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India gets 'most modern' tsunami warning set-up

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Three years after tsunami battered many coastal parts of the country, India today unveiled the "most modern" tsunami early warning centre that will issue alert for the killer waves within 13 minutes of an earthquake.

The National Early Warning System for Tsunami and Storm Surges in the Indian Ocean was dedicated to the nation by the Minister of Earth Sciences, Kapil Sibal, at a ceremony attended by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy, top scientists and senior government officials.

The tsunami warning cen-

tre has been set up at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) here.

"We now require about seven minutes to analyse the earthquake data and another six minutes to run simulation models to generate alerts," Sibal said, adding the scientists were working to reduce this time by half.

Peter Koltermann, head, Tsunami Co-ordination Unit Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO, described the system as the "most modern" in the world.

"The Indian system is completely different from the Pacific Tsunami Warning System. It is the most modern system as INCOIS has adopted

a multi-hazard approach in developing it," Koltermann said.

The warning centre, which has been established at a cost of Rs 125 crore, will also issue alerts for typhoons and storm surges that wreak havoc along the eastern coastline.

"We had promised the country to put in place a tsunami warning system soon after the December 2004 tsunami devastated many coastal parts of the country. We deliver the system today," Sibal said.

The warning centre has been established by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Space and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.