



NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (NEMO)
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
WEST INDIES



1st November, 2018

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEMO TO RELEASE TSUNAMI WARNING SIGNS VIDEO AND LAUNCH AN EXHIBITION TO COMMEMORATE “WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY” (WTAD), NOVEMBER 5, 2018

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) will release a ‘Know the Tsunami Warning Signs Video’ on Monday 5th November, 2018 to commemorate “World Tsunami Awareness Day.” This video was produced locally by NEMO in collaboration with a number of popular local Soca Artistes, through funding from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) under the Country Directed Fund (CDF).

The National Emergency Management Organisation will also launch an exhibition at the Car Park next to the Postal Corporation Building in Kingstown on Monday 5th November, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. The main purpose of this exhibition is to heighten awareness on tsunami and other geological hazards such as landslides, earthquakes and volcanic eruption.

The UN General Assembly designated the 5th of November as the annual day for spotlighting tsunami risk. This worldwide event is supported by the Government of Japan, and is used as an opportunity to showcase good practices related to Tsunami.

Tsunamis are rare, but their impact can be extremely deadly and devastating. Tsunamis are often accompanied by natural signs: **FEEL, SEE, HEAR.** Knowing the warning signs are important and community and individual understanding about how and where to evacuate before a wave strikes can save lives.

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) is currently involved in a Tsunami SMART Schools and Communities Project in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the Ministry of Education and the Seismic Research Centre (SRC) with funding from the European Union through CDEMA’s Country Directed Fund.

Through this project, the National Emergency Management Organisation is working with six schools (The Kingstown Anglican School, Clare Valley Government School, Colonaire Primary School, Union Island Secondary School, Mary Hutchinson Primary School and Stephanie Browne Government School) to develop Tsunami Evacuation Plans.



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The project is also piloted in the Communities of Rose Place and Union Island. The residents, business operators in these communities and surrounding areas and also the staff and students of the beneficiary schools under this project were trained in Tsunami Science and developing tsunami evacuation plans and procedures for their businesses, schools and the communities.

In March 2018, NEMO conducted Tsunami Evacuation Drills with the Community of Rose Place, the Kingstown Anglican School, the Clare Valley Government School and Community as part of “CARIBE WAVE 18”, the annual Tsunami Warning Exercise for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions.

The Tsunami SMART Schools and Communities Project will end in December, 2018 with the placement of tsunami signs in the beneficiary communities.

The National Emergency Management Organisation is also implementing the UNESCO IOC CARIBE EWS Tsunami Ready Pilot Project in the coastal communities from Kingstown to Argyle. This project is funded by the USAID/OFDA with support from the Caribbean Tsunami Warning Protocol Programme of UNESCO.

The project commenced in October 2018 and will end on the 30th of September, 2019. Some of the activities included in this project are:

- Development and presentation of Tsunami Inundation Maps
- Capacity building training for tsunami evacuation mapping
- Fabrication and installation of tsunami signage
- Development and review of Tsunami Standard Operating Procedures
- Establishment of a National Tsunami Ready Board.

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Additional Information:

In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5th November as World Tsunami Awareness Day.

The Assembly called on all countries, international bodies and civil society to observe the day, in order to raise tsunami awareness and share innovative approaches to risk reduction.

The date for the annual celebration was chosen in honour of the Japanese story of “Inamura-no-hi”, meaning the “burning of the rice sheaves”. During a 1854 earthquake, a farmer saw the tide receding, a sign of a looming tsunami. He set fire to his entire harvest to warn villagers, who fled to high ground. Afterwards, he built an embankment and planted trees as a buffer against future waves.