



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

THE COLUMN

THE AHA CENTRE NEWS BULLETIN

VOL.57 | DECEMBER 2019

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

PANDEMIC?

CONFLICT?

8th Anniversary of the AHA Centre

RETHINKING AHA CENTRE

HIGHLIGHT

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of the AHA Centre
– Rethinking our Path

MONTHLY DISASTER OUTLOOK

Monthly Disaster Review and Outlook
for November - December 2019

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EDITOR'S NOTE



HI READERS,

Welcome to the special version of the Column, in which we round out 2019 by compiling the events and news from the last couple of months into one great read!

Volume 57 begins with a Highlight article that focuses on the “Rethinking the AHA Centre” forum that took place during November, as well as a great overview of Thailand’s DELSA Satellite Warehouse opening event from December. After a run-down on disaster figures and insights from the last couple of months, we then bring you an insight into the applications that are available for ASEAN residents to help with disaster information.

In our Partnership article we have a closer look at the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies, and get some great history and insights into Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) through our Other Side interview with Mr Ray Shirkhodai from the Pacific Disaster Center. We finish with a run-down from the AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme graduation ceremony in Jakarta, as Batch 6 participants headed back to their ASEAN Member States to begin their journeys as new regional disaster management leaders.

We hope you enjoy your read, and welcome you to a new decade and new era for ASEAN disaster management!

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The AHA Centre

8TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AHA CENTRE

RETHINKING OUR PATH



The Strategic Forum included over 60 participants, with representatives from ASEAN Member States, NDMOs and Ministries of Foreign Affairs, participants from the ASEAN Secretariat, subject matter experts and panellists.



To celebrate the eight-year journey since the establishment of the AHA Centre, the Strategic Thematic Forum – Rethinking AHA Centre was undertaken from 18-22 of November 2019 in Jakarta, Indonesia. A forum for reflecting on successes and mapping the path forward, event also included the Workshop on Management of International Assistance, and the Partners Dialogue – Celebrating Partnership.

The Strategic Thematic Forum – Rethinking AHA Centre (held on 18-19 November, 2019) was opened by H.E. Michael Tene, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Community and Corporate Affairs, who reminded us that when thinking ahead, we must also align with ASEAN's broader vision. During this exercise, regional and global technical experts in the fields of conflict, Disaster Risk Reduction and pandemics, along with representatives from ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Secretariat and the AHA Centre, were brought together for technical discussions aimed at providing insight and assessing the feasibility of engaging in new disaster management elements beyond the AHA Centre's existing scope of natural disasters. The forum included over 60 participants, with representatives coming from National Disaster Management Organisations and Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the ASEAN Secretariat, subject matter experts and panellists, AHA Centre staff, and other facilitators and observers. The forum actively promoted discussion through both group work and panel discussions, encouraging sharing of open opinions in all discussion areas. The Strategic Thematic Forum was supported by UK Mission to ASEAN.

WORKSHOP ON MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

Day three of the event began with the Workshop on Management of International Assistance, which was co-organised by the AHA Centre and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Asia Pacific, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The workshop's aim was to strengthen the coordination of regional and international assistance during humanitarian

Written by : Ina Rachmawati | Photo Credit : AHA Centre

emergency response, including methodologies, procedures and tools. It also aims to improve preparedness capacity of ASEAN Member States, by identifying areas of improvements in the management of incoming regional and international assistance during emergency response, and to improve the capacity of the AHA Centre as the primary regional coordinating agency in managing offers of regional and international assistance for affected Member States during emergency response.

The workshop was conducted throughout two days from 20 to 21 November 2019, with participants from National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of the ASEAN Member States, IFRC and representatives from National Societies in Southeast Asia, the AHA Centre and other key stakeholders. The workshop was officially opened by the AHA Centre's Executive Director Ms Adelina Kamal, Head of IFRC Country Office in Myanmar, Mr Joy Singhal, Mr Ky Anh Nguyen, ASEAN Secretariat Director of Sustainable Development, and Mr Michael Cottier, Deputy Head of Mission Embassy of Switzerland in Indonesia. A keynote speech was delivered by Mr Said Faisal, the Former Executive Director of the AHA Centre who was also the Deputy of BRR for Aceh and Nias responsible for the implementation of post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction.

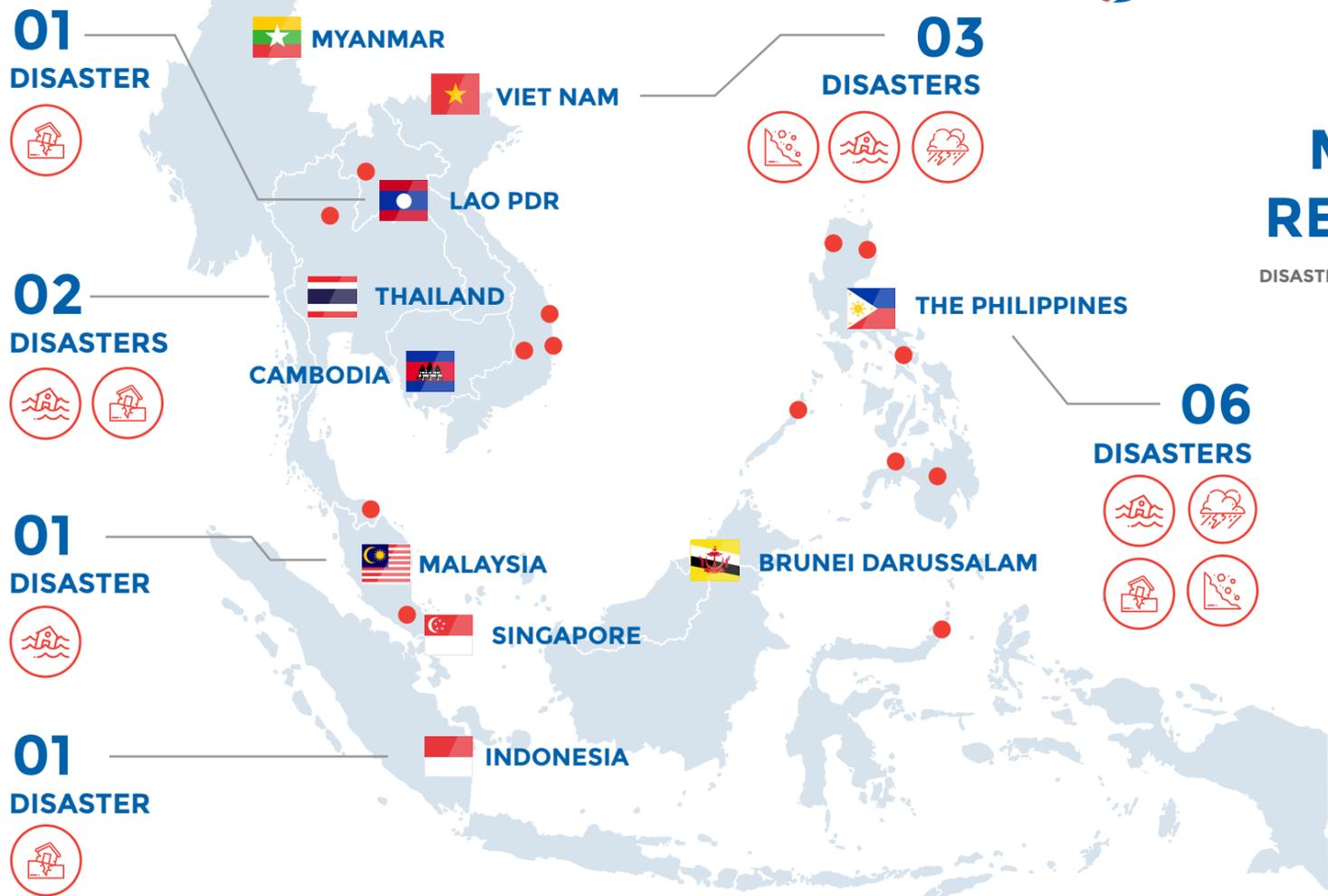
PARTNERS DIALOGUE: CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIP

The week-long strategic thematic forum ended with the Partners Dialogue: Celebrating Partnership event. The Partners Dialogue was used as an opportunity to share information on the work of the AHA Centre, its core achievements over the past 8 years, and share key discussions and findings regarding its proposed future direction. The activity invited all the AHA Centre's partners from the past eight years to share their insights that can be used to help expand the Centre's work for the next five years. This was the first time the AHA Centre brought together all its donors and strategic and operational partners together in one event to discuss the AHA Centre's work, achievements, core business, mandate and strategy. The Forum was attended by 66 participants including representatives from ASEAN Dialogue Partners, strategic and operational partners, AHA Centre staff, ASEAN Secretariat, along with several supporters and observers.

OVER 60 PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED THE FORUM



- 1 H.E. Michael Tene, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Community & Corporate Affairs, opened the Strategic Thematic Forum on 'Rethinking AHA Centre', reminding us that when thinking ahead, we must also align with ASEAN's larger vision.
- 2 Mr Michael Cottier articulated that he is proud that Switzerland government as the ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partner has been able to support the Workshop on Management of International Assistance, organised by the AHA Centre in collaboration with the IFRC, in Jakarta with participants from all 10 ASEAN Member States.
- 3 During the last day of the Rethinking, with our partners where we celebrated our partnership.
- 4 The one week event actively promoted discussion through both group work and panel discussions, encouraging sharing of open opinions in all discussion areas.



MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS (DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE
NOVEMBER 2019

GENERAL REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 2019

The number of disaster occurrences during November 2019 was only slightly above 50% of the previous five-year average. November is the usually the month that sees the beginning of the Northeast Monsoon, bringing more rains, especially to the southern part of the ASEAN region. However, this year the positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) has affected several parts of the region resulting in less rain. This is reflected by significant decreases in flooding events for the period – and the year in general – particularly in Indonesia.

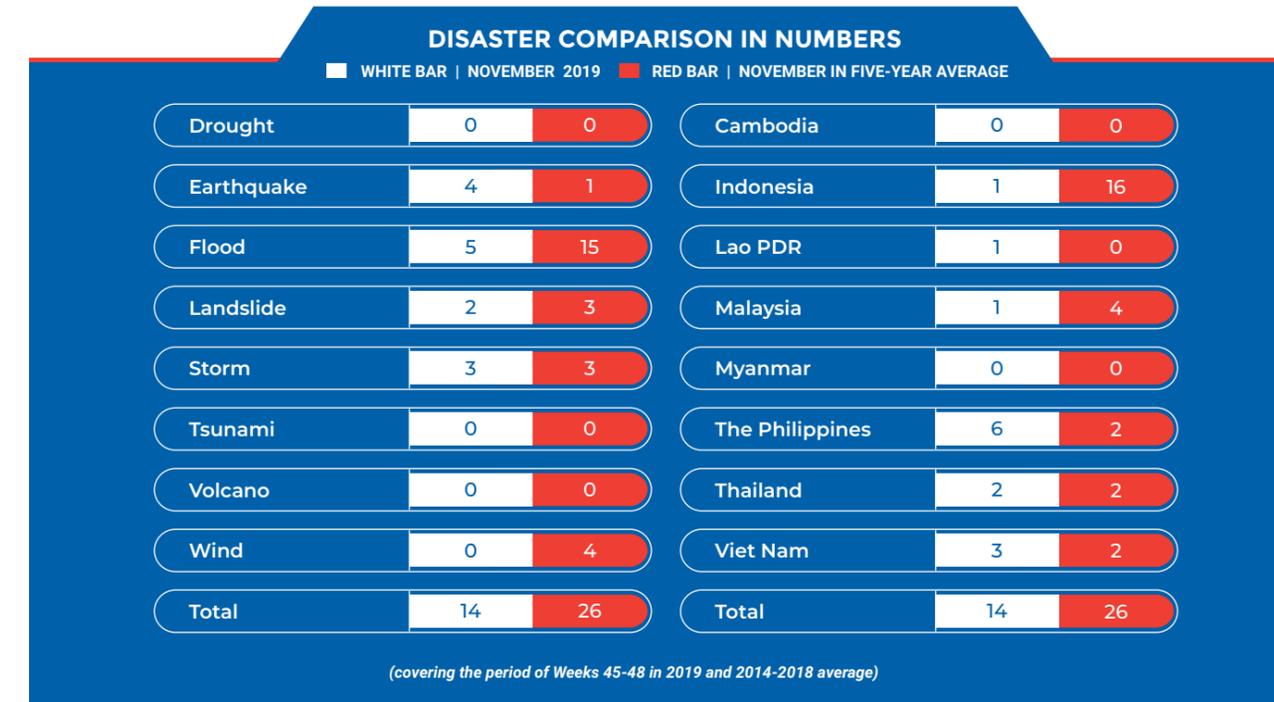
The number of affected and displaced persons during the month of November also only reached about 15% and 26% compared to the previous five-year November average, while the number of damaged houses was also less than 20%. Of note is also that during the last five years, two major events (namely as Typhoon Hagupit in 2014 and Typhoon Damrey in 2017) affected more than 8 million people, and displaced more than 500,000. Most of the disasters that occurred in November 2019 were registered as minor to moderate, including Typhoon Nakri, which affected the Philippines and Viet Nam in early November, and several earthquakes in Indonesia, the Philippines, and the border of Lao PDR and Thailand. The overall decreased impact of disasters could be related to both the amount and scale of actual disasters, and also the national capacity of ASEAN Member States to respond internally.

14 REPORTED DISASTERS
 throughout the ASEAN region in November 2019

DISCLAIMER
 Disclaimer: AHA Centre's estimation is based on data and information shared by National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) and other relevant agencies from ASEAN Member States, international organisations, and news agencies. Further information on each recorded significant disaster, description, and detail of data and information are available at: <http://adinet.ahacentre.org/reports>.

REGIONAL TALLY	NOVEMBER 2019	NOVEMBER IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE
• Number of recorded significant disasters	14	26
• Number of affected people	229,046	1,475,124
• Number of internally displaced people	60,264	231,522
• Number of damaged houses	1,128	5,658
• Number of casualties	8	33
• Number of injured people	34	196
• Number of missing people	14	26

(covering the period of Weeks 45-48 in 2019 and 2014-2018 average)



SEASONAL OUTLOOK

According to the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), the transition to Northeast Monsoon season began in mid-November. During this period, the northern ASEAN region typically experiences dry conditions, while the southern ASEAN region experiences rainy weather. With a surge of cool air from the northern Asian landmass expected to blow toward the Equatorial Southeast Asia region, the Mekong sub-region, South China Sea, and the surrounding areas (including Peninsular Malaysia and parts of Sumatra) can expect cooler temperatures during the outlook period. In contrast, warm conditions are forecast over the Indonesian archipelago around the Java Sea region. There is a high likelihood of above-average temperatures over most parts of the region during the December 2019 until February 2020.

In terms of rainfall outlook, there are no clear trends for the December 2019 to February 2020 season, but there is an increased chance of below-average rainfall over most parts of the region south of the equator who may

experience drier-than-normal conditions in December 2019. Wetter conditions are expected over the western Maritime Continent, including central Sumatra, Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and parts of western Borneo. Likewise, in December 2019, the Mekong sub-region and the eastern Indonesian archipelago can expect a gradual increase in hotspot activities as the dry season sets in. Based on past trends, an escalation of hotspot activities can be expected in late January and February, particularly over Thailand and Cambodia. Hotspot activities in the southern ASEAN region are expected to remain generally subdued, however isolated hotspots may emerge in Sumatra, Kalimantan and Malaysia during periods of dry weather, especially in February. Generally, above-average temperatures are likely over most parts of Southeast Asia from December 2019 to February 2020. Meanwhile, the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) monitoring system remains in "Neutral" state, and model outlooks from international centres are predicting sea surface temperature anomalies to remain at this status until early 2020.

Data Sources : ASEAN Disaster Information Network, ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre



MONTHLY DISASTER REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

DISASTER MONITORING & ANALYSIS (DMA) UNIT, AHA CENTRE
DECEMBER 2019

REGIONAL TALLY	DECEMBER 2019	DECEMBER IN FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE
• Number of recorded significant disasters	29	18
• Number of affected people	5,013,871	1,871,289
• Number of internally displaced people	440,329	153,421
• Number of damaged houses	934,369	114,574
• Number of casualties	70	173
• Number of injured people	1043	1496
• Number of missing people	10	62

(covering the period of Weeks 49-52 in 2019 and 2014-2018 average)

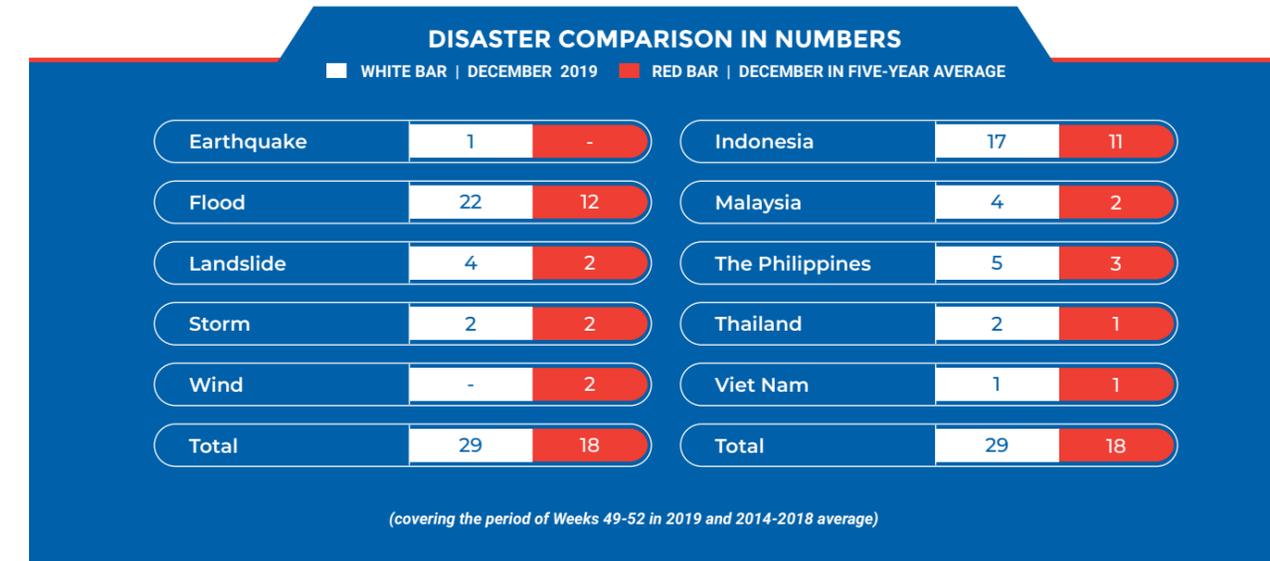
29 REPORTED DISASTERS

throughout the ASEAN region in December 2019

GENERAL REVIEW OF DECEMBER 2019

December 2019 significantly shifted from the previous five-year average December disaster statistics, recording a higher number of occurrences, impact to population, and damage to houses, albeit with lower casualty rates. The number of disaster occurrences experienced a 61% increase compared to the previous five December periods, with flood events contributing the largest share. A majority of flooding events took place in Indonesia towards the end of the month when the country was experiencing strong impacts from the Madden-Julian Oscillation. Meanwhile, considerable deviations in the number of affected (168% increase from the five-year average) and displaced (187% increase from the five-year average) people and damaged houses (716% increase from the five-year average) were driven by Typhoons KAMMURI (equivalent to Category 4 hurricane at peak strength) and PHANFONE (equivalent to Category 2 hurricane at peak strength) hitting the Philippines within a three week timeframe. Combined, both typhoons are estimated to account for 79% of affected people figures, 55% of displaced people, and 97% of damaged houses reported in the last month of 2019.

On the other hand, there were notable decreases in casualty figures compared with the five-year average – with 60% decrease in dead, 30% decrease in injured, and 84% decrease in missing people. This suggests that in spite of extensive disaster impact this month, life-saving mechanisms in ASEAN Member States were effectively implemented. In terms of geophysical hazards, there were 24 recorded earthquakes of magnitude 5.0 and above, one of which was a magnitude 6.9 earthquake in the Southern Philippines, affecting hundreds of thousands of people, and contributing to more than a quarter of the displacement figures.



(covering the period of Weeks 49-52 in 2019 and 2014-2018 average)

SEASONAL OUTLOOK

The ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) expects the Northeast Monsoon to prevail over the region until late March to early April, before transitioning towards the inter-monsoon phase. Traditionally, the Northeast Monsoon results in a dry season in the northern ASEAN region, while the rainy season persists in the southern parts of the region. In terms of main weather and climate drivers in the region, both El Niño Southern Oscillation and Indian Ocean Dipole systems are expected to be in neutral phase for the next few months, and there are signs of weakening Madden-Julian Oscillation over the coming weeks.

Above-average temperatures over most parts of the ASEAN region for the next few months is predicted by global weather and climate prediction models, with moderate to high probability of this happening. Alongside this, below-average rainfall is predicted over Myanmar and the Philippines, while there is a higher chance of above-normal rainfall around the Java Sea area and the eastern archipelago of Indonesia, which may result in flooding.

The ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) expects the Northeast Monsoon to prevail over the region until late March to early April, before transitioning towards the inter-monsoon phase.

DISCLAIMER

Disclaimer: AHA Centre's estimation is based on data and information shared by National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) and other relevant agencies from ASEAN Member States, international organisations, and news agencies. Further information on each recorded significant disaster, description, and detail of data and information are available at: <http://adinet.ahacentre.org/reports>.

Data Sources : ASEAN Disaster Information Network, ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre



5 USEFUL APPS

FOR DISASTER-PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Living in the ASEAN region requires residents to equip themselves with a range of helpful technologies that can provide support to mitigate hazards that may arise under any circumstances. These days, technology is handy for receiving alerts and information on disasters and emergency. Increasing ease of access to information is important, as the ASEAN region sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", leaving it prone to the full array of natural hazards. There are a range of applications you can use to receive disaster notifications, support your preparation, and inform you what to do during a critical event.



www.pdc.org/apps/disaster-alert **DISASTER ALERT**

Developed by the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) in Hawaii, the United States, this app allows the users to search the locations of current disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, storms, landslides, floods and forest fires. And recently, the app has also included tracking the spread of a major virus outbreak. Supported by the DisasterAWARE platform (also developed by the PDC), Disaster Alert provides GPS-based notifications, also allowing users to see other details and locations that are dangerous.

1

NATIONAL APPLICATION EXAMPLES

2

Info BMKG (Indonesia)

The Indonesian Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) official app "Info BMKG", offers features such as earthquake notifications, early warning weather alerts, and informations. Users can also get information about weather forecasts based on location. For earthquake information, all registered earthquakes can appear as notifications, complete with the epicentre location and its distance from the user.

Batingaw app (The Philippines)

Batingaw, a Tagalog word for "siren", is a proactive, comprehensive and rational disaster management mobile application adopted by the Office of Civil Defence (OCD) and National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) as a communication tool to help reduce and mitigate the disastrous effects of natural and human-made hazards on vulnerable communities. It was developed by Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart) in cooperation with the OCD and the NDRRMC. It highlights the need for tools that will not only strengthen public awareness on the importance of disaster preparedness, but also facilitate a nationwide system for disaster response and management.

Safety Guide (Brunei Darussalam)

This app provides guidelines to understand the nature of natural and man-made disasters; early warning signs and specific action plans to various emergency situations for individuals and the community as a whole. This app is based from the book published by the Brunei Darussalam National Disaster Management Centre in 2013 titled 'Buku Panduan Asas Kecemasan dan Keselamatan Awam'.

Written by: Ina Rachmawati

3 **QUAKEFEED EARTHQUAKE ALERTS**

This free app is intended specifically for iOS users who have iPhones and iPads. As the name implies, the app is intended to inform users about earthquake occurrences. So far, it highlights earthquakes from M1.0 on the Richter scale in the USA, and M4.5 in other countries.

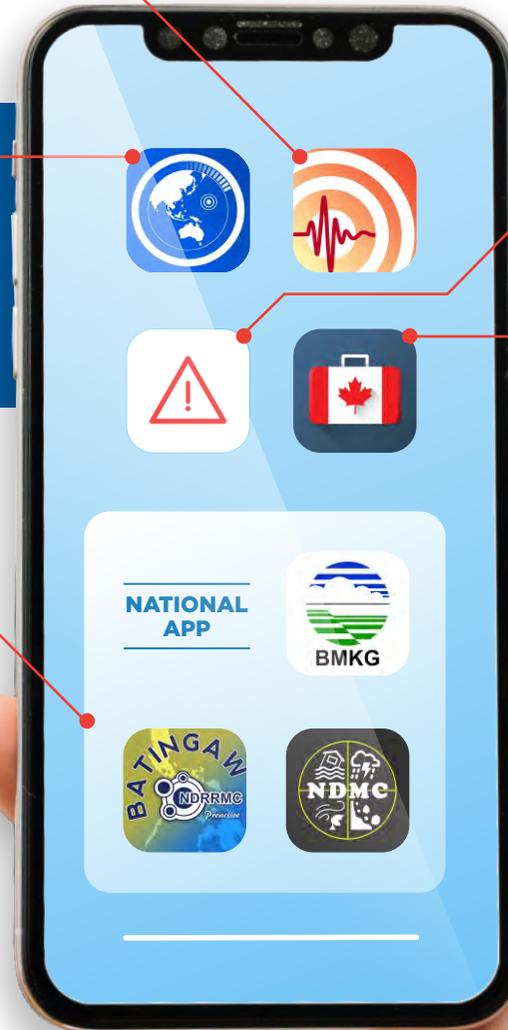
4 **HAZARD - IFRC**

Disaster Preparedness in Your Pocket. The app states that it provides instant access to the information you need to know to prepare for and respond to the impact of a range of hazards, using an alert system feature that provides official updates and warnings from alerting agencies. Hazard also allows you to prepare your homes and family for disasters, find help, and let others know you are safe.

In the ASEAN region, the app is currently supported by Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies from Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

5 **TRAVEL SMART (BONUS APP)**

While Global Affairs Canada created this app, don't let that stop you downloading it if you live elsewhere. Travel Smart app provides essential preparedness and emergency information about countries all over the world. A few highlights include locations of local emergency contacts and embassies, 24-5 alerts, estimated wait times at borders, historical data on storm seasons and natural disasters, transmittable diseases and outbreaks, higher risk areas of towns for tourists, and much more.



DOWNLOAD NOW:





THE CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES AT

THE S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE

Academic institutions form a strong and relevant partnership for the AHA Centre, particularly as it expands its work and increases capacity throughout the ASEAN region. The AHA Centre has had an ongoing working knowledge partnership with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore for many years, with the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) forming a key partner for both the AHA Centre and the ASEAN region on academic and policy research on disaster management. The NTS Centre was established in 2008, and has developed three core research themes: Climate Security, Migration and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). This month, the AHA Centre gathered some insight from Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, NTS Centre Head at RSIS.

Professor Caballero-Anthony explains the link between the work of the NTS Centre and disaster management, alongside the RSIS's engagement with the AHA Centre in its early years.

"The NTS Centre has tracked the development of regional governance on non-traditional security issues like disasters since its founding in 2008. We have engaged with the AHA Centre since it was established in November 2011 and have developed a strong knowledge partnership. This partnership continues to flourish with the development of our own humanitarian assistance and disaster relief programme in 2015 and the engagement of NTS Centre in disaster and humanitarian affairs and policy development in the Asia-Pacific."

She also highlights ongoing work and partnerships with other key ASEAN stakeholders such as the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), the Singapore Civil Defense Force, and the ASEAN Secretariat with an array of programmatic areas.

When asked about the all-important relationship between disaster management organisations and the academic world, the Professor highlights the importance of a networked approach to solving problems, that is based on the premise that sustainable answers can be found through working together across different sectors.



Written by: William Shea | Photo: AHA Centre

"Disaster governance is the most developed in this respect and the seeds have been planted to grow the relationship between academia and disaster management practitioners in ASEAN. However, it remains a growth area where there is a need to engage the social sciences more to find answers to the societal challenges we face. Within universities there are different disciplines which bring a range of skillsets to the table from law to business and the natural to social sciences and humanities. It is through a carefully calibrated combination working together that we are well placed to find sustainable solutions to the disaster governance challenges we face in the region and beyond."

Professor Caballero-Anthony holds high hopes for partnerships between academic institutions and disaster management bodies – such as the great example on display between the AHA Centre and the NTS Centre of RSIS – and hopes that more such partnerships can expand from this strong base.

"A strong symbiotic relationship between scholars and practitioners gives us the opportunity to bridge the gap between real-world challenges on the ground with the development of longer-term strategic vision and policy frameworks from the interaction between our two communities."



ASEAN KICKS-OFF THE OPERATIONALISATION OF THE

NEW SATELLITE WAREHOUSE

IN CHAI NAT, THAILAND



The attendees and event organising committee from DDPM posing after the launch

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SATELLITE WAREHOUSE IS AN EMBODIMENT OF ASEAN'S EFFORT TO INCREASE THE SPEED, SCALE AND SOLIDARITY OF ASEAN'S COLLECTIVE SUPPORT



ASEAN's second satellite warehouse that will serve as the logistics hub for the Mekong sub-region was inaugurated during its operational launching on 13 December 2019, at its location in the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) Regional Centre 16, in Chai Nat Province, Thailand.

The AHA Centre and the DDPM, Ministry of Interior, Thailand as co-managers of the satellite warehouse, were joined by representatives from ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, other partners of the AHA Centre, and members of the private sector and civil society to inaugurate the satellite warehouse. The event kick-started the full functionality of the warehouse, and signifies ASEAN's commitment to realise the vision of One ASEAN One Response.

The satellite warehouse is designed to accommodate ASEAN's collective response in the region – in particular in Thailand and neighbouring countries including Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam. The satellite warehouse is now equipped with international-standard stockpiles adjusted to ASEAN needs. The relief items range from kits for disaster-affected communities to equipment for assisting on-the-ground operations of the National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of the affected countries, as well as the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT).



H.E. Anupong Paochinda, Minister of Interior, Thailand inaugurated the use of Satellite Warehouse in Chainat, Thailand

Written by : Ina Rachmawati and Caroline Widagdo | Photo Credit : AHA Centre

During the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok on 23 June 2019, ASEAN Leaders oversaw the soft launch of the ASEAN satellite warehouse in Thailand, under the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA). The soft launch was intended to introduce the satellite warehouse as one of the ASEAN mechanisms to ensure speed in the delivery of relief assistance, in line with the aspirations of One ASEAN One Response. Thailand's satellite warehouse will complement the existing regional stockpile stored in the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Subang, Malaysia, and another satellite warehouse located in the Philippines that was launched in July 2019.

The establishment of the satellite warehouse is an embodiment of ASEAN's effort to increase the speed, scale and solidarity of ASEAN's collective support to ASEAN Member States affected by disasters. The AHA Centre and DDPM Thailand acknowledge the invaluable support from the Government of Japan through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), and the Ministry of Interior of Thailand, provided to the DELSA project that has made the effort possible.



H.E. Anupong Paochinda, Minister of Interior, Thailand, had a walkabout tour around the warehouse to see the stockpile



ACE PROGRAMME DIARY

On November 28, 2019, the journey of 18 AHA Centre Executive (ACE) Programme Batch 6 participants finally came to an end, recognised through a graduation ceremony at the AHA Centre's office in Jakarta. The training comprised of 23 courses, visited 5 countries, and was implemented throughout 5 months. Participants of the course were National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) officers from the 10 ASEAN Member States. Facilitators and training partners for the course came from more than 21 international organisations, universities, and institutions working in the area of disaster management.

The objective of the ACE Programme is preparing the future leaders of disaster management in the ASEAN region, by building their capacity across various aspects of disaster management, including preparedness, response, and recovery. Participants were encouraged to understand the scope of international and intra-regional coordination, as well as demonstrate the spirit of One ASEAN One Response. There are four core competencies that the programme aims to achieve, namely developing experts in humanitarian assistance, supporting the operationalisation One ASEAN One Response, building result-oriented leaders, and improving leadership effectiveness.

Dignitaries for the ACE graduation ceremony arrived from the ASEAN Secretariat, Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), ASEAN Member States' representatives, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, the Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB – Indonesian NDMO), the AHA Centre, and of course the ACE Programme participants themselves.

"ASEAN communities need to be more resilient. This can be achieved by conducting training for officers of NDMOs in ASEAN, and strengthening coordination mechanisms among Member States" said, Harmensyah, the Secretary-General of the BNPB during his opening address. According to Harmensyah, building networks among Member States can help achieve excellence in managing disasters in disaster-prone areas such as the ASEAN region. He hoped that the ACE Programme alumnae can support their organisations in their respective countries, and also stand beside the AHA Centre when managing disaster in the region.

Japan's Ambassador to ASEAN, H.E. Akira Chiba, reiterated the importance of the ACE Programme in building strong networks between colleagues and experts in the region. He hopes that participants will spread and share their knowledge, such as the lessons they learned from their study visit to Japan. He then professed that ACE Programme participants will become disaster management leaders not only in the ASEAN region, but also on the international stage.

H.E. Kung Phoak, the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN, also provided insight to attendees regarding the application of innovative and creative methods for building resilience to face the various, often transboundary disasters that constantly take place across the region. He highlighted that this objective should be the priority of disaster management activities throughout ASEAN, and that such approaches require effective and strong leadership – hence the importance of the ACE Programme. He closed by supporting all ACE Programme alumnae to become champions of disaster management in their respective nations across ASEAN.

After speeches, the ACE participant from Thailand – Ms Sulawan Kewsanga – presented her project proposal to onlookers. Ms Kewsanga's project was titled 'Increasing the Disaster Response Mechanism for People with Disabilities', with proposal aspect forming a key part of programme outcomes for all participants. Awards were also presented to participants during the graduation ceremony, with recipients listed below.

The next session was a reflection speech compiled by the ACE participants, that was delivered by Mr Ram Chum Mang from Myanmar, and Ms Amelia Justina Lim from Singapore. Mr Ram expressed his gratitude to all partners who supported the course and stated that "we the ACE participants have become ASEAN brothers and sisters, to become future leaders". Meanwhile, Ms Amelia highlighted that the ACE participants were not the same people they had been five months ago. She mentioned an experience during a field visit in Palu in which participants met a survivor from the liquefaction affected area.

As the survivor recounted her experience from the 2018 disaster, the participants listened and cried together with the survivor. Amelia, however, mentioned that those tears were tears of compassion, not tears of weakness.

This experience was printed in Ms Amelia's thoughts and she realised those good leaders are those who put being human first above all else. These leaders put themselves in others' shoes to understand their feelings and aspirations. Then she highlighted that during a crisis, ASEAN should work as a team, because 'together we are stronger'.

To bring the graduation ceremony to a close, Ms Adelina Kamal, the Executive Director of the AHA Centre, reiterated messages she delivered five months before – that the ACE Programme course would be difficult, but it was necessary for building the leadership muscle of future leaders.

Ms Kamal expected that ACE Programme alumnae would implement all experiences and knowledge from the course to support communities during crises. She hoped that those knowledge, lessons, and experiences would make everyone a better person, especially in managing disaster in ASEAN region.



Written by: Sridewanto Piniuji | Photo: AHA Centre | Originally published at <http://pinuji.net> on December 2, 2019



STELLAR AWARD

- Rownie Aura Abella (Philippines)
- Amelia Justina Lim (Singapore)
- Mary Ann Sarah Ulat (Philippines)

NOMINEES FOR STELLAR AWARD

- Ram Chum Mang (Myanmar)
- Safrizan Bin Suhaini (Malaysia)
- Sridewanto Piniuji (Indonesia)

QUANTUM LEAP AWARD

- Palida Puapun (Thailand)
- Nguyen Ba Thanh (Viet Nam)
- Phosavanh Thammavongxay (Lao PDR)

NOMINEES FOR QUANTUM LEAP AWARD

- Sonekahn Phommahaxay (Lao PDR)
- Myo Myo Aung (Myanmar)
- Theara Moeun (Cambodia)

MOST VALUABLE AWARD

- Danial Aimran bin Hamdan (Malaysia)
- Rina Nur Hafizah binti Abdul (Brunei Darussalam)
- Sulawan Kaewsanga (Thailand)

NOMINEES FOR MOST VALUABLE AWARD

- Ojahan Lumban Gaol (Indonesia)
- Pansiem Solyden (Cambodia)
- Nguyen Hoang Tung (Viet Nam)



MR RAY SHIRKHODAI

Mr Ray Shirkhodai has spent the last 20 years of his career developing science and technology for disaster reduction. He is currently the Executive Director of the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) – a global science and technology centre for disaster risk reduction and intelligence managed by the University of Hawaii – and a steady partner of the AHA Centre since its early years. Ray was the primary architect of DisasterAWARE, PDC’s advanced multi-hazard early warning and decision support platform, powering PDC’s mobile and internet applications, as well as AHA Centre’s Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS). Ray has also led PDC’s support of major international disaster relief operations both at home and abroad. With a background in Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science, he has been at the forefront of disaster-related technology since joining the PDC in 2002, and after a career in software engineering dating back to the 1980’s.



Originally serving as Chief Information Officer (CIO,) and then Chief Operating Officer (COO), Ray became the Executive Director of PDC in 2007, by which time he had already began his engagement with disaster management in the ASEAN region. He remembers those early days, including the 2004 launch of the ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management (ARPD), when pledging PDC’s partnership to the regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts. “My personal engagements with ASEAN have included direct involvement with the 10-member NDMO ICT Gap analysis, establishing the Disaster Information Sharing and Communications Network (DISCNet), the first AADM Strategic Work Programme 2010-2015, Interim AHA Centre ICT Gap Analysis and proposed position staffing, and of course, DMRS deployments, just to name few,” Ray said.

Ray also highlights partnerships with individual nations as important, citing PDC collaborations and agreements as an integral part of the overall regional approach. “We’ve had decade-long partnerships in DRR with many of the Member States, including DisasterAWARE deployments in Thailand (2006-2008), Viet Nam (2012-2017), Indonesia (2014-2019), along with other risk assessments and DRR-related engagements with those Member States as well as with Myanmar and the Philippines. We’ve also collaborated very closely with Singapore to deliver various trainings, and build DRR capacity.”



The PDC and the AHA Centre signed a Memorandum of Intent in 2018 that paved the way for closer collaboration between the two organisations, in particular in further enhancing the Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS) and other collaboration in the development of information and communication technology

He also highlights current ongoing programmes with ASEAN, including enhancing DMRS and Information Communication Technology (ICT) adoption and DRR application usage in the region, working both directly with Member States, as well as with ASEAN through the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the AHA Centre.

Written by William Shea : | Photo : AHA Centre

Ray also has a lot to say regarding the impressive advances he has seen in the ASEAN region – both within individual Member States and the region as a whole. “ASEAN and its Member States have made significant individual (national) and collective (regional) strides in information technology adoptions related to DRR within a relatively short 15-year timeframe” he said. “The ratification of AADM, along with strategic development plans have helped the nations and the region to steadily invest in, and improve usage of new technologies for DRR purposes.”

When questioned regarding the importance of ICT for DRR, Ray is strong and passionate in response.



Ray also contributed to the ongoing discourse on the role of ICT in disaster management response, including by becoming a resource person in the Regional Workshop on Big Data and Disaster Reporting organised by the AHA Centre in March 2019 and ASEAN Workshop on ICT Roadmap for 2025 and beyond in July 2019, in Jakarta.

“Technology can help us save more lives, faster. I believe that the trends for adoption and utilisation of AI and ICT are destined to accelerate with the commoditisation of ICT and related services brought about by cloud-computing” he said. “It is therefore, most important to invest in the development of DRR applications and content to influence the effectiveness of DRR policies and practices within the region.”

ONE ASEAN ONE RESPONSE



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ABOUT ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia. As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN among others are to accelerate the economic growth, social progress, cultural development, to promote regional peace and stability as well as to improve active collaboration and cooperation.

ABOUT THE AHA CENTRE

The AHA Centre is an inter-governmental organisation established on 17 November 2011, through the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the AHA Centre by ASEAN Foreign Ministers, witnessed by the ASEAN Heads of State / Government from 10 ASEAN Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Centre was set-up to facilitate the cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member States and with the United Nations and international organisations for disaster management and emergency response in the ASEAN region.

ABOUT AADMER

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a legally-binding regional policy framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management in the 10 ASEAN Member States. The objective of AADMER is to provide an effective mechanism to achieve substantial reduction of disaster losses in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets, and to jointly respond to emergencies through concerted national efforts.