



MHA to conduct Multi State Mega Mock Tsunami Exercise 2017 tomorrow; involves 31 coastal districts across four States & a UT, international participants

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The Ministry of Home Affairs through National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) will conduct a multi-State mega mock exercise on tsunami preparedness tomorrow.

The exercise will be simultaneously conducted in 31 coastal districts across four States - West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu - and Union Territory Puducherry along the entire East Coast. The disaster scenario will simulate tsunami waves originating due to a high-intensity earthquake near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which will lead to a massive tsunami along the East Coast.

Participants from 11 Pacific Island countries will observe the entire exercise to take away key lessons and best practices to be adopted while preparing for and responding to a disaster situation.

The exercise is one of the various activities planned on the occasion of the 2nd World Tsunami Awareness Day held on November 5 this year. It began with an orientation conference on 8th November, which was held to ensure the smooth facilitation of the exercise.

This was followed by coordination conferences and table-top exercises at various State Emergency Operation Centres (SEOCs) wherein all the involved districts participated through videoconferencing. These exercises helped familiarise participants with their responsibilities, actions required and helped them evaluate their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for tsunami warnings in the run-up to the exercise to be held tomorrow.

Officials from all the important departments such as the Army, Navy, Air Force, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), health, police, education, firefighting, Civil Defense, transport, electricity, public relations, etc. participated in these preparatory meetings.

Tsunami is a highly devastating natural hazard, and requires rapid response when it occurs as the reaction time is limited. A two-hour reaction time has been planned in this scenario during which the entire State machinery will be mobilised in a defined manner to respond swiftly and efficiently. Evacuation drills will also be rehearsed at selected sites. This exercise aims to assess and help improve the preparedness, response mechanism and coordination among concerned agencies.

India's eastern coast is susceptible to both floods and tsunamis and many coastal districts have conducted similar mock exercises for better preparedness over the years. This is, however, the first time that the entire eastern coast will participate in a mock exercise simultaneously.

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