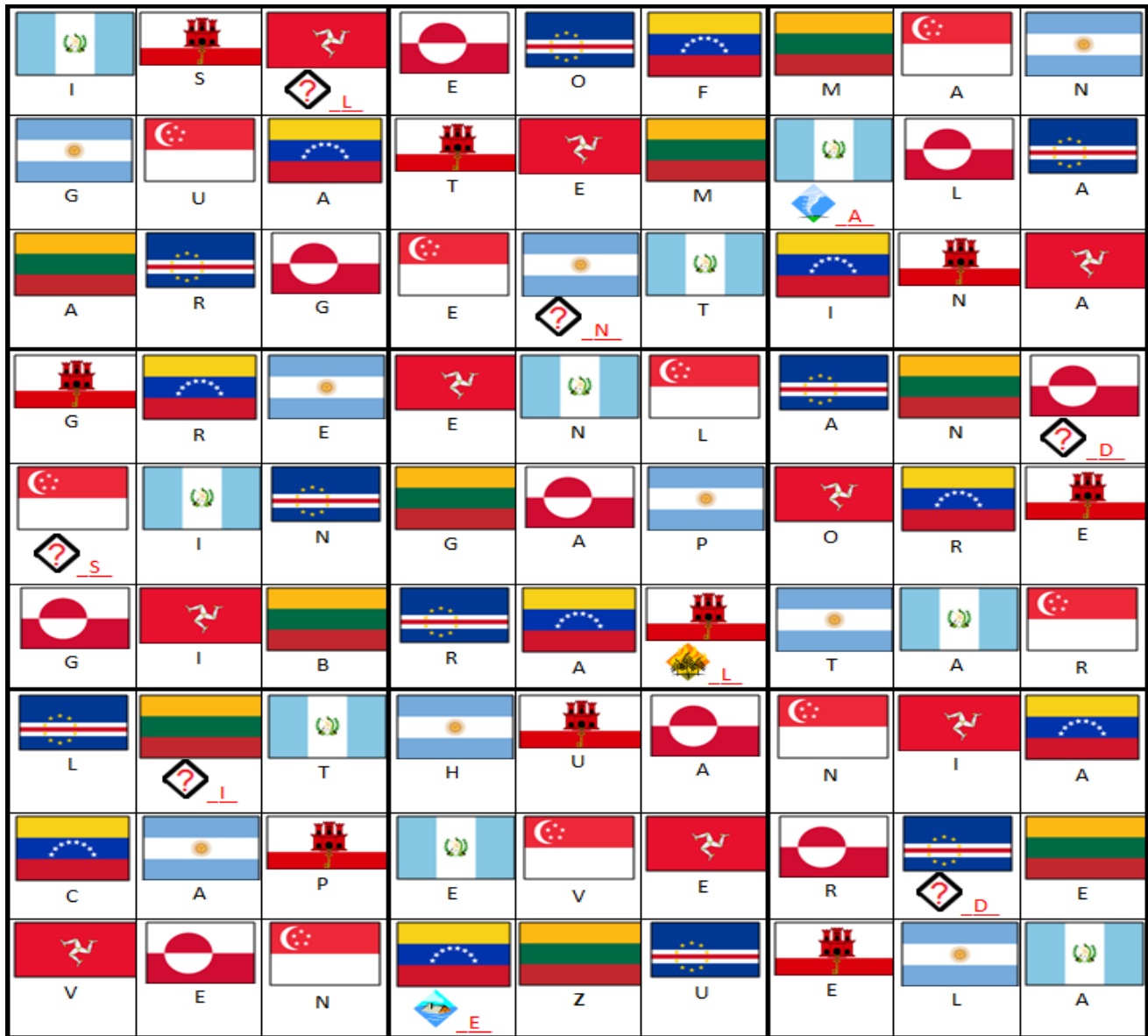


Disaster Strikes!

By Eric Frackleton

The first step of the puzzle is to solve the Sudoku using the standard rules in order to find all the flags. Once all the flags are in place, there is only one possible solution for the placement of the disasters. Since each disaster must be in each row, column, 3x3 square, and country exactly once each, you can find the missing disasters by using logic. (Ex. Cross off any such cell with a disaster in place in the same row/column/3x3/country and add a disaster to a cell if it becomes the only possibility left for its row/column/3x3/country. Repeat until finished.)

Next it just remains to notice that each country represented has a nine letter name and index into the names to get each letter for the solution. This is hinted subtly in the flavor text, which italicizes "disaster countries across row." By writing the name of a country across the row containing its disaster, the letter overlapping the disaster is the one that appears in the solution.



This gives the answer: **LANDSLIDE**.