

Indonesian Team Visits BOBP-IGO



It was a flurry of black jackets at BOBP-IGO. The occasion: a team of 12 Indonesians and two Australians paid a 10-day visit from 10 July 2003 to the BOBP-IGO and other institutions in Chennai and Kakinada to acquaint themselves with safety-at-sea projects. The visitors are active participants in the 15-year program COREMAP, which seeks to rehabilitate damaged coral reefs and conserve undamaged reefs in Indonesia. The trip to India was funded by Ausaid.

The 12 Indonesians belonged to the Indonesian Media Center, which has been established to promote resource conservation among coastal dwellers. For the past two years, the Media Center has organised creative and innovative project activities in Makassar, South Sulawesi (see map). Leader of the group was Mr Baharrudin Nur (from the Bureau of Economic Development in Makassar). Three other members were fishers, two of whom were village heads. The remaining members were social activists, trainers, graphic designers and project staff. Some came from remote islands; this trip to Chennai was the first time they had left their homeland.

Last year, after an awareness-raising exercise, the Media Center established a foundation with safety and survival at sea as its focus. Since then the Center has been working with remote communities and introduced some significant innovations. Examples: a vessel with built-in buoyancy chambers; a fibreglass cover for external engines and an enclosure for inboard engines (this prevents morbidity in exposed engine parts). Besides, the foundation has set up data banks detailing accidents and incidents

with fishing vessels at sea in order to systematically analyse patterns of morbidity and mortality in Indonesian fishing villages.

The Indonesian team visited the BOBP-IGO office and was given an overview of BOBP's past and current initiatives on sea safety. The team then travelled to Kakinada. (Kakinada was the nucleus of an FAO-assisted project to help fisherfolk and the Department of Fisheries, Andhra Pradesh, to combat frequent cyclones.) For many the trip to Kakinada was very exciting, as it was their first journey on a train.

- The team was briefed on sea safety and preparedness programmes by Mr C M Muralidharan, senior specialist of AFPRO (Action for Food Production) and officials of the State Institute of Fisheries Technology. Mr V Babu Rao,

a boat building engineer who has specialised in construction of fibreglass boats, and Mr S B Sarma (former Assistant Director of Fisheries who was earlier BOBP's coordinator based in Kakinada) gave the visitors talks and demonstrations on engine/ motor repairs and maintenance, occupational hazards in respect of engines/ motors, training in safety and best-use practices.

- The team met the Joint Director of Fisheries (Coast), and discussed shore-to-sea communication systems and satellite weather forecasting systems installed in the state.
- The team visited the Kakinada fishing harbour, where members acquainted themselves with shore-to-sea communication systems onboard fishing craft. They interacted with artisanal

The Indonesian Team at BOBP-IGO office. Sitting L – R: Andi Israhuddin, Abdul Salam, Andi Muhammad Riady, Melody Kemp, Sugiartanty, Ahmad Mauliddin. Standing L – R: Robert Kingham, Abdul Razak, Anis Tejakusuma, Nuring Abdul Muin, Hamzah Baso, Baharuddin Nur, Y S Yadava, Mus Arifin, Ahmad Latta.



boat owners on traditional sea safety mechanisms.

- The team visited the Integrated Coastal Management project in Kakinada, and learned about initiatives taken by NGOs concerning sea safety and disaster preparedness. Mr N Harikrishna of Oxfam, Hyderabad, and others gave the team a briefing.
- On return to Chennai, the team attended a lecture by SIFFS (South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies), Trivandrum, on safe use of outboard motors in small fishing crafts.

“We were impressed by what we saw, particularly the fibreglass technology with flotation devices. Mr Babu Rao demonstrated these in Kakinada,” said team leader Baharuddin Nur. All the members praised the community organisation efforts in Kakinada to prevent or combat cyclones. “Indonesia is not subject to cyclones. But we are vulnerable to earthquakes and tsunamis, so we need emergency plans,” one of them said.

Indonesia hasn't joined the BOBP-IGO yet, but the team from Makassar acknowledged the importance of regional co-operation, and will keep itself informed about the IGO, its ideas and activities. In the immediate future, it hopes to benefit from Mr Babu Rao's expertise in fibreglass technology and mechanical maintenance.

The visitors said they were taking back from India knowledge and awareness of how problems similar to their own can be effectively tackled. They had gained in confidence as well. The men in black jackets left India with suitcases that bulged with glistening Indian fabrics, and proceeded to Sri Lanka to spend a week with the National Fishers Solidarity Organisation (NAFSO).



Interactions with the community (above) and demonstration of a fibre-glass safety float at the boat building yard in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh (below).



COREMAP, Safety at Sea and BOBP

The health and safety of fishers is related to the health and safety of marine ecosystems. The “types of thinking and the notions of consequence” that would help fishers to survive would also help reefs and marine ecosystems. That is the rationale behind the visit of the COREMAP team to the Bay of Bengal region.

It was believed that by travelling to India and seeing and listening to fishers who were part of a Safety-at-Sea (SAS) programme, the Indonesian teams could broaden and enrich their knowledge and learn to independently develop and monitor SAS activities. The fact that small-scale fisherfolk in the Bay of Bengal region use an infrastructure and face problems comparable to those in Indonesia, made the India trip all the more useful.

BOBP's materials relating to safety and survival at sea have been enthusiastically received, particularly by World Bank consultants designing Phase 2 of COREMAP. They would like to incorporate these materials in a Reef Watcher Manual.

The visitors' itinerary, prepared in consultation with BOBP's Dr. Yadava, called for trips to field sites which had developed organisational structures for SAS of small-scale fishers. The Indonesian participants were carefully selected to include trainees from SAS workshops already conducted such as village safety officers, reef watchers, field facilitators, NGO personnel – plus staff of the Media Centre in Makassar.