

Nagapattinam: Waves from the Deep



Screening and Q&A
with the director,
Swarnavel Eswaran
Michigan State University

Friday, May 20th
4:45-6:30 pm
Foster 103



The Indian Ocean Tsunami had a particularly devastating effect on the eastern borders of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India. The documentary *Nagapattinam: Waves from the Deep* focuses on the area of Nagapattinam on the eastern shore of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Nagapattinam was one of the worst affected areas, with 6065 deaths, 75% of which were women and children. Many women who were waiting with children on the shore to receive and market fish, along with the fishermen who were returning home after their catchment, died at Nagapattinam on the 26th of December 2004, between 9 and 9.30 a.m. The fishing villages, Akkaraipettai and Keechankuppam, in particular, bore the brunt of the destruction.



This documentary engages with the efforts of the government and NGOs in their relief work, and with the criticisms surrounding them. For the first time, the Indian government allowed the participation of NGOs in the immediate relief and rehabilitation work. 419 NGOs landed up in Nagapattinam, promising 80 million US dollars to help with the livelihood and permanent shelters for the affected people. In addition to exploring the people invested and committed to relief work, this documentary looks at disaster management through the eyes of everyday people as they cope with the trauma of the 2004 tsunami in the decade that followed.



This event is a part of the Chicago Tamil Forum, and is sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and COSAS.
http://anthropology.uchicago.edu/chicago_tamil_forum/