

Mock tsunami drill takes place at coastal villages in Odisha

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KENDRAPARA : Mock tsunami drills were conducted in all 328 tsunami-prone coastal villages of the State to create awareness among people on the natural disaster.

Odisha State Disaster Mitigation Authority (OSDMA) along with district administrations and other Government and NGOs conducted the drill in 22 blocks of six coastal districts.

Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWS) of Hyderabad had sent a tsunami warning to OSDMA on Wednesday morning after an earthquake was reported in an island in Andaman.

Receiving information, OSDMA authorities immediately alerted the coastal districts and the mock drill was conducted.

Earlier, OSDMA had trained the villagers on how to face the natural calamity.

It had even developed tsunami warning systems in the State for the purpose. "National Tsunami Early Warning System helps OSDMA to send tsunami warning to the villagers. The State's vulnerability to tsunami has increased after the December 26, 2004, tsunami," said Deputy General Manager of OSDMA Prasanta Kumar Nayak.

The villages situated within 1.5 km of Odisha coastline were identified by OSDMA eight years back. While 64 villages were identified in Kendrapara, 28 were in Jagatsinghpur, 88 in Puri and 44 in Ganjam, 63 villages were identified in Balasore district.

Similarly, 41 villages in Bhadrak district were enlisted as vulnerable to tsunami.

The mock drill included evaluation of the system's operational capacity, efficiency of communication and evacuation work of the seaside villagers.

The district administration, Indian Navy, Coast Guard, fishery and port officials, fishermen, locals, panchayat body members, NGOs and social workers participated in the mock Tsunami drill, Nayak added.