

**CHRISTENSEN FUND
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRESS REPORT
JANUARY 1, TO NOVEMBER 2006**

COPDANET's work in the Mangrove Resource Center started in full swing soon after Tsunami relief and rehabilitation in February 2005. After a series of earthquakes, which shook the whole Island and made the earth (land) tilted Tsunami struck engulfing most of the Islands. Even today the seawater, which submerged the Island lands has not receded since the land has become lower than the sea level. On December 26, 2004, Tsunami devastated all Islands in Andaman and Nicobar and killed several thousands of Andamanese and Nicobaites. Their properties, wealth, kith and kin have gone away with the giant waves. When the people suffered a great deal COPDANET rushed to the worst part of the Islands and did relief work by supplying rice, pulses, blankets, vessels, drinking water, soaps, mats etc and helped more than five thousand victims around our Mangrove Resource Center with the help of Seacology a US based NGO which works with Island People.

Soon after relief COPDANET began its rehabilitation activities and provided employment to several women and men belonged to different tribal groups around South Andaman as part of their livelihood options.

Apart from offering financial support to a Botanist three staff namely a Mangrove Nursery raising expert, a Gardener who watered the mangrove seeds of twenty thousand and afforested them, a lady expert in seed bank and grading and transplanting mangrove seedlings have been employed and paid for fourteen months from Global Greengrants Funds. A Project Officer who collected the seeds from different parts of Andaman was engaged in restoration work also has been paid for 14 months.

Five part time community adult educators – (three men and two women) conducted regular adult education classes in ten villages and taught the women who worked at the Mangrove Center with Mangrove Science of different species, seed collection time, transplantation seasons etc.,

At least ten local seminars for educating the local people consisting of tribals, Dalits and other marginalized on the importance of mangroves were conducted between 6 – 8 pm in the village community centers with each seminar attended by fifty to hundred to two hundred public mostly local and migrated Tribals.

Five one day Consultations in Cities like Port Blair, Bamboo Flat, Mayabunder, Chudiyathappeu and Sathianagar inviting specialists as resource people to speak on mangrove conservation and restoration. From February 28 – March 4, 2006 Mr. Jim Enright, the South Asia Coordinator of the Mangrove Action Project, Thailand and Mr. Alfredo Quarto, Executive Director, Mangrove Action Project, Seattle, USA were in Andaman Islands visiting mangrove forests and seeing COPDANET's Mangrove Conservation work and visited our center and looked at the data base of different species of Mangrove saved in our computer. They met a few forest officials, addressed the

Forest Guards would be under Training and made presentation in one Day Mangrove Consultation in Port Blair attended by high dignitaries, Government Officials, intellectuals, Scientists, Botanists and Forest Officials from the department of Environment and Forests and created a great impact. Perhaps those two would bear witness to COPDANET's activities done with Global Greengrants funding in Andaman Islands.

The Mangrove Forest right in front of our Mangrove Resource Center with lush green mangroves with different species such as *rhizophora mucronata*, *avencenia marnia* and *ceriops tagal* started withering from March 2005. We were expecting to take school children for picnics into the forest and teach them about mangrove science. But to our surprise, and to the surprise of scientists, botanists and environmentalists including people from MAP, the Mangrove forest all over Andaman Islands started withering while everyone expected the mangrove to come with new leaves and flowers.

But till today most of the beautiful mangrove forests, a treasure to Andaman have died and dried soon after. There are many reasons attributed to the withering of the mangrove forests. Some say that the silt in the roots were washed away and only the sand is deposited causing the death. Some say that wherever the seawater is still inundating the mangrove forests up to three to five feet of water, the mangrove died. Some say that some of the species which are on the dry shores will survive since there is still the tidal waves going back and forth and the mangroves on the upper zonation area with silt sediments, might colonize upper dry land and move further with the dry land where there are other trees.

On the whole it is estimated that there are more than twenty thousand hectares of mangrove which have died in South and North Andaman Islands alone. We are breaking our heads like the Forest Department to save the existing Mangrove forests. Still various theories have been floated pointing out to the reasons for the death of mangrove. But till today scientific analysis has not been completed and official information has not come out of the Forest department who are responding to conserve all mangrove species and also protect them.

We were trying to impart environment education with special emphasis on mangroves to all the schools around South Andaman and insist upon weekly classes on environment education in all the classes as per the order of the Government Educational Authorities. But though we are allowed to speak to the students on Mangrove Conservation once a month in all the fourteen Higher Secondary Schools and twenty six elementary schools through volunteers, the Government has not formulated an Ordinance to make environment education compulsory. But COPDANET will continue to lobby with the authorities of Higher Education and general public that environment education should be mandatory in all schools in the Island where forests and human beings are inseparable. In the meantime we shall give environment science especially on the importance of mangrove conservation in all schools and communities as a campaign. It is estimated that of all countries affected by Tsunami India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and

Thailand have experienced net loss of 28% that is from 5 million to 3.6 million hectares. In Andaman alone thousand hectares of coral reef was lost after Tsunami. If the mangrove forest were there, the loss would have been less.

We are influencing three groups of people (a) we are influencing Forest Officials to give prime importance to Mangrove Conservation, afforestation and restoration. We meet them regularly and interact with them and provide information and data on Mangroves in Andaman and are jointly working with the Forest officials to find a solution to the death of thousands of hectares and clean all the dead wood and replant mangroves seedlings or leave them for natural regeneration. The department of Environment and Forest recognize the work done on Mangroves in the Mangroves Resource Center and Biological garden established by COPDANET in 2005 in South Andaman Island.

We are trying to influence the public (school teachers, middle class government servants) intellectuals, educationists, college and students, religions bodies over the importance of environment education in all the schools in Andaman Islands. At the same time the awareness campaigns through street plays, public meetings, seminars and consultations etc organized by COPDANET has created tremendous impact among the middle class especially among other NGOs who are working with Tsunami victims. We will be celebrating the Mangrove Conservation Day in July 2006 in a grand scale.

We (COPDANET) staff are starting a Forum on Environment Conservation to save all endangered fauna and flora in Andaman Islands. We are trying to influence all NGOs- small or large, natural science clubs, Botanical survey and Andaman Forest Department and other likeminded societies and clubs so as to meet regularly and study the status report of Andaman deeply and take concrete action wherever necessary to protect the endangered species. We would like to protect the Tribal reserves. National parks, wildlife sanctuaries and above all luxuriant mangroves, perhaps the richest in the world.

Apart from the comprehensive report on South Andaman Mangrove Resource Centre and Biological Garden, there are highlights of Andaman Islands with special reference to the Mangrove Resource Center of various events and programmes including different new projects and new visitors not only at the Centre but also in Andaman who have spoken about different developmental projects after Tsunami.

These highlights give the reader a birds eye view of Andaman Island social economic and human development with special reference to mangrove conservation by the local people's initiatives.

TRIBALS AND MANGROVES

Everyone in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, knows about the Mangrove forests which saved hundreds of Tribals lives such as Jarawas, Shonpens, sentinalise and Nicobars, their properties above all their forests with their homes during Tsunami in December 2004.

With all these, the Tribals have realized that but for Mangrove forests, there would have been a devastating catastrophe. Therefore with this realization on “Mangroves Saving the Peoples Lives”, an awareness towards conservation of their fauna and flora has become a “key word” for tribals. These poor tribals who have been alienated from making use of forest resources by the strict laws of the Departmental questions such as who owns the forests in general and mangroves in particular? What role they should play in conservation apart from what the Forests department has been doing? Why cannot they become the custodians than spectators in afforestation and restoration of the dead mangrove forests and play a vital role. These are the pertinent questing coming from the Tribals chief tans and local self Government leaders with clear indication that Forest laws have to change and more responsibilities should be given to the native Tribals to prove that they have the right knowledge and experience than the outsiders to be the vanguards in the future conservation programmes.

COPDANET with its interaction with several interested groups such as Tribals chiefs, local administrators, Government officials and forest guards and officers, has been able to mobilize a large number of civil societies including different tribal communities to give their pledge and solidarity in the movement of Mangrove Conservation and Future Survival of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

MIGRATED TRIBALS FROM THE MAIN LAND (INDIA)

There are migrated Tribals who are designated as scheduled tribes by the Government of India are settled in the main hamlets of both North, Middle, South Andaman since the Government of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which is directly governed by the Federal government from New Delhi, which brought large Tribals population from Indian Tribals belts of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal and made them to settle in Andaman Islands for working in the thick forests and supplying timber and fuel wood for the Government owned Saw Mill which sold building materials to local settlers since the Independence of India in 1947 and soon after the political prisoners were set free from Cellular Jail, Andaman.

These Tribals such as Santals, Onges, Biharis, Mundas and Irullas are still without proper settlement and are used as daily wage labourers without land for cultivation, without proper housing and employment. The Government has been neglecting them as unwanted for Andaman’s future development since they are illiterates, lack leadership qualities and always submissive and non-violent.

The Supreme Court in 2002, banned cutting and felling forest woods and closed down several Saw Mill factories. The elephants used for felling the trees have been let out in the forests to go astray. There tribals who have lost everything, are those who work as landless labourers enabling the ex-freedom fighters to enjoy their development of land and properties with the sweat of the poor tribals.

COPDANET is determined to organized these tribals with whom it is constantly in contact and interact, to raise their voices of decent and claim what is their right and privileges . A small nursery at the Mangrove Resource Center has been to provide employment regularly for more than twenty families of Tribals in raising mangrove nursery, seed collection, afforestation of seedlings and restoration etc in degraded areas. With more funds from Christensen Fund we can do mighty things to uplift these Tribals who require our help in lobbying and advocacy.

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Felix N. Sugirtharaj
Hony. Secretary

IMPRESSIONS OF MY VISIT TO ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS MAY 3-14,2006

Felix N. Sugritharaj, Hony. Secretary – COPDANET, India

December 26, 2004 a black day in the history of the Andaman and Nicobar islands would be remembered for generations together. The loss that the islanders incurred on this fateful day can never ever be restored. Many NGOS have come to the rescue of the islanders, but their efforts to restore the livelihood in the islands could not succeed without the assistance of Andaman and Nicobar Administration and people.

During my visit between May 3-14,2006, I have noticed that the Mangroves are still withering in the thick Mangroves forest right in front of the Mangrove Resource Centres, South Andaman. To my surprise that I found that even the Mangrove trees which are close to the Centre (50 metres away) have started withering though the high tide and low tide zonation has been good without any water immudation. Very rarely I have seen any new green shoots in the dry Mangrove forest around. So I am wondering how long will it take for the natural restoration which Mr. Alfredo Guarto, the Director of MAP told us during his visit to Andaman island last month. What worries me in that the beautiful serene-lush green mangroves with different species have been lost once for all. The Forest Department still wants to wait and watch what will happen after the heavy rain fall which is likely to take place in the emsuing months. I still believe that if the salinity in the stagnated sea water in the creeks are being confronted with fresh rain water, there may be some natural changes.

In the meantime we are requesting the Forest Department to identify Copdanet a few degraded areas where the manrove seedlings raised at the Centre could be transplanted. Elisa and myself are planning to visit CAR NICOBAR ISLAND next month to study the relationship of Nicobaris (a group of Mangaloid Tribes) to mangroves. It was reported reported after Tsunami that the mangrove forests have saved the Nicobaris land, properties and precious lives by serving as wind shields. The mangrove forest in Nicobar island is not under the control of the forest department and as such that the Tribals are controlling their forests and their conservation.

We have to secure a special permission from the Andaman Administration to visit the Tribal reserves and though there are no guest houses nor hotels for stay, we have to receive special permission from the captains of each village cluster to stay and study Mangrove vegetation. After the visit, we can start environment education programmes to the Nicobaris to protect and restore mangroves.

Car Nicobar is 270 kilometres from Port Blair, the capital of Andaman. It is a flat and fertile island covered with a cluster of coconut trees and enchanting beaches. The Nicobaris stay in huts specially built with stilts(STILTS) having the entrance through a wooden lader. It takes 16 hrs by sea from Port Slair to nack Nicobar islands.

Cyclone called “MALA”

Strong winds reaching a speed of 60-75 k.m. per hour followed by torrential caused widespread damages in the middle and north Andaman from May 4-6, 2006. River Kalpong causing damages to standing crops of paddy and Erosion has taken in many places washing away the sea wall,built in many islands after Tsunami.

TO SAVE THE JARAWA TRIBES

The Jarawas of the NEGRITO RACE live mostly in north Andaman Islands and have been affected by measles, and doctors are heasing towards the Jarawas settlement to save more then forty five children and adults affected by measles. If the disease spreads, it may wipe old the stone age aborigenes who are wembering only 350 in whole Tribal area. There are alligations that the Indians officials are, attempting to cover up the scale of the epidemics of measles outbreak which causes concern to NGOS and Human Right Activists. A strategy is required to be evolved to enable both Jarawas and the civil population to co-exist peacefully without interfering in each others way of life so that the interest and cultural norms of Jarawa tribes are preserved.

WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN PORT BLAIR

- A five day workshop on capacity building of youth organizations in disaster Management was held at the youth Hotel and I participated on the last day and met the eminent speakers. Mostly spoke about mangroves which could be restored to serve as bioshield during natural calamities. Therefore a workshop in mangroves to prevent natural disasters must be organized in the future to bring greater awareness and knowledge to locals and tribals. The pity is that every person in Andaman and Nicobar Islands know about mangroves but not their usage during disasters. I think that mangroves should be to a part of disaster management kit.

Conclusions

I met both Rev. Selvaraj and Mr. Elisa in Andaman islands. Elisa has helped a lot in developing the mangrove nursery. He has been instrumental in bringing new seeds or mangroves to the nursery. Rev. Selvaraj is busy with pastorate work. Elisa will visit Car Nicobar this month and pave the way for our visit next month.

The Mangrove Resource Centre's repair of retaining wall should be undertaken soon since the crack is becoming bigger and bigger.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS ACTIVITIES FROM SEPTEMBER 10-20, 2006

Felix N. Sugirtharaj, Hony Secretary, COPDANET, India.

During this visit Mr. Rajagopal, one of the Coordinators for mangrove restoration accompanied me. We concentrated on the light roofing construction on the first floor of the Mangrove Resource Centre, Shore Point, South Andaman which was almost completed with tresses and zinc and green colour sheets. Then the flooring with light green colour tiles were spread and plastered. With this addition the Mangrove Resource Centre has more space to accommodate thirty guests with children or adults to participate in any programme including seminars, meetings etc on mangrove science and other related environmental subject which are most relevant and contextual to the general public in South Andaman.

The construction of 'Retaining Wall' on the eastern side of the MRC to protect it from shrinking, cracks and erosion will begin next week and it is hoped that the wall will be completed at the end of October 2006. The only snag is down pouring of rains everyday in torrents.

October 2006 – Festival Season in Andaman

Next month is an important month for Andaman inhabitants because the Bengalis who are the majority of Andaman population will be celebrating the "Durga Puja" festival with flying colours and this will be followed by "Deepavalli" another important Hindu festival with fun and frolic. Deepavalli, being an important festival in India does not exclude people of other faiths since home made sweets will be shared to all irrespective of caste and creed and this brings joy and gaiety to all islanders who will be socializing on this occasion. This festival spirit does not end in one or two days. They go on at least for a two weeks. Schools and colleges will be closed for "Puja" holidays and those who have saved money will be traveling to the mainland to join their kith and kin during these festivities.

Capital News Waves from Andaman and Nicobar Islands Post Disaster Management Workshop

The 39th Engineers day was celebrated emphasizing the importance of effective post disaster management. The Lt.Gen Lakhera, the Chief Administrator of Andaman and Nicobar Islands said that the role of engineers in natural disaster mitigation and management is greater than those engineers living in main land since the islands bore the brunt of killer waves of Tsunami. He criticized the Government for not having a systematic management mechanism to save lives in times of calamities. He also said that the island administration should be well prepared to apply the technical mind and practical experience to develop a model that will effectively deal with rescue, relief and restoration in the hours of crisis disasters. Felix participated on behalf of MRC on September 15, 2006.

Observance of Ozone Layer Day

On September 16, 2006 the islands celebrated the World Observance of Ozone Layer Day. It was a clarion call to public, government and non government organizations to refrain from using products which use Ozone Depleting substances and asked the industries to switch over to non ozone technologies to save the earth and environment. The theme for this year is “Protect the Ozone Layer, Save Life on earth”.

Ozone Layer in the upper atmosphere absorbs harmful ultra violet (UV) rays emerging from the sun and wards of its ill effects on human health and natural ecosystem.

September 18, 2006 Administrators Visit to Nicobar Islands to Redress Grievances

The Administrative staffs and high officials of the Island bureaucracy visited Nicobar Islands which was the most affected by Tsunami and held several round of talks with the Tribal leaders on the rehabilitation and reconstruction process despite constraints. People expressed their tale of woes and sorrow and gave petitions to construct a sea wall, providing compensation for the lives lost during Tsunami and building of racing canoes for the Nicobarese. The fishers at Comp Bell Bay asked for permanent shelters which have not been built yet. They also petitioned for an ice plant to facilitate storage of their fish catch and assistance for boats and nets lost in December 2004.

About Mangroves Near Mangrove Resource Centre, South Andaman

The lush and green mangrove forest right across the Mangrove Resource Centre in South Andaman is fallen apart with only dry and withered trees and logs still waiting to crumble down fully in the creeks and perish. Though the Forest Department has not allowed the coastal people to collect the dried woods of mangroves, there is no sign of natural restoration or regeneration of mangroves in the places where they have gone. The Department of Environment and Forest does not openly speak about the future plans either restoration or afforestation. The big question is whether Tsunami the killer of Mangrove Forests also in Andaman which protected the people from its fury?

New policy to give Tribals More Right To Land

The Union Ministry for Tribal affairs has formulated a revised draft of the Mutual Tribal Policy to address the issues concerning the Scheduled Tribes, Director of the Mutual Folk Lore Support Centre said that the Tribes were being denied their right to natural resources and land to own. Environmental and wide life groups think of Tribals as destroyers of nature. He said without the Tribals the natural resources already available would have been destroyed by non tribals. According to 2001 census the scheduled Tribe population was 84.3 million accounting for 8.3 percent of the nations population. The Tribes occupy 15 percent of India's geographical areas, mainly forest, hills and inaccessible terrains rich in natural resources. A policy of rehabilitation and

resettlement with legislative framework is the need of the how to minimize displacement. The Tribes are the great masters in self governance and worshippers of nature as sacred as their lives.

World Tourism Day September 27th

While the World Tourism Day is going to be celebrated all over the island with races and other sport activities, the Mangrove Resource Centre will invite intelligent citizens numbering about twenty five to encourage them about alternate tourism which is basically eco tourism. The visitors to these islands, usually foreigners are interested in alternate tourism and have no other opportunity for availing these privileges. They have been always looking out for a unique programme apart from superficial tourist gimmicks and MRC is planning to spread this idea not only to tourists but also to locals near the forests and conscious public.

Gandhiji's Birthday Celebration

On October 2, 2006 Gandhi's birthday will be celebrated in the MRC with a half a day seminar on Mahatma Gandhi's Principles of non violent struggle against injustice and globalization and neo colonialism and the weapon Gandhi used to achieve freedom for India from external aggression was "Sathyagraha"- A peaceful non violent movement to establish truth.

News in Titbits

Agriculture Vs Aquaculture

Dr. R.C. Srivatsa Director, Central Agricultural Institute (CARI) Port Blair has said that the submerged land in the inter tidal zone cannot be used for agriculture, but it is best tidal zone for aquaculture. MRC will organize a Debate about the pros and cons of aquaculture in Andaman Islands as a post Tsunami livelihoods.

India's Coastline Eroded

During a study by the students and staff of Allah abed University, India, it has been pointed out that out of India's coastline if 5,423 km is getting affected by erosion. As much as 1248 km the shoreline was getting eroded. Describing beach line erosion as a universal problem, the report said that 70 per cent of all coast line in the world was getting eroded. In India out of 7,517km about 5,423 km along the mainland and 2,094 km in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been facing erosion. The coastline composed of headlands, promontories, rocky shores, sandy pits, barrier beaches, open beaches, good estuaries inlets, marshy lands and off-shore islands. The continental shelf along the countries east coast was narrow with 60km in the South only.

August Report

Independence Day of India Celebrating with National Flag Hoisting

Maria Rajan and Elisa attended the seminar on the theme “Emerging opportunities in Andaman and Nicobar Islands” which was organized by Community Enterprise Forum International (CEFI) at Megapose Nest on 27th and 28th August 2006. Penalists from different parts of the both national and International have come and spoke on the theme with the following sub headings.

- a. Agriculture
- b. Fisheries
- c. Tourism and Transport
- d. Micro and Macro Industries
- e. Aquaculture, Sea weeds production etc.

ANDAMAN HIGHLIGHTS

November 7-14, 2006

The Department of Forests and Environment, Andaman and Nicobar Islands held the Convocation Ceremony for the Forest Guards of the 36th batch at the Forest Training College Wimberlygunj. The Chief Guest was Mr. Mehta, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests who gave away the medals and certificates on November 7, 2006.

Dr. Felix N. Sugirtharaj, the Hony Secretary of COPDANET attended the function at the invitation of the Forest Officers.

NEWS FROM NICOBAR ISLANDS

The Car Nicobar islands organized the coconut campaign to encourage farmers to cultivate more coconut since it is the most dominant crop so as to enhance production on November 6, 2006.

BIODIVERSITY DAY

November 11, 2006

On November 11, 2006 an essay competition on Biodiversity was being organized by COPDANET in all Schools and Colleges in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to mark the Biodiversity year and to create awareness Biodiversity which is a must for saving nature and mankind, especially in these islands on November 11, 2006. The Mangrove Resource Centre held a public meeting in MRC in the evening for which the locals have been invited. This was part of awareness campaign on Mangrove Conservation and Biodiversity of the whole island.

A NEW TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM

A 125 crore (12 million Indian rupees) project for establishing a Tsunami warning system is progressing as per schedule and will be completed by September 2007, said Mr. Goel, Secretary for Union Ministry for Earth Science, said on November 6, 2006.

He said “we have planned to install 10-12 bottom pressure recorders, of which eight will be near Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

INAUGURATION OF THE MANGROVE RESOURCE CENTRE AND BIOLOGICAL GARDEN, SHORE POINT

The dedication and inauguration of the Mangrove Resource Centre and Biological Garden, Shore Point, South Andaman at 5.00 pm by Mr. Duane Silverstein, the Executive Director of Seacology, a funding agency from USA which supports Island Development with special emphasis on Mangrove Conservation all over the globe.

Mangrove Resource Centre and Biological Garden was dedicated and Inaugurated by Mr. Duane Silverstein, the Executive Director of Seacology along with the Board Members of Seacology Mr. Ton Lves, Mr. Larry and Mrs. Wendy Barels, Mr. Dick Troop, Ms. Marsha Williams and Ms. Lezlie Johnson and also in the presence of Mr. Anuradha Wickramasinghe, the President and the Director of the Small Fishers Federation, Pambala, Sri Lanka with Mr. Karunasena, the Chairman of the Environmental Board, Government of Sri Lanka and a large number of distinguished guests and local Heads including the Jilla Prashad members and Panchayat President of Bamboo flat. The important event was plantation of ten different species of Mangroves of seedlings in the Biological garden and the Nursery in the campus of Mangrove Resource centre.

The School children who participated in the Mangrove Action Day on July 26, 2006 and the Gandhi Jeyanthi Celebration on October 2, 2006 were given merit certificates for competing and winning prizes in Mangrove Essays, Mangrove Paintings and Mangrove Drawings between 5.30-7.00pm. There was a gala function in the specially erected podium where the Mangrove Centre activities were introduced and explained by Dr. Felix N. Sugirtharaj, Hony Secretary, the Coastal Poor Development Action Network, India. He also mentioned about the visit of Mr. Alfredo Quarto, the Director of MAP, U.S.A and Mr. Jim Enright, the South East Asian Coordinator for the Mangrove Action Project in March 2006. Dr. Felix also praised Alfredo and Jim for their constant solidarity and support through various funding agencies such as Global Green Grants, Christensen Fund and Earth Island Institute for their generous financial support for the improvement. If the Mangrove Resource Centre and the Restoration of degraded mangroves in Andaman Islands after Tsunami. This was followed by most of the guests offering their felicitation and greetings on behalf of Seacology, USA and Small Fishers Federation, Sri Lanka.

The visitors, guests and a large audience including the Principals of different schools witnessed the Tribal Dances from the Ranchi Tribal young women, Bharathanatyam by three young girls from different school later on the dances like Karagattam, a folkdance from the Tamil group. Mr. Kannan, the DMK leader from Bamboo flat was also present.

Finally a song composed by one of the local musician on the tragedy of Tsunami was sung in the memory of the all the victims who last their lives in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands when all the audience stood in silence. Mr. Elisa Hony Coordinator of the Mangrove Resource Centre and Biological Garden proposed the vote of thanks.

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Felix N. Sugirtharaj
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