

## Mild Tremors Felt as Mock Tsunami Drill is Conducted in Odisha

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BHUBANESWAR: Panic gripped the people of Dhenkanal and those living on the outskirts of Cuttack district after two tremors were experienced on Saturday morning. The tremors occurred when disaster management agencies were conducting a tsunami preparedness mock drill in six coastal districts of the State.

The magnitude of the first tremor which was experienced at 8.18 am was recorded at 3.2 on the Richter scale. Almost three hours later, at 11.21 am, a second tremor - 2.8 on the seismic scale - was reported. The IMD said the epicentre of the two tremors was 35 kms to the north of Bhubaneswar. However, the residents of the Capital did not experience the quake.

Experts said the tremors may have been caused by intra-plate fracture zones. Though the region was earlier on the bordering zone of Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates, the plates have moved. Some existing faultiness could have caused the release of energy, leading to the tremors. Dhenkanal and Cuttack lay on the Moderate Damage Risk Zone of the seismic map.

Meanwhile, disaster management agencies of both State and Centre carried out a mock drill in 328 villages of Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri and Ganjam districts to generate awareness and gauge response from the public.

The villages were located within 1.5 kms radius off the coast in 22 blocks. It was part of a nation-wide tsunami mock drill conducted by Indian Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

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The exercise started at 9.30 am and ended at 1.30 pm. Senior officials from Odisha State Disaster Management Authority, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and Special Relief Commissioner coordinated the exercise from SEOC.

Emergency centres at district and block levels were involved along with district officials in the drill. Response teams from NDRF and Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force and Fire Service also took part in the exercise.

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