



Road Ahead

The Government has drawn up a comprehensive plan for the restoration and development of the coastal areas ravaged by tsunami. It consists of several noteworthy initiatives, which cover not only physical components but also addresses gaps in intangibles such as disaster preparedness. The resolve of the Government is to preserve and strengthen the coastal habitat while ensuring that the traditional rights of the coastal population are not trampled upon in any way. This is reflected in the housing policy of the Government and the plans to rebuild and enhance the infrastructure of the coastal areas in a holistic and eco-friendly manner.

The obvious corollary to catalyse the economy and increase disaster preparedness in the coastal areas would be to restore the physical connectivity and upgrade the fisheries infrastructure. Lack or poor road networks act as a drag on the economy and prevent effective disaster response during evacuation and rescue. Therefore, the roads and bridges are being completely restored. The coastal economy is heavily dependent on fishing and therefore the plan provides

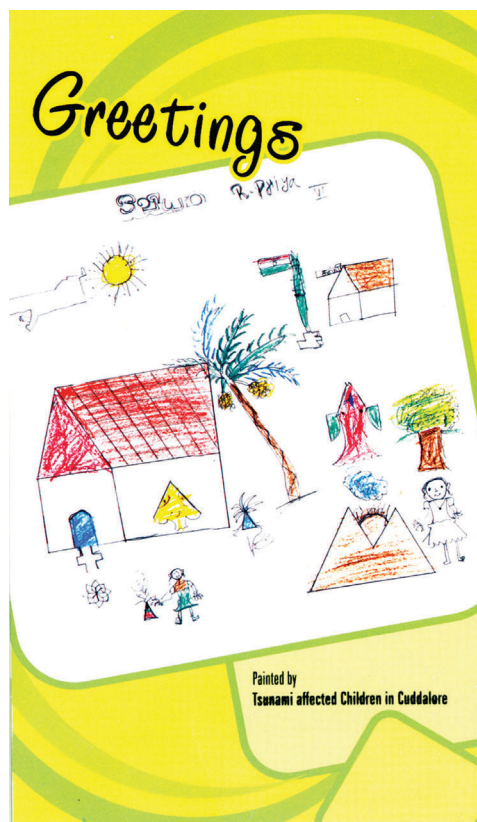
for restoration of the fisheries infrastructure including ports and harbours which were decimated by the tsunami. These initiatives will also provide the much needed impetus to the local economy resulting from employment generation.

The Government of India has announced plan for the setting up of a Tsunami Warning Centre for India with the latest technology. This centre is expected to trigger the response mechanism at the State, district and village levels. The State Government is planning to extend the UNDP funded Disaster Risk Management programme which saved many lives in Samiyarpettai to all the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu. Exposure to such training not only addresses the gaps in capacity of the community to face future disasters but also give them the confidence to face mundane challenges in their day to day lives while improving the cohesiveness of the local communities cutting across caste and class lines. Emergency Operation Centres and Standard Operating Procedures for districts will be part of the requirement.

The search for alternative livelihoods has reached a crescendo especially after the tsunami has brought the risks involved in the coastal life to the fore. This felt need has become accentuated due to the limited nature of the aquatic resources. This has led younger generations to aspire for vocations that are not only different but also provide for sustainable income streams. The Government has addressed this need in right earnest and a dedicated programme of alternative livelihoods is being rolled out in consultation with the communities. Recognizing the advantages of group based activities, special attention is being paid to ensure that these opportunities are also delivered through Self Help Groups. It is expected that the coastal economy supply chain will be substantially altered after the implementation of these schemes. This will not only supplement the income base but also provide for substantive risk diversification resulting freeing them from excessive dependence on a single vocation.

Tsunami demonstrated the effectiveness of natural protection measures such as plantations, mangroves and sand dunes in protecting the coastal eco-system from natural attacks. This has prompted the Government to provide for the only defence from natural calamities in its programme — a comprehensive shelterbelt programme in the coastal areas. Part of our inability to protect ourselves from such shocks of nature is our very little understanding of the coastal habitat. Therefore, several studies of the various aspects of the coastal eco-system are being undertaken to further our understanding of the complexities of nature and to undertake measures, which will provide the requisite protection and a sustainable habitat. A comprehensive Coastal Zone Management Plan is being prepared hopefully forming the basis for a resurgent and safe coastal economy.

Tsunami was able to destroy our houses and snuff the life out of a whole generation but it was not able to subdue the spirit of the people of Tamil Nadu. The Government is fully geared to support the spirit of its people and provide them with a secure and prosperous future.



"Create jobs in tsunami-hit areas"

Rehabilitation programmes done smoothly and wholeheartedly: Kalam

S. Ganesan

NAGAPATTINAM: Rehabilitation measures for the tsunami-affected areas should not end with the provision of permanent shelters but go beyond to focus on creating employment potential by establishing physical, electronic and knowledge connectivity to the villages of Nagapattinam, President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, has said.

Winding up a whistle-stop tour of the tsunami-affected areas and an inspection of the ongoing rehabilitation measures here on Thursday, Mr. Kalam said permanent shelters were most immediate and important need of the people. People were anxious that the permanent shelters were ready before the onset of monsoon. "I request the district administration to push through the work," he said.

At the same time, construction could not be rushed through as the beneficiaries should like the location and the designs, he said answering a query on the problems faced in identifying the land for the construction of the houses.

Economic development

Stressing the need for spurring economic development in the district, Mr. Kalam said the object could be achieved by providing urban amenities to rural areas (PURA).

Suggesting the laying of a "circular road" to promote economic development, he said this



BRINGING HOPE: President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam interacting with tsunami-affected children at Annai Sathya Government Orphanage, Kadampadi, in Nagapattinam district on Thursday. — PHOTO: M. MOORTHY



Nagapattinam District Collector J Radhakrishnan briefing US former President Special Envoy Bill Clinton on the measures taken for the rehabilitation of tsunami survivors during the latter's visit to Nagapattinam on Friday -Express/M K Ashok Kumar

Nagai recovery sweeps Clinton off his feet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Nagapattinam/Chennai, May 27: Bowled over by the tsunami recovery...

en have been converted into greeting cards. They have given us something to work on," he remarked. "We ought to and we can provide

mendable work in restoring the livelihood of people.

Clinton said that funding tsunami recovery was least of his worries. "Right now that is not

him riences of the day, Mr. Kalam tsunami early warning system pro- said though many families un- that the Centre had proposed to

Clinton: India has done commendable relief work

Praises relief work at multiple levels of governance

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: India has done "a very good job of providing its own financing" and helping its neighbours in the aftermath of the

Commending the relief work at multiple levels of governance, Mr. Clinton said the local Government had done an excellent job, coordinating its efforts with the U.N. system people and with

"increasing the economic well-being of the communities by diversifying to do other things to make a living" and "challenges of equity".

"A little further down the road" his team would work compiling a manual of the best practices and make it available to people all over the world.

Mr. Clinton affirmed, in reply

Asked when he would return



TAMIL NADU

MAP SHOWING THE
AFFECTED TALUKS
DUE TO TSUNAMI - 2004
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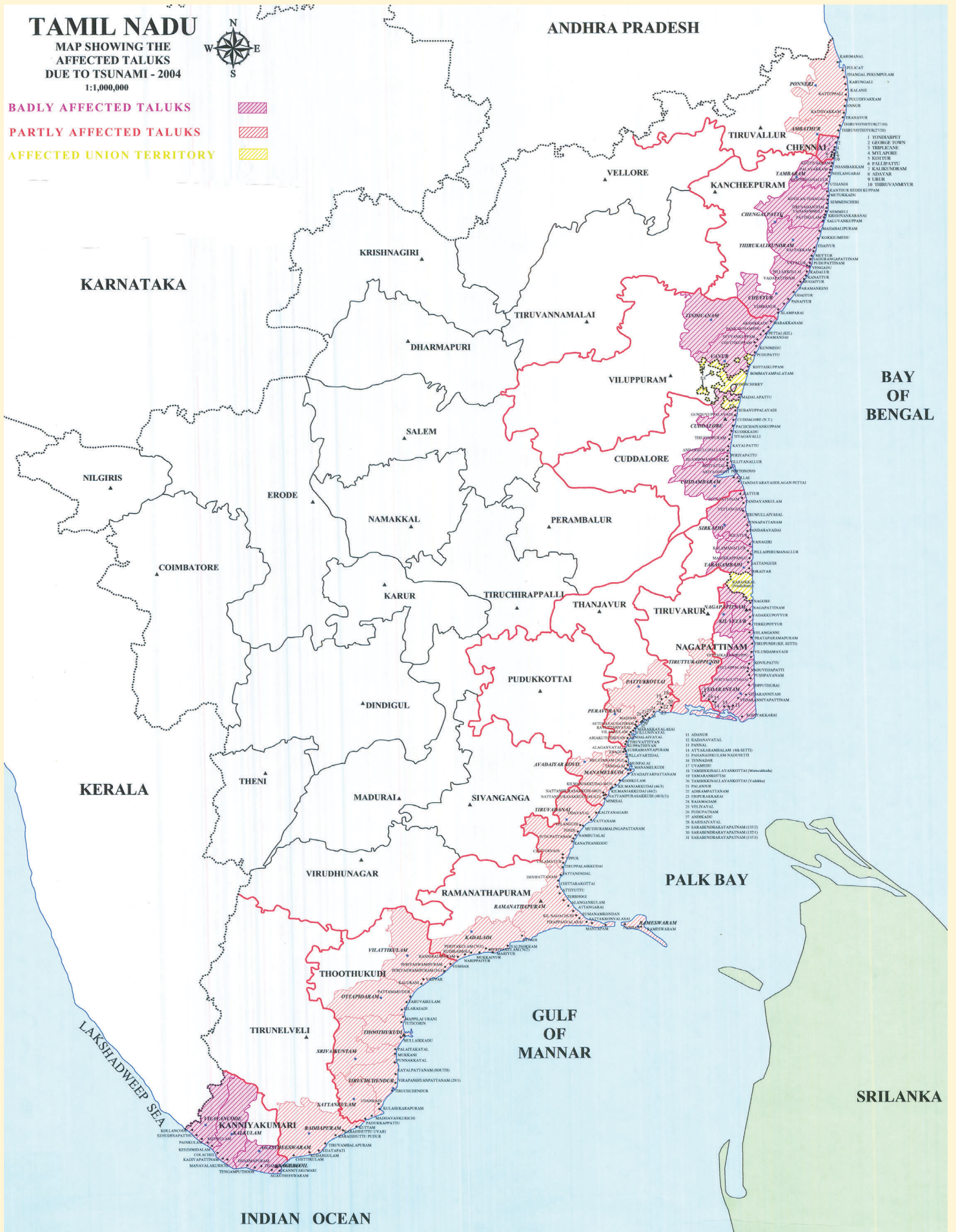
BADLY AFFECTED TALUKS



PARTLY AFFECTED TALUKS



AFFECTED UNION TERRITORY





Text and design by New Concept Information Systems

