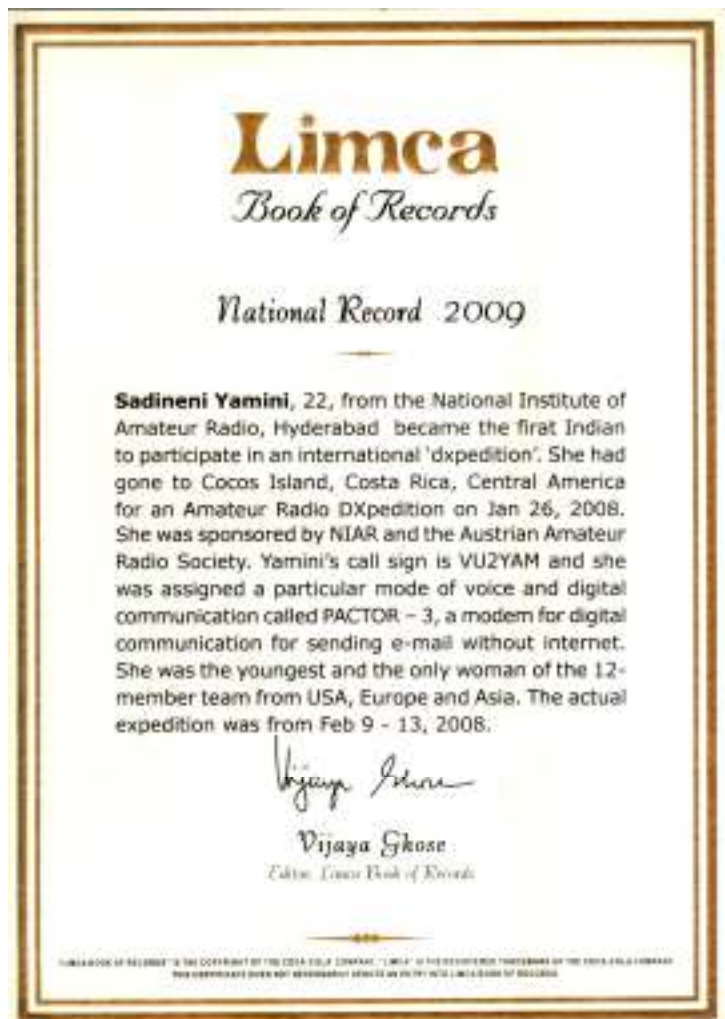


YL S. YAMINI, VU2YAM ENTERS LIMCA BOOK OF RECORDS-2009

Ms. Sadineni Yamini, VU2YAM, aged 22 years member of National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), Hyderabad became the first Indian woman to participate in an International Dxpedition conducted in an uninhabited Cocos Island of Costa Rica, Central America during 9-13th February 2008.



Yamini, excelled in her achievements for using voice as well as digital modes of amateur radio communication technology that enables sending e-mail without internet from a remote location. Sponsored by NIAR and Austrian Amateur Radio Society, she was also among the youngest and the only woman of the 12 member team consisting of hams from USA, Europe and Asia.

Several national and international organizations have recognized and acknowledged specific achievements made by Sadineni Yamini earlier. This exceptional achievement now finds place in

National Record 2009 of the prestigious Limca Book of Records as per the communication received from the Editor, Limca Book of Records.

Sadineni Yamini took special interest in the field of amateur radio joining as student member at NIAR and continued to pursue this activity with outmost dedication. She continues to motivate youth to become partners in technology development by exhibiting her skills and undertaking challenging expeditions under extremely difficult circumstances in the field of amateur radio, which will remain as an inspiration to younger generation.

NIAR members provides communication for Aila Cyclone

The members of National Institute of Amateur Radio, Hyderabad and Indian Wave of Amateur Radio, Kolkatta, provided two-way amateur radio communications in the Aila cyclone relief operations in West Bengal in June 2009.

Amateur Radio in Cyclone "Aila" response

- By Ms.Yamini, VU2YAM

On the 25th of May 2009, a deep depression coiled over Bay of Bengal became Cyclonic formation "Aila" struck the coastal districts of West Bengal with wind speeds over 90 KMPH causing immense devastation in the region. The river banks breached at several locations as incessant rains caused river waters raise to unprecedented levels inundating farm lands, submerged houses in hundreds of villages resulting in hundreds of casualties and rendering millions of people homeless.



The road connection to several remote areas was cut off by "Aila" virtually creating Islands with no food, water, shelter and electricity for millions of people. The communication system to these remote villages was possible only when the cell phone towers were brought back into operation.

The Government of West Bengal sought assistance from Ham volunteers in the region to bridge the communication gap and for backup communications at remote locations. Mr. Ambarish Nag Biswas, VU3JFA and other Local Hams responded immediately by sending their members to North 24 Parganas District and South 24 Parganas District. The information on severity and scale of disaster started to trickle in as the local administration sent these teams on boats to remote areas to access the situation.



Mr. Ambarish Nag Biswas, VU3JFA operating at District Magistrate office Barasat.



The devastation unleashed by "Aila" cyclone deprived millions of people of their homes, leaving them a narrow stretch of land on high grounds or an elevated concrete road to survive. The trail of destruction is visible over vast area as sea of water as far as a human eye can see. The flood waters did not recede even two weeks after the onset of Aila. The situation demanded more Ham operators for efficient management of relief. The district administration requested further support of Ham volunteers with necessary equipment to assist their relief operations.

National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), well known for its preparedness and committed team of volunteers immediately rushed its members to Kolkata, Capital city of West Bengal by train and flight to further reach Barasat, Headquarters of North 24 Parganas District on 1st June 2009. The District Administration dispatched the Ham teams to serve at administrative headquarters and other remote locations of Hingalgunj Block in North 24 Parganas district.

The team upon arrival met Mr. Srikumar Mukherjee, Hon'ble Minister for Civil Defense, Govt. of West Bengal which was coordinated by Mr. Arya Ghosh VU2GKB and Mr. Joy Chakravarthi VU3JCH. As per the advice of the government, an amateur radio station was established at the office of Controller of Civil Defense in Kolkata.

Later the station was shifted to District HQ at Barasat as normal telecommunication links between the District and State HQ were found adequate. The Amateur Radio station at Barasat remained as control station for all the other stations operating in this district which was tirelessly managed by the most experienced operator Ms. M.Bhanumathy, VU2BL. The stations checked on hourly basis to remain in regular contact for transfer of messages.



Ms. M. Bhanu, VU2BL

Each Ham volunteer carried a suitcase containing HF Transceiver, VHF transceiver, 2 Hand-helds, Inverted 'V' antenna for 20/40M, VHF whip antenna, 100meters of coax cables, tools and other essential accessories all weighing over 30 kgs. The District Administration provided fully charged heavy duty 12V

Batteries which was judiciously used to run the transceivers up to 5 days for uninterrupted communication at two remote locations. The Hams teams operated mostly on HF 40M - 7045 & 7070 KHz & on 20M - 14160 KHz and VHF 145.500 MHz.



Ms. M.Bhanumathy, VU2BL & Ms. S.Yamini, VU2YAM operating at State Civil Defense

The messages mostly were on requirement of relief material, administrative reports on disbursement of relief, reports on public health as well as situation reports of medical camps and movement of officials. Even as the mobile communications from private cell phone operators was partially restored, Amateur Radio communication was asked to remain as backup communication as information received by administration included new weather warnings and raise in river water currents on account of High Tides.

The remote locations in India are known to lack basic amenities and sanitation. Survival of millions of people in these areas is on bare minimum requirement of food, water and shelter. The homes of the people living in these parts of rural India are made of mud walls with roof made of hay stacks. The villages in remote areas had no electricity but used solar power and generators. Reaching the locations of operation at Block HQ was the first task, not familiar with the region or local language, part of the journey was on road, later men and material were shifted to small raft to cross a river and then one hour ride on a motorized tri-cycle. It took nearly 8 hours to travel 75 kms distance and reaching final destinations was just another challenge for the team.

Ms. S. Yamini VU2YAM, well known ham (recently her name included in Limca Book of Records 2009) was operating the amateur radio station at Block Headquarters office at Hingalgunj. Electricity was partially restored when we arrived at this location and a backup generator was in place as this was administrative control for the division. HF and VHF station were installed for round-the-clock operation. This location just the right place assigned for an individual female team member to work round the clock operation. The first signs of severe devastation were visible.



Ms. Yamini, VU2YAM at Hingalgunj

Hingalgunj Block was among the most devastated areas in North 24 Parganas District with over 28,000 families and 126,000 people affected by Aila, over 57 kms of river embankments breached causing maximum damage.

The District Administration and over 300 volunteers from various agencies worked in managing relief effort at this block including NIAR, ICDS, Departments of Health, Land & Agriculture, NDRF, Army medical teams, UNICEF and other NGOs. The material supplied include Rice, Dal, Chira, Drinking water, mosquito nets, medicines, bleaching powder, firewood and medical supplies etc.,



The National Disaster Response Force, an efficient professional team with manpower and resources specially designated for Disaster Preparedness and Response in the country brought us to the shores of Jogeshgunj and Kalitala which were nearly 30 Kms from Block HQ on separate rafts, a journey that took nearly 2 hours on a curvy river overflowing with flood waters. The cruise goes along the river which is only 100 meters wide at most places that separate India and Bangladesh. A local guide is assigned to each raft to identify the villages in Indian Territory and also to avoid unwarranted landing on the shores of neighboring country.

Jogeshganj Panchayat with four villages viz, Jogeshganj, Patghara, Madhavkati, Hemnagar which virtually became an island, with over 90% of 5282 families severely affected as their homes were completely washed away. The livelihoods of many people depend on agriculture and fishing, many families have left this area or shifted to safer locations or moved to other places in the state to live with friends and families elsewhere. A HF/VHF station was set up at this location operated by Mohan, VU2MYH.



Mr. Mohan, VU2MYH at Jogeshgunj



Mr. Jose Jacob, VU2JOS at Kalitala

Kalitala Panchayat consists of 3 Villages viz Kalitala, Shamson Nagar and Pargonti, located on an island on the South Eastern tip of North 24 Parganas District adjacent to Sundarban Tiger Reserve Forest has population of nearly 21,000. People stayed in temporary shelters on elevated road. Relief material is brought through river from Hingalganj Block Office and other places and distributed by Panchayath and other NGOs on a daily basis. A Community kitchen is operating near Panchayath office. The medical camp reported many cases of diarrhea. Kalitala was among the farthest village from the Block HQ. Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, handled Ham Radio messages on HF /

VHF from there requesting drinking water, food, shelter, medicines etc. On 7th June 09, there was an alert for severe high tide in the area. Fortunately, the high tide did not rise to any danger level. The Station worked on 12V battery as this village has no electricity.

Several Ham volunteers from Kolkata and other places were also involved in the Aila relief communications some of them to positions in other affected locations Viz. Mr.Subhadeep Chatterjee VU2CSB, Mr. Satyarup Mandal VU3SCM, Mr. Swapan Dhara VU3SJR in Sandeshkali, Mr. Parag Ranjan VU3RUO in Dhulduli, and Mr. Anupam Biswas VU3BIS in Dhamakali of North 24 Paraganas District. Mr. Tanmay Chakraborty VU3SQY, Mr. Tapas



L to R: Sunil-VU2SYD, Deepak-VU3PHH, Jyoti Chakravarthy - VU3BGI, Yamini-VU2YAM, Bhanu-VU2BL, Jose Jacob -VU2JOS

Chakraborty VU2TKC, Mr.Anand Bose VU2AMB and other members of Indian Wave of Amateur Radio operated the HF 20M MFJ QRP donated by QRP-ARCI from Goshaba in South 24 Paraganas District. Mr. Sunil VU2SYD, Mr. Subhash Chandra VU3SUY and Hams from other states and regions like VU2NRO / VU3LMS & VU2JMA from NIAR HQ in Hyderabad and Mr.Sangeet VU2CEO were on standby for relay of messages.



LtoR: Bhanu-VU2BL, Yamini-VU2YAM meet with IWAR members Tanmoy-VU3SQY, Nilendu Ghosh -VU3PFX, Deepak-VU3PHH, Tapas Chakraborty- VU2TKC

Agencies conducting Aila relief activities including Govt. of West Bengal appreciated the dedicated service of amateur radio and Ham volunteers as our teams returned to their bases on 11th June.

On behalf of National Institute of Amateur Radio, I wish to thank District Administration and Government of West Bengal and particularly Hams from West Bengal for their tremendous support the activity.

Amateur Radio demonstrations at NIAR HQ, Hyderabad

Visit of TRK Engineering students	Visit of Srinidhi Institute of Science & Technology students
A group of 20 students of TRK Engineering College visited NIAR on 18.6.09. A demonstration on amateur radio technology was shown to them.	The students of Srinidhi Institute of Science & Technology visited NIAR on 18.6.09. A demonstration on amateur radio technology was shown to them.

Demo at Engineering Staff College

A demonstration of amateur radio technology was conducted at Engineering Staff College of India on 13th April 2009 to the participants of Training programme on "Disaster Management Electrical Safety Procedures and Accident Prevention" by Mr. S. Ram Mohan, VU2MYH, Ms. Yamini, VU2YAM and Mr. Jose Jacob, VU2JOS. The latest technology "sending e-mails through HF" was also shown to them. All the participants shown lot of interest on the same.

Visit of Infosys Vice President

Mr. Haragopal, VU2HAP, Vice President, Infosys and Mr. Suresh Rajagopalan visited NIAR on 11th May 2009. A power point presentation and demonstration was shown to them.

World Amateur radio day celebrations - A report by Mr. Satyapal, VU2FI, Director, IIH, Bangalore

The Indian Institute of Hams, Bangalore organized a series of events in commemorating with the World Amateur radio day celebrations-2009.

A lecture and demonstration on amateur radio was organized at B.V. Bhoomaraddi College of Engineering & Technology, Hubli on 4. 4.09. Over 150 students participated.	A lecture and demonstration on amateur radio was organized at BMS Institute of Technology, Yelahanka, Bangalore. Over 200 students participated.
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"AT9RS" IOTA DXPEDITION



Grandi Island is a tiny uninhabited Island located on the coast Goa, Western India. Its coordinates are 14.92 N – 15.77 N and 73.67 E – 74.07 E. Occasionally local people visit here for picnics and snorkeling. Navy carries out naval exercises here including firing of weapons. It is part of the North Goan group of Islands of IOTA AS-177. It was activated for the first time with the special call sign AT9RS during April 5 to 8, 2009. The following 6 members of German DX Federation (GDXF), National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) and local hams participated in it.

1. YL Yamini, VU2YAM
2. OM Frank, DL4KQ/VU3FRK
3. OM Sarat, VU3RSB
4. OM Jose, VU2JOS
5. OM Manju, VU2SMS
6. OM Roni, VU2ROE

The event coincided with the silver jubilee celebrations of NIAR for promoting Amateur Radio activity in the country.



YL Yamini, VU2YAM operating SSB

Three members Yamini, Sara and Jose traveled from Hyderabad to Goa by car with lot of equipments from NIAR and Sara. It took about 16 hrs to reach Goa and met Frank and XYL who were already there by then.

The team stayed at a hotel near the Dona Paula Jetty in Panaji. It was by hired boat that the team traveled to Grandi Island. As nothing was available on the island they had to arrange A to Z from the main land. These included the 2 generators, Kerosene, Plastic tents, Tables & Chairs, Food items and even drinking water.

Bamboos were taken on loan from the Police HQ. The local hams Manju and Roni coordinated well for arranging all the items.

Team started in the early morning of 5th April 2009 with all the items from the Dona Paula Jetty for the island and it took just over an hour to reach the island. On the way they could see the other islands and some times Dolphins also. Occasionally water was splashing into the boat. There is no berthing place on the island. Its surrounded by rocks. The boat carefully went to a narrow strip of land available and team unloaded the items. Due to shortage of man power it was a Herculean task to take all the items uphill.

Under the leadership of Frank, two separate shacks for SSB and CW were erected on the rocky hill top. The following equipments were used.



OM Jose, VU2JOS

1. SSB: Electrocraft K2 and accessories
2. CW : Elecktocraft K3 and accessories



OM Frank, DL4KQ

An Icom IC 7000 was used as standby. The generators were stationed mid way between the shacks. The antennas used were multi band Verticals and Dipoles fixed on tall telescopic fiber masts. After the shacks were set up, the two tents were put up which gave welcome relief from the heavy sun. It was an exhausting job and all worked hard. It was good team play. Though there is vegetation on the other part of the island, we had put up the shacks in the plain areas but with full of rocks. In between the two shacks there is a narrow path which was very dangerous to cross. On both its sides

are deep gorges.

Due to logistics of the boat trip, 24 hour shifts were scheduled for the operators. The boat used to come every day in the morning with new operators and left with the operators who were on duty since the previous day.

Frank and Jose operated in CW while the four others were in SSB. A couple of times the SSB tent collapsed due to the winds and was put back again. The tents put up were very small and it was indeed very hot inside during day time. There were rocks every where and one had to be careful while moving around.



OM Sara, VU3RSB

There was lot of problems to tune the antennas at first. It was also found that the kerosene generators were making lot of RF interference on the bands. On the first night, the two generators broke down and Yamini and Jose had to sit idle. The next day 3rd generator was brought as replacement. On the last day the automatic antenna tuner of the CW shack also burnt off also.



OM Rony, VU2ROE

Band conditions were average and team made a moderate 2800 QSOs from all over the world. They operated mainly on 7, 14 and 18 MHz bands. Local hams like VU2ACK and VU2JAB visited our expedition along with family members of the local hams.

There is a light house on the other part of the island. Contacts made from here are eligible for World Light House on the Air (WLOTA) programs. The WLOTA number is 1641 and already they have given validation for this expedition.

There is Christian Cross on the island. Sometimes people used to light candles there. Besides some sea birds, we could not find any other birds or animals on the island. We could see some fishing and tourist boats passing by our island from time to time.

The event was covered by the local Doordarshan TV station in Panaji, thanks to Manju who works there. There were some problems with the operating licences which were sorted out by NIAR. Special thanks to WPC for issuing the special call signs and also to GDXF, NIAR, VU2SMS and VU2ROE and other sponsors.

The successful two way radio contacts made by the team explained the level of competence among hams to establish their radio stations, enhance skills for operating Amateur Radio stations for emergency communication from a remote location and spread international goodwill.



OM Manju, VU2SMS

About Goa:

Goa was a Portuguese colony for 450 years located in the West coast of India, South of Mumbai and became part of India on 19 December 1961. It has a separate culture of its own. Panaji is the capital which is also known as Panjim. The city in contrast is full of churches and bars. The 456 year old body of St. Francis Xavier is preserved in a church here. With its many beaches, it's a popular tourist destination. Fenny, the liquor made from cashew is famous here. There are floating casinos and hotels in Panaji. The local language is Konkani. Marathi and English is also spoken and few also speak Portuguese.



హ్యామ్ రేడియోలో యామిని

| లిమ్కాబుక్లో... |

నగర యువతికి స్థానం

హ్యామ్ రేడియో, హైదరాబాద్

లిమ్కాబుక్ ఆఫ్ నేషనల్ రికార్డు-2009లో నగర యువతి స్థానం సంపాదించింది. నేషనల్ అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియోలో అంతర్జాతీయ సమన్వయ కర్తగా పనిచేస్తున్న యామిని ఈ రికార్డు సాధించిన తొలి భారతీయ మహిళగా గుర్తింపు పొందారు. అమెరికా కోస్టారికా ద్వీపంలో హ్యామ్ రేడియో ఆఫ్ రేట్ కేసేండుకు వెళ్లిన ఛాందంలో ఈమె తొలి మహిళ. 2008 ఫిబ్రవరి 9 నుంచి 13 వరకు ఎముకలు కొరికే చలి, చుట్టూ సముద్రం భయపెట్టే హార్మోన్ల వేడలు మధ్య అమె ఈ సాహస యాత్రను దిగ్విజయంగా పూర్తిచేశారు.

అనుమతి కష్టం

జారాసకపాఠ్య... పేరు విచగానే జైత్రసాధ్య గుర్తుకొచ్చాయి కదూ! ఆ దీనిమా దిగ్విజయించి కూడా ఈ కోస్టారికా ద్వీపంలోనే. అట్టడకు వెళ్లేందుకు అట్టడ ప్రయత్నం అనుమతి తొరకటమే కష్టం అలాంటి చోట ఎదు రొకటయిందేమీ అనుమతి పొందిన తొలి భారతీయురాలిగా విజయం సాధించింది యామిని. కొంతసేపై నుంచి ఆమెలేకే చేసినాళ్ళ ఓపెన్ హింట్లో ఉండాల్సి వచ్చేది. ఈ సాహసాన్ని మెచ్చిన అమెరికా ఐంగారు పతకంతో సత్కరించింది.



ఈహించలేదు! యామిని

అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియోలో కొత్త పరిజ్ఞానం దేశానికి పరిచయం చేయటం మరలిపోలేదు అనుమానం. ఈ రికార్డు సాధిస్తూనే మాత్రం అనుకోలేదు. అంతర్జాతీయంగా పలు దేశాల మహిళలు అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియో నిపుణులుగా పేరు ప్రఖ్యాతులు సాధించారు. భారతదేశం నునే ఎవరూ లేరనే భావ ఉండేది. మన దేశంలో కూడా ఉన్నారని నిరూపించాలనే ఎందుకున్నాం. దాన్ని ఎలాగైనా సాధించాలనే తపన నాలో అట్టడికాసాన్ని నింపింది. ఇంటర్నెట్ లేకుండా అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియో ద్వారా ఈ-మెయిల్, పోలోలు పెంపవచ్చు. రేడియో ల్యాండ్లెక్కాన్ ద్వారా పంపే ఈ పరిజ్ఞానం తీసుకు వచ్చా సాహసాల చేసే వాళ్ళ చాలా తక్కువ. ఇది మహిళలు. యువతుల్లో సూపర్ సింపుతుందని అనిపిస్తూ, భారతీయ మహిళ మనోజ్ఞుల్యాన్ని గినిస్ బుక్కు చేరాలనేది నా లక్ష్యం.

28--5--2009

Amateur radio member makes it to the Limca Book



EXPERT BROADCASTER: S. Yamini is credited with several national and international recognitions in amateur radio.

Sadineni Yamini, a member of National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), Hyderabad entered into Limca Book of Records -2009, for being the first Indian woman to participate in an international expedition to an uninhabited, Cocos Island of Costa Rica from February 9 to 13, 2008.

During the trip, Ms. Yamini excelled in using the Earth-Moon-Earth (EME) communication technique, which enables sending

e-mails without Internet from remote locations, said a press release from the institute.

Under the EME technique, radio waves would be shot to moon's surface, which in turn would bounce back and captured by earth-based receivers.

Ms. Yamini is credited with several national and international recognitions in the field of amateur radio and serves as an inspiration for the future AR enthusiasts, it added.

“Sakshi” Telugu News Paper, 26th May 2009

లిమ్కా బుక్ ఆఫ్ రికార్డులో యామిని

హైదరాబాద్, న్యూస్లైన్: హైదరాబాద్లోని నేషనల్ ఇన్స్టిట్యూట్ ఆఫ్ అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియోలో పనిచేస్తున్న ఎస్. యామిని లిమ్కా బుక్ ఆఫ్ రికార్డులో చోటు సంపాదించుకొన్నారు. నేషనల్ రికార్డు -2009 కింద ఈ 22 ఏళ్ల యువతి పేరు నమోదైంది. కాక్స్ ఐర్లాండ్, కాస్టారికా, సెంట్రల్ అమెరికాలో గత ఏడాది జరిగిన అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియో యాత్రలో ఆమె నేషనల్ ఇన్స్టిట్యూట్ ఆఫ్ అమెచ్యూర్ రేడియో తరఫున పాల్గొన్నారు. అమెరికా, ఆసియా, ఐరోపా ఖండాల నుంచి ఈ యాత్రలో పాల్గొన్న 12 మంది బృందంలో యామిని అతి పిన్నవయస్కురాలు కావడం గమనార్హం.



Media Reports on "Aila" cyclone relief communications, West Bengal

<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/06/08/stories/2009060860150500.htm>

Date:08/06/2009 [Andhra Pradesh](#) - [Visakhapatnam](#)

NIAR team takes part in relief work

Staff Reporter

VISAKHAPATNAM: A team from National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), Hyderabad, has been participating in relief operations in West Bengal hit by cyclone Aila in the last week of May.

Ham radio stations have been set up at Barasat District Magistrate Office, Barasat Circuit House, Dhanekhali, Dulduli, Sandeshkhali, Hingalgunj Block Development Office, Jogesganj, Kalitala of North 24 Parganas District and Rangabelia of South 24 Parganas District with relay stations at NIAR, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Belur and Kerala and other places across India, according to Arya Ghosh, a life member of NIAR.

Mr. Ghosh said he had spoken to the West Bengal Minister of State for Civil Defence Srikumar Mukherjee and told him about the role Ham radio operators could play in the relief operations. A team from NIAR, Hyderabad, had met the minister at Kolkata on June 2 and provided the necessary support to operate from various cyclone-hit parts.

Ham radio operation is pursued as a hobby after obtaining licence by passing an examination conducted by the Ministry of Communications of the Government of India.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HAM radio team tunes into relief work- 1 Jun 2009, 0354 hrs IST, Suman Chakraborti, TNN

KOLKATA: A three-member team of the Hyderabad-based National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) will reach the city by Monday night with HAM radio equipment to help the state government in relief work. The team has been requested by the state government to set up makeshift radio stations in the flood-affected areas of South and North 24-Parganas.

NIAR director Ram Mohan said they had received a letter from the North 24-Parganas district magistrate's office, asking them to send HAM radio equipment to the flood-affected areas of the district to help them in conducting relief and rescue work.

"We received a letter from the additional DM of North 24-Parganas to assist them in the flood-affected areas of the district. We are immediately sending a team to Kolkata with satellite radio equipment," said Ram Mohan.

He added that since a week has passed since the storm Aila hit the state, they were not quite informed as to the present situation. "We have been informed that the situation in some of the flood-affected places of the district has improved a little. We are trying to keep in touch with the district administration to keep us informed on the present situation. Nevertheless, we are sending our team and equipment," Ram Mohan said.

HAM radio expert Ambarish Nag Biswas, who has been selected as one of the coordinators to monitor the temporary radio stations, said they would help the government keep track of the present situation. "Apart from informing those who are engaged in rescue and relief work as to where people might still be stranded, we would be able to keep track as to whether any outbreak of disease occurs or whether anybody goes missing. These problems occur when the water level starts receding. We would subsequently be able to inform the DM immediately so that they can take quick action. We have been asked to set up these temporary radio stations at Dhamakhali, Kultoli and Sandeshkhali and we would have to move on as per situation," Biswas said.

Two others Parag Ranjan Das and Subhadip Chatterjee would also be in the team. The team will use VHF and HF frequency to keep track of the situation. (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Kolkata/HAM-radio-team-tunes-into-relief-work/articleshow/4601551.cms>)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Relief workers bogged down by fatigue-3 Jun 2009, 0417 hrs IST, Suman Chakraborti, TNN

KOLKATA: Relief workers, who got down to work a day after Cyclone Aila hit, are showing signs of fatigue. This is resulting in the uneven distribution of relief materials in the flood-affected areas like Sandeshkhali.


The teams are working hard, but still failing to distribute relief equally at places where they have managed to reach. As a result, while some victims have received relief materials repeatedly, many are yet to get anything at all.

Officials keeping track of relief distribution through the HAM radio network have informed authorities about the relief workers tiring out. A fresh batch of workers are being sent to the affected areas.

Officials keeping track of relief distribution said the teams moving around on speedboats in the worst-affected areas were getting puzzled. "Some families are managing to collect relief materials repeatedly while there are many, particularly the elderly and children, who are not receiving relief at all. This is either because they are reaching late or have got stranded far away from relief distribution points. It is practically not possible for relief workers to keep a continuous check on who receives the materials repeatedly and who are being deprived," said an official.

Members of the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) reached the city on Monday night with equipment to assist the relief workers. "They are on standby and we would take their help according to the situation. We are moving along with the medical team in the affected areas like Dhaniakhali, Dulduli, Nebukhali, Hathgacha and also in various places in Sandeshkhali-I and II," said Ambarish Nag Biswas, one of the coordinators keeping track of the situation on the HAM radio network.

The HAM radio coordinators said it would have been helpful if they had been provided with some funds to work with. "We are spending our own money to work in the affected areas," said an official. (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Kolkata-/Relief-workers-bogged-down-by-fatigue/articleshow/4610733.cms>)

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Radio hams to rescue

Amitabh Bachchan is one. So is Rahul Gandhi. And we aren't talking politics or films. They are radio hams — amateur radio operators who facilitate a two-way communication using radio waves. Most radio hams have full-fledged jobs and ham only as a hobby. One needs to clear an examination and get a licence to become a radio ham. During a disaster, radio hams can play a vital task in helping the administration with the relief operation by opening up a second line of communication.

Twelve radio hams are trying to reach out to Aila-affected areas of Bengal. "Radio hams have helped in disaster management after the Orissa cyclone and the Gujarat earthquake too," said Arya Ghosh, a life member of the National Institute of Amateur Radio in Hyderabad.

After consultation with civil defence minister Srikumar Mukherjee, a number of ham stations have been set up since June 1 in North 24-Parganas (Barasat, Dhanekhali, Dulduli, Sandeshkhali, Jogesganj) and South 24-Parganas (Rangabelia) with relay stations at the institutes in Hyderabad, Calcutta, Belur and Kerala.

During disaster management, radio hams set up a station and keep track of inaccessible areas. "Communication can save many lives. Radio hams are in constant touch with the district administration and keep officials updated about the situation," said Ghosh. Another such group is the Indian Wave of Amateur Radio, whose members were able to establish communication with Aila victims in the ravaged villages of Gosaba, South 24-Parganas.

"A 19-member team reached Gosaba on May 26, a day after the cyclone. Their job is to determine which remote areas need drinking water, food and medical supervision. They inform the local people or the district administration through other ham stations in centrally located areas," says Malay Mukherjee, a member of the group. (http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090607/jsp/calcutta/story_11069221.jsp)

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