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1. Four community halls being built for tsunami affected

The Hindu dated 1st January 2007 reported that Peoples Development Association engaged in tsunami rehabilitation work in the district, in constructing four community halls in the coastal villages of Vellapallam, Vettaikkarniruppu, Manalmedu and Keechankuppam. Besides constructing 295 permanent houses for the tsunami families at Vilundamavadi, Vellapallam, Seruthur, and Velankanni.

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2. Group ties up with NGOs for training n farm practices

The Hindu dated 2nd January 2007 – Coimbatore reported that "Agrochemical Promotion Group, an industry body that represents 200 crop protection companies plans to train 1000 personnel of Non Governmental Organizations in farm practices.

Group chairman S.Kumarasamy told that it had tied up with the Confederation of Non Governmental Organizations in Rural India.

About 400 staff members of the NGOs were trained in safe and judicious use of pesticides and related subjects in 2006. "The idea is to give technology inputs and skills."

This year the training would be held for three days in at the block and taluk levels.

Technology Transfer

Technology transfer was imperative to improve farm productivity. Th one lakh agri-extension officers and six lakh villages in country "should be used to transfer technology. The group offered to work with the government pilot projects in technology transfer.

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3. Maximum 'ECOSAN' toilets for fishing village

On the 7th January 2007 the Hindu reported that " Kameshwaram, a tsunami hit fishing village, has the distinction of getting the maximum number of ' ECOSAN' compost toilets in the country with the opening of 100th Household Centered Environment Sanitation Toilet (HCEST). As many as 100 toilets were constructed by Society for

Community Organization and Peoples Education (SCOPE) of Tiruchi, a pioneer in the field of ECOSAN compost toilet in the country. Each of this toilet costs around Rs.7000 were built with financial assistance from Nagapattinam District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), UNICEF, and Friends – in – need , an NGO from France. The toilets were considered a good model.

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4. “Poverty is not a hurdle for pursuing education”

On the 7th January 2007 the Hindu reported that Foundation stone is laid for building of additional buildings of a school at Vettaikkarniruppu in Keezhaiyur block. The buildings are being constructed at a cost of Rs.25 lakh by People Development Association (PDA), a Madurai based non governmental organization. Joe Velu of PDA said that the association undertook a project to construct additional buildings for 11 schools in 10 tsunami hit villages of which buildings of four schools had already been completed.

French Assistance

This school building is being constructed with financial support from Solidarite Laique, France. The PDA was engaged in various reconstruction activities in 16 tsunami affected villages including construction of 295 permanent houses for the victims in four villages. Mr.Velu appealed to the villagers to send their children to school and make the best use of the facilities.

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5. Six districts under disaster management programme

The Hindu dated 9th January 2007 Vellore: reported that Nagapattinam, Cuddalore, Kancheepuram, Kanyakumari, Nilgiris and Thiruvallur Districts are among the 169 in 17 multi hazard prone states in India to be covered under the United Nations Development Programme at a cost of Rs.1.53 crore, Minister of State for Home affairs S.Regupathy told. He told that the programme had been taken up on the basis of the vulnerability atlas prepared by the Building Material and Technology Promotion Council an agency of the Union Government.

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6. Strange phenomenon in sea of the Nagapattinam Coast

The Hindu dated 9th January 2007 reported that “Fishermen in the coastal areas of Poompohar, Tranquebar, Nagapattinam and Vedaranyam in Nagapattinam district are now seeing a strange occurrence in the sea.

Two fishermen Mari and Kaliyan of Poompohar said that they ventured into the sea in four fiber glass boats. The sea was surprisingly calm for about 3 km from the shore but suddenly they could not spread their nets. The strange behavior created panic they returned to the shore.

Kulasekaran and Maruthai of Nagapattinam who went for fishing along with others in mechanized boats also experienced the same. They said that usually the sea would be rough only during low pressure.

The frequent and sudden receding of the sea water for about 100 to 150 meters at several coastal areas including Arcottuthurai and Kodiakarai and Tranquebar after the tsunami is also causing fear among the fishermen.

Veerachamy a fishermen from Kodiakarai said that the sea water went back for about 100 meters at Kodiakarai and the fishermen were finding it difficult to bring their boats to the shore.

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7. 24-hour mobile control room in Nagapattinam

The Indian Express dated 9th January reported that Nagai SP Kalpana Nayak inaugurated by a 24 hour mobile control at Mayiladuthurai, the commercial hub of the district. After inaugurating the service she said that police department has opened the mobile control room in an attempt to prevent many unlawful activities and to make the service of police personnel readily available. The community can dial 100 to make use of the services of the mobile control room which is equipped with a police official. The mobile control room would be on its control area round the clock.

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8. Call for more investments in early warning system

e-newsletter planned to highlight natural disasters in developing countries

The Hindu dated 14th January 2007 Vellore reported that “ The five day international Roundtable on Lessons from Natural Disasters, Policy Issues and Mitigation strategies, which concluded at the VIT University has recommended on greater investment in studies and projects leading to prediction and early warning of different types of disasters. It pointed out that every country should appropriately and adequately in mapping and forecasting multi hazard scenarios, Time bound plans backed by adequately resources should be the most vulnerable. It urged countries that have gained the experience of integrating disaster management with development to share concrete examples with others. The round table was organised by the Centre for Science and Technology of Non-aligned and other Developing countries (NAM S & T Centre), New Delhi and the Centre of Disaster Mitigation and Management (CDMM) on the VITU campus from January 8th to 12th.

The meeting recommended formation of an association of natural disaster experts from NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) and other developing countries to network the experts and to foster, promote and sustain partnerships among the developing countries.

They have planned to launch an e-newsletter, ‘Natural Disasters and Development’ highlighting natural disasters in the NAM and other developing countries, which will be released once in two months to begin with. Information on research, education and training facilities will be available in the member countries would be exchanged through the news e-news letter to pave way for regional and international cooperation and to facilitate capacity building in disaster management.”

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9. There is more to Kidney racket

The Indian Express dated 14th January 2007- Chennai reported that “Most of the women in temporary shelters in Eranavur are fated to live with one kidney only and some more are in the queue to undergo a surgery which will remove their vital organ all for money”. At least 100 young women in the temporary shelters have fallen prey to major kidney racket. They are all now penniless with relative’s or themselves having spent the money already. The Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) of Ponneri MS Sangeetha visited Eranavur, made a study and then submitted a detailed report to the Chennai Collector who in turn ordered a high level inquiry.

After a door to door survey conducted by the team, Sangeetha said “We have found that this is not just in tsunami affected areas. But Kidney sale is prevalent in most of the slums in Tamil Nadu. We do not find any major connection between the tsunami and kidney selling. Most of them had sold it through middlemen, who were known faces in

the area. However unfortunately, though Rs.1 Lakh had been fixed for a Kidney, many received only Rs.40000.