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# 1.25 L people to be 'evacuated' in tsunami drill

India among 24 Indian Ocean nations taking part in the two-day UNESCO exercise starting today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

India, along with 23 other Indian Ocean nations, is participating in a major tsunami mock exercise – IOWave18 – being organised by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO on September 4 and 5, first on the west coast and then the east coast the following day.

It will involve the evacuation of over 1.25 lakh people from the coastal communities of Odisha, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat and Goa.

NDRF battalions, Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guards, Army, and critical installations like nuclear power plants, port and harbours are also participating in the



A drill being carried out at Chennai's Marina Beach, which was battered by tsunami on December 26, 2004. ■ FILE PHOTO

exercise, a press release from the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) informed.

In the latest tsunami drill, an earthquake with a magni-

tude of 9.0 will be simulated in the Makran Trench south of Iran on September 4 at 11.30 a.m. and the second one on September 5 at 8.30 a.m. will simulate the magnitude of 9.3 at Northern Su-

matra, Indonesia.

Both exercises will be conducted in real time lasting about 12 hours and ITEWC will issue 15 tsunami bulletins to both national and regional stakeholders through GTS, email, fax, SMS as well as on website.

The aim of the exercise is to increase tsunami preparedness, evaluate response capabilities in each state and improve coordination throughout the region.

IOC has coordinated setting up of Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWMS) in the aftermath of the tsunami on December 26, 2004.

The Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC), based out of INCOIS, is capable of detecting tsunamigenic earthquakes within 10 minutes of the occurrence of

earthquake on the seabed and issue timely tsunami advisories to disaster management officials as well as to vulnerable communities.

ITEWC provides operational tsunami information to all Indian Ocean rim countries and will be participating in the IOWave18 exercise as both National Tsunami Warning Centre (NTWC) and Tsunami Service Provider (TSP) for the region.

A training workshop and tabletop exercises to enable national stakeholders to streamline their standard operating procedures (SOPs) has been done while a manual comprising specifics of conducting the tsunami exercise, along with the detailed bulletins and feedback forms was also prepared and circulated to the stakeholders, the release added.