

CHAPTER III

THE DYNAMICS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

IN ASIA

A. Disaster Happens in Asia

Asian Continent, actually one of the largest continent and also the continent with the most population in the world, is a continent with the very high risk of natural disasters . Several factors contributed to the high risk of natural disasters in Asia is that the region of Asia is the meeting point of major earth plates in the world such as the Indo Australian plates, Eurasia and the Pacific Asia region which has an earthquake potential. In addition, there are some of Asian countries that have mountains or active volcanoes and there are also some Asian countries that have islands of geographical conditions. These countries are at high risk of cyclones and floods. Moreover, according to a survey conducted by British survey agency put Bangladesh as the country that has most risk of natural disasters and extreme weathers which is followed by China, Philippines and Indonesia.²⁴

With the three countries in Asia that are included into the top five countries with the highest population densities in the world, namely China,

²⁴ "12 Countries At 'Extreme Risk' Of Natural Disasters" (accessed June 07, 2012); available from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/06/09/12-countries-at-extreme-r_n_605924.html#s98112&title=Bangladesh,

Indonesia and India, it makes the impact of disasters on the continent of Asia

often resulting in a very high number of victims.

Table 3.1

Popular name	Date of event	Type of hazard	Main cities affected	Total number of deaths	Total number of affected	Total damages USS billion
Japan earthquake	11 March 2011.	Earthquake and tsunami	Sendai, Ichihara, Fukushima, Minamisanriku, Onagawa, Rikuzentakata, Ofunato, Kesennuma	5178 (as of 17.03.11)	Not yet known	Not yet known
Sichuan earthquake	12 May 2008.	Earthquake	Beichuan, Dujiangyan, Shifang, Mianzhu, Juyuan, Jianguo, Mianyang, Chengdu, Qionglai, Deyang	87476	45976596	85
Cyclone Nargis	2 May 2008.	Tropical cyclone	Yangon	138366	2420000	4

Java earthquake	27 May 2006.	Earthquake	Yogyakarta	5778	3177923	3.1
Kashmir earthquake	8 October 2005.	Earthquake	Muzaffarabad	73338	5128000	5.2
Mumbai floods	26 July 2005.	Flood	Mumbai	1200	20000055	3.3
South Asian tsunami	26 December 2004.	Earthquake and tsunami	Banda Aceh, Chennai (some damages)	226408	2321700	9.2
Gujurat earthquake	26 January 2001.	Earthquake	Bhuj, Ahmedabad	20005	6321812	2.6

(Sumber : world disaster report OCHA 2010)

Chairman of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency of the United Nations (UN), John Holmes, states that countries in Asia need to build capacity to prepare before a disaster occurs, given the region is prone to disasters. John Holmes also stated that 70 percent of the world's natural disasters occur in Asia regions.²⁵ Of the total number of natural disasters in Asia in the period 2004 until 2011, 40% of them were flood, and then followed by landslides, earthquakes and forest fires. Flood is the most frequent natural disaster that hit countries in Asia, based on the geographical conditions in the countries of Asia and there are lots of tropical rainforests. Many forests are not accompanied by public awareness in keeping the environmental balance. Even the most frequently occurrence is the deforestation that destroys the forest functions as a groundwater reservoir. For example, large floods that often occurs in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Bangladesh.

The high risk of natural disasters in those Asia countries will more clearly be presented by the author with the exposure data on the types of natural disasters in Asia regions and the countries affected by the disasters. Type of disasters in question, among others are; drought, earthquakes, floods, storms, forest fires, volcanic eruptions, and others.

²⁵ "70% bencana alam terjadi di Asia (accessed June 07, 2012); available from: "www.vivanews.com, 15 oktober 2009,

a. Drought

Drought is a common disaster in the southern Asia and middle east region, where the dominant climate in these regions is hot and there are many geographical regions that are in the form of deserts.

However, as the climate changes that swept the world today, drought also extends its area, even to areas which have wide forests, like Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand which were mentioned as an area with huge tropical rainforests in the world.

Droughts can cause damage to agricultural fields, depletion of water reserves to be consumed, even on an extreme scale of dryness that can cause death in human beings, due to the extremely hot weather.

Countries in Asia are often hit by drought including China, where in March 2010 China stated the loss caused by drought in China reached to 2.85 billion dollars.²⁶ Other countries that also often hit by drought are Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and India.

b. Earthquake and Tsunami

An earthquake is a vibration or shock that occurs on the surface of Earth's caused by a tectonic plates activity or volcanic activity. The earthquake caused by the shifting of tectonic plates, called tectonic

²⁶ "CHINA MENJEMPUT BENCANA KEKERINGAN TERPARAH SEPANJANG SEJARAH UMAT MANUSIA" (accessed June 07, 2012); available from <http://looking-news.blogspot.com/2010/04/china-menjemput-bencana-kekeringan.html>, 8 April 2010,

earthquakes while the earthquakes that are caused by volcanic activity are called volcanic earthquakes. In other hand, the tsunami is the rising of sea water caused by seismic activity under the sea. Large earthquakes that occurred in Asia are able to get international attention are the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. On 26 December 2004 an earthquake struck the Indian Ocean under the sea with a magnitude of 9.2 on Richter scale, and caused tremendous damage effects. The starting point of an earthquake occurred around the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, and the tsunami waves were generated by the earthquake also caused damage in Indonesia and some other countries like Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Somalia, Myanmar, Maldives, Malaysia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, South Africa, Yemen, Kenya, and Madagascar with a variety of different levels of damage.

In addition, a large earthquake and tsunami had also hit Japan on March 11th, 2011. The Japanese earthquake also caused a tremendous impact because of the earthquake and damaged a Japanese nuclear facility resulted in the release of large amounts of radiation in the air in Japan regions.

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On October 28th, 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, at 8:52 pm of the Pakistan time, and measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale and centered on the point of the epicenter 19 km, adjacent to the northeast Muzaffarabat, and 100 km east of the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. Country that most seriously affected Pakistan, where the earthquake had caused 74,698 people confirmed dead in Pakistan.²⁷ The high number of the victims in Pakistan was because the earthquake occurred on Saturday when people have everyday activities such as working and schooling. Pakistan earthquake also caused death in several countries such as Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir that included in the administrative area of western India and China reported 1,400 people died.

c. Flood

Flood is a disaster resulted from a lack of capacity of ground water caused by the deforestation and environmental destruction. Floods occur most frequently in countries of Asia. It is because generally, in Asian region there are many forests and tropical climate with high rainfall intensity.

Floods are common in countries like Thailand, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. The worst flood was recorded in Thailand in

²⁷ BBC News. 2005-11-03 ((accessed June 07, 2012); available from: "Earthquake toll leaps to 73,000"

October and November 2011 where the flood destroyed houses and farms lading killed as many as 427 victim.²⁸

d. Storm

The storm not ordinary storm. The strength of the wind can uproot a tree from its roots, breaking down bridges, and roofs off buildings with ease. Storms are extreme weather, from hail, snowstorms to sandstorms and dust.²⁹ The most destructive storm is a hurricane, or cyclone winds.

The famous storm that hit Asia is Cyclone Nargis, which struck Myanmar in May 2008. This storm caused 85,000 people died and 54,000 people were reported missing.³⁰

B. Model Studies Diplomacy Disaster Functionality

The turn of the 20th century into the 21st century is accompanied by a wide range of issues that arise in the international world. The traditional in the beginning of war was a manifestation of the process in achieving the national interest of a nation's popular in the 19th and 20th, then became unpopular because of the emergence of new issue, such as human rights, and environmental issues.

²⁸ "Banjir Thailand Telan 427 Jiwa" (accessed June 12, 2012); available from: <http://internasional.kompas.com/read/2011/11/02/15185940/Banjir.Thailand.Telan.427.Jiwa,2november.2011>

²⁹ Brian Williams, "Fakta Paling Top: Planet Bumi", Erlangga for Kids, 9797418928, 9789797418922

³⁰ "Cyclone Nargis" (accessed June 12, 2012); available from: http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/news/international/countriesandterritories/myanmar/cyclone_nargis/index.html,

Environmental issues raised related to the higher consciousness of human beings to maintain the continuous nature explored and destroyed by human beings. Natural imbalances then often cause anomalies in the natural system whose output then is the emergence of a natural disaster. Various major natural disasters has given to human a sort of shock therapy for more attention to the preservation of nature.

A wide range of study then emerged to accompany the environmental issues that arise, including the study of disaster diplomacy developed by Ilan Kelman and Mao Weizhun. The essence is the utilization of natural disasters to achieve the national interest of the states. More details are exposed on natural disasters study developed by Kelman and Weizhun.

B.1 Model for Natural Disaster Diplomacy by Kelman

Ilan Kelman in his book "*Island Security and Disaster Diplomacy in the Context of Climate Change*", *Les Cahiers de la Securite*, start a discussion about disaster diplomacy with questions :

*"To define and explore disaster diplomacy, Kelman and Koukis asked the question 'Do natural disasters induce international cooperation amongst countries that have traditionally been "enemies"? Could disaster-related activities, pre-disaster and post-disaster, positively affect relations amongst states which would not normally be prone to such cooperation? The term 'enemy' thus has a wide remit which is not confined to violent conflict, but which refers to states which have not been collaborating diplomatically or politically.*³¹

³¹Kelman, Ilan "Island security and disaster diplomacy in the context of climate change (accessed June 07, 2012); available from: "www.disasterdiplomacy.org/project.html,

Questions raised by Kelman is a study that developed representatively about disaster diplomacy. Kelman believes that natural disasters can not only be viewed as a negative event that is only destructive. According to Kelman, natural disasters can be used as an opportunity to develop a country's diplomatic position with other countries; various cases can be used as a precedent for the development of disaster diplomacy studies in which the two countries traditionally hostile then after the disaster diplomacy, the two countries showed a positive development.

"Post-disaster cooperation may highlight the ability of the rival states' government officials to work together in common cause; positive gestures of support in the wake of a disaster by one rival may inspire reciprocity on the part of the aid recipient, which in turn may initiate a virtuous cycle, known as "tit-for-tat disaster diplomacy".³²

Peacemaking Process Led by People Initiative

The peace process between the two traditionally hostile countries after a natural disaster, could be in two ways as described by Kelman,

"In the wake of a natural catastrophe, disaster or disaster-related activities can in principle prompt peacemaking between rivals through government and people-led activities."³³

Although the disaster diplomacy which has been implemented is not capable of bringing the hostile countries to the practice of diplomacy towards the reconciliation that is applied, at least they are able to open the way towards peace.

³² Kelman.Ilan "Island security and disaster diplomacy in the context of climate change (accessed June 13, 2012); available from: www.disasterdiplomacy.org/project.html,

³³ Akcinaroglu. Seden," Natural Disasters and Peacemaking between Interstate Rivals" (accessed June 13, 2012); available from: www.disasterdiplomacy.org

The road to peace can be reached through awareness of citizens of the disputed countries by showing a desire to open the way for peace toward policy makers.

Good intentions from one of the countries to help the country's enemies affected by natural disasters can change the image in the eyes of donor countries citizens who are hit by natural disasters.

B.2. Model Study of Natural Disaster Diplomacy by Weizhun and Tianshu

A study developed by Mao and Que Weizhun Tianshu in his book entitled "*Disaster Diplomacy:*

A New Diplomatic Approach?" explains that "*Civilization and ingenuity are the inherent demands of diplomacy.*

As we are in a world where disasters occur frequently, it is on the agenda how to deal with the relations between the state hit by disasters and other states in order to stimulate the efficacy of diplomacy better. Disaster Diplomacy is an optional approach for both the state hit by disasters and others. The practice of Disaster Diplomacy has a great influence and actual values on improving national and international interests. Disaster Diplomacy is flexible and multiform yet uncertain and there are some restrictions in the process of diplomatic practice. Disaster Diplomacy can also promote the Chinese role "as a responsible and powerful country".³⁴

According to Weizhun and Tianshu, natural disasters is an option for the affected country to make a diplomatic move that aims to achieve national interests. Furthermore, for a country that is not yet affected by natural disasters but has the interests of the country or the interests of nature imagery in the international forum, natural disasters can be used as a way to achieve it.

³⁴ "Disaster Diplomacy Publication (accessed June 14, 2012); available from: "www.disasterdiplomacy.org."

A case was then developed by Weizhun and Tianshu, where they argued that, the progress of China in the last ten years can not be separated from the disaster diplomacy measures taken by Chinese government. By submitting a number of international aid and rescue teams to the countries affected by the disasters.

C. The implementation model of Disaster Diplomacy in Asia

Asian continent in the preceding chapter has been described as a continent that has a very high risk of natural disasters, thus these countries in Asia should further be aware and prepared to enhance the countries' capacity to deal with situations of natural disasters, to study on disaster diplomacy and give more options to the countries affected not to only be frustrated by the disaster but to rise to make the process of disaster diplomacy to achieve a positive value of the natural disasters that occur. Some countries in Asia that have implemented the disaster diplomacy study include:

a. Disaster Diplomacy in India and Pakistan

The practice of disaster diplomacy has been applied by the government of India in case of natural disasters in the form of an earthquake that hit Pakistan in 2005. As mentioned above in the discussion of the types of disasters that have occurred in Asia, earthquakes in Pakistan has given a very great loss to Pakistan, both of the death of its citizens and infrastructure damages.

India offers a number of assistance to Pakistan in response to the earthquake. However, along with the suspicion that arises from Pakistan, India

delayed shipment of relief on the borders. Pakistan's military recently opened the borders for the aid from India to enter on the 18th of October or ten days after the earthquake. Package of assistance provided by India were in the form of food supplies, medicines and blankets. Politically the two countries have not shown a positive development towards peace, and the practice of disaster diplomacy applied by India against Pakistan was declared a failure in its attempt to establish a reconciliation between the two countries. Here the authors presents the data of the perception of the India and Pakistan people before and after the earthquake.

Table 3.2 The Comparison of Perceptions of Residents of Pakistan and India Before and After the Earthquake.

Case	Positive Coverage	Negative Coverage	Neutral Coverage	Total
India PreDisaster	101 (47%)	63 (29%)	50 (23%)	214
India PostDisaster	58 (25%)	83 (35%)	95 (40%)	236
Pakistan PreDisaster	89 (46%)	52 (27%)	53 (27%)	194
Pakistan PostDisaster	56 (29%)	46 (24%)	92 (47%)	194

(www.disasterdiplomacy.org)

b. Disaster Diplomacy in China and Taiwan.

China as one of the pioneers who implements the disaster diplomacy in Asia, both in its efforts to resolve the problems between the two countries and also in order to achieve economic and international political support.

The process of disaster diplomacy between China and Taiwan have long been made by both countries in the conflict between the two countries motivated the desire to break Taiwan away from the PRC. Disaster diplomacy is seen by the two countries to exchange aid in the disaster that occurred in both countries.

Related to the chi-chi earthquake that occurred in Taiwan on 21 September 1999, the government of China through the China Red Cross provided assistance that worth as much as 100,000 dollars and logistic assistance that worth as much as 500,000 yuan. Offers from China after the chi-chi earthquake relief is an illustration of the importance of an understanding of the disaster diplomacy of both countries.³⁵ However Taiwan considers China's offer of assistance from the PRC government as efforts to take over ownership and control of the islands of Taiwan.³⁶

Suspicion of the Taiwan against China's intentions behind the supply of natural disaster relief gradually decreased after some time the two countries together helping each other when natural disasters occur in both countries.

³⁵ Prater,Carla. "China-Taiwan Disaster Diplomacy (accessed June 16, 2012); available from: www.disasterdiplomacy.org,

³⁶ Ibid.

Some examples of cooperation between Taiwan and China in terms of natural disasters handling include:

1. Drought struck Taiwan on 5 May 2002, and Taiwan bought water from China to provide its clean water.
2. Taiwan Red Cross donated U.S. \$ 100,000 in response to floods that occurred in China on July 7, 2002.
3. Taiwan rescue team saved 130 Chinese fishermen that were adrift at sea on 9 July 2002.
4. Related to the earthquake in China on 12 May 2008 which killed 62,000 people southern China, the Taiwan government, citizens of Taiwan and raise Taiwan ex-military personnel who then distributed aid to China. Assistance from the Government of China was replied with gratitude from Taiwan.

The process of ongoing disaster diplomacy is believed to provide a positive impact on the continuing process of reconciliation between the two countries. Taipei and Beijing relation is believed to continue to improve with the continued cooperation between the two countries in process of handling natural disasters both in Taiwan and in China.

c. Implementation of Disaster Diplomacy in China

China has a long history of civilization and the civilization of China is estimated to have been started since 5,000 years ago, reflected from the maturing of Chinese civilization and the famous culture of China that is also known to

Europe through the story of Marco Polo brought by the Europeans interested in the cultural make-owned China.

The amount of civilizations in the past owned China then dimmed some by tragedy as the application of political isolation and the Japanese occupation until now has recorded by the history of China known as the worst colonialist ever.

China's economy in the past also experienced a difficult period in which hunger was widespreading and frequent natural disasters occurred in China.

Europe began to help China as there was a high intensity of natural disasters occurred in China, through various programs like the Christian charity (Charity Cristian) was the first aid organizations that can penetrate the isolation of China, where the organization sent a missionary program of the 16th century, and until the 18 th century more than 800 missionaries have been sent to China³⁷. In the era of the missionaries in charge as the main character who runs aid programs in China.

European missionaries who run programs in China inspire the Chinese government to establish a humanitarian aid agency itself, on 26 January 1878, China officially established Disaster Relief, the institution founded by the missionaries, diplomats and businessmen. The agency aimed to raise money and food delivery. In addition, in 1931, China also established the China International Famine Relief Commission (CIFRC). the agency played an extraordinary role in

³⁷ Weizhun,mao, "European influences in Chinese humanitarian practices(accessed June 27, 2012); available from:" <http://www.revue-emulations.net/archives/n7/weizhun>

the fight against famine in the first half of the 20th century. CIFRC became a modern institution that was more professional in carrying out assistance programs. These institutions were still functioning until the Japanese invade China in 1937.

China actually has a disaster management system that has become a tradition during the reign of ancient China. The old disaster management system owned by China inspires the decision-makers in China to develop a system that is more modern confectionary disaster and comprehensive. China disaster management system is also used as a media of soft power diplomacy to achieve the international arena.

China became very active in attempting to plug in the world of international hegemony, began in the mid-1990s, while the implementation of disaster diplomacy by China that most felt was when the earthquake and tsunami disaster occurred in Asia in 2004. China sent some large number of aids to the countries affected, and as a result, it lifts the image of china. China in the economic field is also allowed by the ASEAN countries to join the free trade forum initiated by ASEAN is the entrance of China's products to the ASEAN countries.