

Hurricanes delay Grenada's observance of World Tsunami Awareness Day

The recent passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria has delayed Grenada's planning to observe World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 05).

According to the Acting Disaster Management Coordinator, Samantha Dickson, the National Disaster Management Agency (NaDMA) had plans to host a recognition event for the Tsunami Ready Programme in the Northern coast area on Sunday November 05 - but plans changed as the team from Puerto Rico is now expected to arrive in Grenada the last week in November, to continue the planning process.

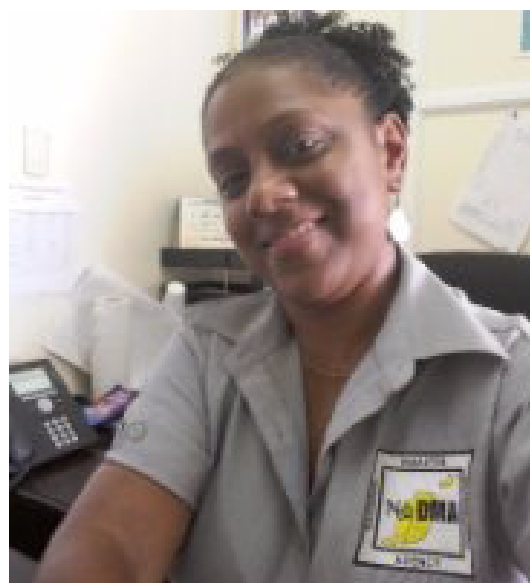
She said the planning will be done with a hope that the recognition event can be hosted in early January 2018.

Coordinator Dickson recalled that earlier in 2017,

NaDMA participated in the regional activity, "Caribe Wave," and reached about 21,000 persons via email and 200,000 via texts, which were sent out by three telecommunications providers. In addition, 1000 persons evacuated during the exercise - in the northern coast and Carriacou. She explained that this was the education and awareness component that has continued into the Tsunami Ready Programme, which is funded by USAID to the tune of US\$40,000.

A tsunami is a chain of huge waves created by disturbance created underwater. These waves are normally associated with earthquakes taking place under or around the ocean.

In regards to Grenada's ongoing drive to bring about tsunami awareness, Mrs Dickson told *The Grenadian Voice* that



Acting Disaster Management Coordinator, Samantha Dickson

"the northern coast is a start - there will be house to house education, village meetings, continued participation in activities like Caribe Wave, erection of billboards and labeling of evacuation routes. The northern coast will be the start and then the Agency has to seek funding to roll out similar activities throughout the country."

According to information from the University of the West Indies (UWI) Seismic Research Centre website, in the past 500 years, there have been 10 confirmed earthquake-generated tsunamis in the Caribbean Basin with four causing fatalities. An estimated 350 people in the Caribbean were killed by these events.

The Website said that during the 500-year period of written Caribbean history, tsunamis have inflicted a small amount of losses compared to other hazards such as windstorms, earthquakes and volcanic activity.

The Research Centre said the Eastern Caribbean islands lie in a setting where major structural changes are occurring in the Earth's crust. All known sources capable of causing tsunamis (that is, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides) occur within striking distance of the Eastern Caribbean, and there are also distant sources across the Atlantic. Since the islands lie in an area of relatively high earthquake activity for the Caribbean, the most likely tsunamis to affect the Eastern Caribbean are those which can be triggered by shallow earthquakes (<50km depth), in the region, greater than

magnitude 6.5.

In December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly designated November 05 as World Tsunami Awareness Day to create awareness amongst people about the risks associated with the tsunami, the preventive measures to be taken and to reduce the number of affected people when a tsunami strikes.

World Tsunami Awareness Day is the brainchild of Japan, which due to its repeated experiences, has over the years built up major expertise in areas such as tsunami early warning, public action and building back better after a disaster to reduce future impacts.

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011, local governments in Japan have been supporting projects for group relocation. Homes which are vulnerable to tsu-

namis are no longer being built; and maps, evacuation routes and tsunami evacuation towers are being erected.

In addition, Japan has pledged \$1.5 million for tsunami awareness and disaster risk information in Asia-Pacific to improve disaster risk information and carry out tsunami-awareness programmes in schools across the Asia-Pacific region. With this support, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will be able to help strengthen early warning and disaster preparedness in 18 countries included in UNDP's '5-10-50' initiative: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

Guy Fawkes remembered in Morne Jaloux

The effigy of Guy Fawkes was again traditionally burned on a bonfire, after some moments of merriment in Morne Jaloux. The name Fawkes became synonymous with a Gunpowder Plot, the failure of which has been commemorated in Britain since November 5, 1605.

The celebration of the death of the man who was part of a plan to assassinate King James I to restore a Catholic monarch to the throne, was started by a British citizen who resided in Morne Jaloux many years ago during the colonial period. Shopkeepers and villagers look forward to the celebration every year as November rolls in. In true carnival style and dancing to the music of Comancheros steelband, the figure is carried through the street to the cemetery where

it is burnt.

This year the celebration was without two key people - Jenifer Mitchell - Bartholomew who was the village seamstress responsible for making a new suit every year for Guy Fawkes. She passed away recently. Her husband who also passed away about two years ago was in charge of dancing the effigy through the street.

The story of Guido Fawkes who is now commonly known as Guy Fox, dates back to April 13 when he was born in York. His father died when he was eight years old, after which his mother married a recusant Catholic. Fawkes converted to Catholicism and left for the continent, where he fought in the Eighty Years' War on the side of Catholic Spain against Protestant Dutch reformers in the Low



The late Jenifer Mitchell-Bartholomew and her husband

Countries. He travelled to Spain to seek support for a Catholic rebellion in England without success. He later met Thomas Wintour, with whom he returned to England.

Wintour introduced Fawkes to Robert Catesby, who planned to assassinate the King. The plotters leased an undercroft beneath the House of Lords, and Fawkes was placed in



The effigy of Guido Fawkes in Morne Jaloux

charge of the gunpowder they stockpiled there. Prompted by the receipt of an anonymous letter, the authorities searched Westminster Palace during the early hours

of November 5, and found Fawkes guarding the explosives. Over the next few days, he was questioned and tortured and eventually confessed. Immediately before his execution on

January 31, 1606, Fawkes fell from the scaffold where he was to be hanged and broke his neck, thus avoiding the agony of the mutilation that followed.