



Media Watch

Fortnightly media digest based on articles from the media

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1. Chennai & Thiruvallur “left out” of rehabilitation

The Hindu dated 16th March 2007 reported that A people’s tribunal report released by the Coastal Community Protection Committee has faulted the State Government for neglecting Chennai and Thiruvallur in the tsunami rehabilitation process, saying the two district were “less affected”. The report said that “Tsunami –affected people in Chennai and Thiruvallur have been living in grossly inadequate housing conditions for over two years.” Officer on Special Duty (Relief & Rehabilitation) C.V. Sankar received the first copy of the report. The people of the coastal villages of Chennai and Thiruvallur organised themselves under the banner of the Coastal Community Protection Committee to challenge the Government on issues pertaining to their rehabilitation. They held a tribunal in January to gather the views of all those affected. The Jury comprised of seven members and headed by UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing Miloon Kothari. During the depositions, issues of forced eviction, failed rehabilitation, intimidation and violence against women by the police emerged. The issues were compiled in to a report along which with a declaration by the jury and was presented at a public meeting.

2. Community based project to be launched in Nagapattinam

The Hindu dated 16th March 2007 reported that A Chennai based non-governmental organisation, Development Promotion Group (DPG) carrying out tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction activities in the Nagapattinam and Tuticorin districts plans to launch a community based livelihood project in the Nagapattinam district next month. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Bangkok has already entered into an agreement with the DPG for this pro – poor public-private partnership project. Three areas – livelihood support for affected communities in India through public-private partnership; introducing practice in community based early warning systems in Sri Lanka; and strengthening support for orphans and separated in Indonesia were identified for UNESCAP intervention.

3. Five huts gutted at Nagapattinam

The Indian Express dated 17th March 2007 reported that In a fire that broke out at the Sivan Koil Street at Nagapattinam, five huts were gutted and property worth Rs.2 lakh were destroyed. According to source, a spark from an oven of one of the huts caused the mishap. Fire brigade from Nagapattinam rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire. Mr. Mathivanan, Minister for dairy development visited the spot and consoled the victims.

4. Uniform colour for boats welcomed

The Hindu dated 17th March 2007 reported that Fishermen of the 188 km- long coast of Nagapattinam district welcomed the suggestion of Mr. Jagan Seshadri, Additional Director General of Police and Head of the Coastal Security Group (CSG) to paint an uniform colour for both the mechanized and country fishing boats to help security agencies identify boats even from a distance. A cross- section of fishermen said that work to paint the thousands of boats in the State should not be entrusted to contractors as the fishermen had a bitter experience on an earlier occasion. They field that if the Government called for a tender and entrusted the job to contractors it would lead to large scale corruption. The Government could appoint special monitoring officials from the Fisheries Department to monitor the painting work.

5. UNICEF to train doctors in Nagai

The Hindu dated 18th March 2007 reported that The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) plans to give training to private doctors on Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses (IMNCI) from the second fortnight of next month in the district to prevent infant and maternal mortality said N.S.Iyer, Assistant Project Officer, UNICEF (Health & Nutrition) Chennai, at Mayiladuthurai.

6. Tahsildar transferred

The Hindu dated 24th March 2007 reported that The Tahsildar of Tharangambadi in the district was transferred by the district Collector Tenkasi S Jawahar immediately after hearing complaints from tsunami victims of Chandrapadi hamlet that the houses were not allotted properly. The collector visited Chandrapadi to hand over 75 houses built by an NGO. He was surrounded by a group of women who demanded an inquiry into the allotment of houses. They said 15 families were left out of the allotment list by the Tahsildar. On hearing their grievances the collector took action within two hours and transferred the Tahsildar to Kilvelur taluk. As soon as the transfer order was delivered the staff, at the Tharangambadi taluk office staged a walk out and struck work for some time demanding withdrawal of the order. When asked, the Collector said that the transfer was effected for 'administrative convenience'.

7. Tsunami hit schools gets new building

The Indian Express dated 24th March 2007 reported that St Teresa's Girls Higher Secondary School, located in the worst hit Tharangambadi, got a three storied building at a cost of Rs.40 lakh. Thanks to the gesture of Consumer Goods major Henkel India Limited. More than 60 percent of the students studying in this school hail from the backward fishing community. The school has been producing impressive results in SSLC exam for the past several years, High secondary section was introduced in this school recently and when funds were needed for building construction, HIL Karaikal came forward to lend a helping hand.

8. Adopt organic farming

The Hindu dated 28th March 2007 reported that The Children's Education and Development Alternative (CEDA Trust), engaged in tsunami rehabilitation has encouraged farmers in tsunami hit areas in Karaikal district to adopt organic farming practices to reap the best quality paddy and good yield. Addressing the 'Mupperum Vizha' comprising of harvest festival, International Women's day and World Water Day was organised by CEDA trust Mr. L. Antonysamy, Chairperson of the CEDA trust said that the organization has been helping farmers and took up land reclamation activities in Karikal. Mr. A. Backiyam Director of the CEDA Trust who spoke on women and agriculture, said that the trust has created a situation for the male and female agriculture workers to get equal wages.