied to fishermen in the district. According to Collector Nagulapalli Srikanth, who was also the chairman of the district-level Red Cross, 32 fishermen villages in the district will get benefit by the project.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/26/stories/2008032652960300.htm>

### *Useful Reads*

***The role of coastal forests in the mitigation of tsunami impacts*** by Keith Forbes and Jeremy Broadhead. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 2007.

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/KH11-7D57EG/\\$File/full\\_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/KH11-7D57EG/$File/full_report.pdf)

The role of coastal forests in the mitigation of tsunami impacts unexpectedly became a hotly debated topic in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which ranked amongst the most devastating natural disasters in recent history. A proportion of the reconstruction and rehabilitation effort was focussed on rehabilitation of coastal forests, which early information suggested



had been extensively damaged by the tsunami. Information from a range of sources also suggested that mangroves and other coastal forests mitigated the effects of the tsunami. These factors and reductions in risk associated with increased distance of human habitation from the coastline provided justification for tree planting programmes and led

to calls to establish coastal buffer zones in a number of tsunami-affected countries. The diversity of opinion revealed the urgent need for interdisciplinary work to bridge the gap between science and policy and provide information on whether and how to plant or manage coastal trees and forests for protective purposes. The work summarised in this publication was therefore undertaken to specifically address the physical aspects of tsunami mitigation by forests, which form the

core of the debate. Though the work represents the current state of knowledge on this subject, it is not intended to be exhaustive on all aspects of establishing coastal forests. It is hoped that the information provided will be used in conjunction with economic, social and environmental considerations to improve management of coastal trees and forests both in the Indian Ocean region and elsewhere in the world.

(from the foreword)

***Communicating Disasters: An Asia-Pacific Resource Book. Edited by Nalaka Gunawardhane and Frederick Noronha. UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok and TVE Asia Pacific. December 2007.*** <http://www.apdip.net/publications/CommunicatingDisasters.pdf>

An Asian regional brainstorming meeting was held in December 2006 in Bangkok, Thailand, on 'Communicating Disasters: Building on the tsunami experience and responding to future challenges'. Convened by TVE Asia Pacific and UNDP, it sought to discern the key communication lessons of recent disasters that impacted the lives of millions of people. It discussed both recent successes and failures in timely communication using a range of information and communication technologies, or ICTs. The proliferation of ICTs has enabled many forms of new media with higher levels of interactivity and audience engagement than is typically possible in newspapers, radio or television. This, in turn, has inspired a movement of citizen journalists who provide independent reporting and analysis on many areas of public interest, including post-disaster situations. The new media tools and platforms provide more opportunities for disaster affected persons to



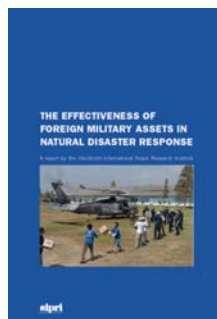
directly voice their concerns, influencing how the mainstream media and humanitarian players react to ground realities.

This book brings together 21 authors who share their experiences and insights on effective communication before, during and after disasters. They look at how information, education and communication can help create disaster resilient communities across the Asia Pacific. Apart from looking at how an aid worker or someone trained in humanitarian relief needs to respond, it examines how can everyone enhance their capacity to listen, reflect and learn -- essential steps in good communication. The editors write in their foreword that "This book does not claim to provide all the answers, but we hope it has at least raised many pertinent questions. Instead of trying to be comprehensive or definitive, our contributors are being provocative and imaginative."

**The Effectiveness of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response:** SIPRI: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008.

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/PANA-7CUH8T/\\$FILE/sipri\\_mar2008.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/PANA-7CUH8T/$FILE/sipri_mar2008.pdf?OpenElement)

Foreign military assets have made large contributions to several recent natural disaster relief operations, yet their use in such operations remains controversial. The questions asked range from matters of principle—is it appropriate for foreign forces to take part in humanitarian work?—to more practical considerations such as cost, how effectively foreign military assets can participate in civilian-led humanitarian operations and how the presence of foreign military assets affects the ability of civilian humanitarian organizations to act independently and safely. This study



provides an overview of the current use of foreign military assets in natural disaster response, including how and why they are deployed. It also analyses the role played by foreign military assets in several major disaster relief operations: in Mozambique following the floods in 2000, in Haiti following floods and tropical storm Jeanne in 2004, in Aceh province, Indonesia, following the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, and in

Pakistan-administered Kashmir following the South Asia earthquake of 2005.

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