

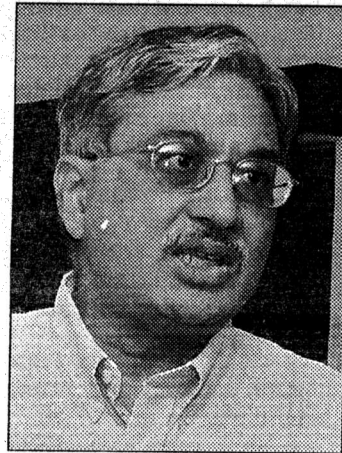
'State's coastline vulnerable to tsunami'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Vadodara: Gujarat's coastline is also vulnerable to a tsunami. This is what Shailesh Nayak, director of Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), said here on Saturday.

Nayak, who also heads the National Early Warning System for Tsunami and Storm Surges in the Indian Ocean at Hyderabad, is an alumnus of M S University's geology department. On Saturday, he was at the geology department to give a presentation on the early warning system that has been set up so that a tsunami alert can be issued within 13 minutes of an earthquake of over six magnitude in the Indian Ocean.

"Danger of a tsunami cannot be ruled out," said Nayak, while answering to queries put up by mediapersons. "It was last in 1945 that an earthquake near the Makran coast located in Pakistan generated a tsunami in the Arabian Sea. Although, the Makran coast is not very active as

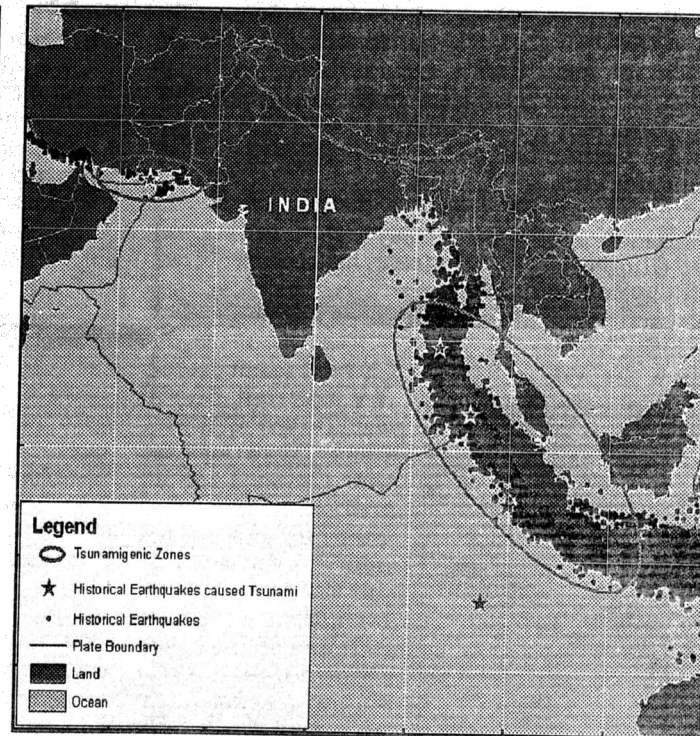


Shailesh Nayak and a map of the tsunamigenic zone (right)

compared to Java-Sumatra coast, we can't say that it will not happen."

He informed that through the early warning system alert of a tsunami in the Arabian Sea can be issued as two of the six bottom pressure recorders (BPR) installed for the warning system are placed in the Arabian Sea while four others have been installed in the Bay of Bengal.

"The good thing for Gu-



jarat is that sea water is shallow and hence the speed of such tsunami would be considerably less giving enough time to save lives of people along the coastline. But at the same time as the sea water is shallow the height of tsuna-

mi will be more," he said, while informing that the 1945 tsunami had its effect up to Mumbai. "In case of such a situation, tsunami would reach Gulf of Kutch in five hours."

While explaining the ear-

ly warning system, Nayak added that the centre receives the first indication of a tsunami in around 25 minutes and confirms a tsunami strike in about one and a half hours after studying different parameters. Although the system has been designed so that alerts can be issued to people at large through sms and mobile handsets, currently information is only transferred to administration because of policy decision, he said.

"Some institutes do issue such alerts on web but the alerts are not issued after confirmation. As a matter of policy, INCOIS does not issue such alerts without confirmation," he said, while adding that for past one and a half years, around 87 earthquakes have occurred but only three of them generated tsunami and neither of them were effective.

Nayak also did not rule out the possibility that thousands of years ago, a tsunami may have inundated temple town Dwarka. "It is quite possible but we do not have any recorded history," he said.