

Together, Towards a safer India

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Directorate General of Home Guards and Civil Defence initiates Disaster Preparedness activities in Delhi

The Directorate General of Home Guards and Civil Defence, Delhi has initiated the process of sensitizing and orienting its officers and personnel in different facets of disaster management especially imparting training for strengthening their disaster response preparedness. The Directorate has also launched simultaneous initiatives to disseminate the disaster management agenda to the common people through the Civil Defence volunteers' network across the city. In the first instance, a pilot initiative has been started in Dwarka under the nomenclature Dwarka (Earthquake) Disaster Management Awareness Project to involve Resident Welfare Associations, Market Associations, Schools and residential societies and their management committees in disaster preparedness activities.

The first programme was organized on 10th November, 2005 in Dwarka which was inaugurated by Dr. Kiran Bedi, Director-General, Home Guards and Civil Defence and she urged that people should be aware of the threat posed to the safety of their lives and livelihoods due to the high exposure to natural hazards and adopt appropriate risk mitigation and preparedness measures to minimize the impact of disasters. Resource persons under the GoI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management Programme addressed the participants from all walks of life on earthquake safety aspects to ensure that the high-rise buildings, markets, schools and places of public gathering are seismically safe. A practical demonstration on various safer construction techniques, the way to check them and basic search and rescue tips was given and IEC materials on do's and don'ts were also distributed. Follow-up training programmes targeted at common people were also formulated and civil defence trainers are being used for the training programmes.



Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) focus on disaster preparedness and training of industrial personnel in disaster response

Upscaling its association with the disaster management agenda under the joint work plan formulated with the Ministry of Home Affairs and in the light of experience of urban disaster events in certain metropolitan cities during the monsoon season, CII organized a training programme on 24th November, 2005 in New Delhi focusing on first-aid and search and rescue to impart practical training to industrial personnel to strengthen their disaster preparedness and response capability.

Chief Fire Officer, Delhi spoke on search and rescue and preparedness measures for safety against fire hazard and earthquakes, with special reference to high-rise buildings and industrial establishments. A presentation was made on structural and non-structural mitigation measures for earthquake safety enlisting simple steps on the factors to be kept in mind while constructing or buying a house/flat. This was followed by a practical session on Medical First Response: First Aid and CPR conducted by a team of doctors from Apollo hospitals.

Inclusion of DM in Class-IX syllabus in Jharkhand and incorporation of fire safety regulations in Dhanbad Building By-laws

The State Government of Jharkhand has included a text-book on Disaster Management in the class IX syllabus as part of the Social Sciences subject. This will help sensitize the students on mitigating the impact of disasters and usher in a culture of better disaster preparedness in the school as well as among the citizens.

In another initiative, the District Administration of Dhanbad has finalized the Regulations on Fire Safety to be incorporated in the Dhanbad Building By-laws. The Regulations derive guidance from the provisions of the National Building Code relating to Fire Safety. The guidelines have been so designed as to specifically cater to the peculiar requirements of the city of Dhanbad.

Inauguration of District Emergency Operations Center in North-East District, Delhi

A disaster-resistant District Emergency Operations Center (DEOC) was inaugurated in North-East District, Delhi for managing and responding to a disaster situation. This is the first DEOC to be completed in the NCT of Delhi

Updates on GoI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme and the Urban Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction Project (UEVRP)

- **MAHARASHTRA:** On the occasion of the death anniversary of Late Shri Yashwantrao Chavan, the District Administration of Karad district organized a village fair-cum-exhibition targeted primarily at farmers and rural people. The fair-cum-exhibition was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra and attended by dignitaries from all walks of life. During the exhibition, a stall displaying information on various hazards and their mitigation and preparedness measures was put up. In addition, Karad Engineers and Architects Association displayed two models depicting an ordinary load-bearing house and another one built with earthquake-resistant techniques and explained the difference between the two to the common people. A large number of handbills and pamphlets were also distributed for information of the common people and volunteers and masons from different villages expressed their interest in receiving training on safer construction techniques from the District Administration.

The Government of Maharashtra has decided to train a cadre of twenty trained DM master-trainers in each of the fourteen DRM Districts in order to create a pool of DM trainers and to institutionalize the disaster management at the district, block and taluka levels. The first of the programmes in the series was held in Ratnagiri District and further trainings are being organized at taluka and village levels.

- **ASSAM:** A State-level Inter-agency Coordination Meeting was organized to facilitate interaction with representatives of various NGOs and civil society organizations active in the State and supporting the Government's efforts to provide relief to people affected during disasters as also for their rehabilitation. The Meeting was presided over by the Secretary, Department of Revenue, Government of Assam who lauded the efforts of various agencies to enhance preparedness levels among the common people. He stressed that in view of the high vulnerability of the State of Assam, it was imperative that all concerned work in close coordination to mitigate the impact of disasters. After detailed interaction, it was decided that district authorities

should maintain an updated inventory of resources to respond to emergency situations in an effective manner. He also urged voluntary organizations to establish closer cooperation to avoid duplication of efforts and should work along with the District administrations.

In Nalbari district, the District Administration has initiated the process of training of GP Disaster Management Teams (DMTs) in first-aid and search and rescue. Linkages have been established with Red Cross and Home Guards and Civil Defence to provide master-trainers to impart trainings.

▪ **PUNJAB:** With the passage of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 by the Parliament of India, the State Government of Punjab has also decided to adopt the same pattern in the State and has decided to set-up a State Disaster Management Authority under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister.

In order to spread awareness about disaster preparedness, the DM Department has distributed the Punjabi version of the TIFAC CD 'Surviving Nature's Fury' to all the Districts for mass awareness generation.

▪ **KERALA:** Nearly 170 volunteers [120 from National Service Scheme (NSS) and 50 from Nehru Yuvak Kendra Sangthan (NYKS)] were sensitized in two separate programmes in Kozhikode on DM concepts, vulnerability profile of the country, the national initiatives, the community-based disaster risk management and the need for disaster preparedness including first-aid and search and rescue. Handouts on various do's and don'ts were distributed and films on disasters were also screened during the programme.

▪ **KARNATAKA:** The State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is organizing a series of seminars on "The Role of Teachers in Natural Disaster Management". During the seminars, the teachers speak about the need for disaster management and outline the activities being carried out by respective School Safety Committees throughout the District.

▪ **TRIPURA:** The State Government of Tripura has taken a number of initiatives to develop and/or strengthen disaster management capabilities at various levels. The Department of Police has provided funds to all the Districts for construction of disaster-resistant Emergency Operations Centers (Control Rooms) in every district. A two-week training programme has also been finalized for

the EOC staff with a view to sensitizing them and for enhancing their disaster response capabilities. Twenty-four police personnel had been deputed to the National Industrial Security Academy (NISA), Hyderabad for training in different aspects of disaster management and on completion of the training have initiated the process of training search and rescue teams at district and sub-divisional levels. Instructions have been given for construction or repair/strengthening of helipads in all Blocks so as to facilitate relief and rescue operations during a crisis situation. So far, twenty-seven new helipads have been constructed and many of the existing ones are being repaired. Simultaneously, awareness campaigns have been launched at State, District, Block and sub-division levels through use of local resource persons and NSS, NYKS and NGOs are being utilized for community-based disaster preparedness at village level. On a suggestion given by Hon'ble Chief Minister during the State-level training programme for NSS officers and volunteers, the process of identification and training of 250 volunteers at sub-divisional level and 500 volunteers in the city of Agartala has been initiated. NSS and NYKS have started developing a data-base of blood donors along with the details about their blood group and contact address for being utilized during any emergency. The Public Works Department is conducting workshops in Agartala to sensitize people building safety regulations and safe construction practices. The Department of Urban Development has finalized the Tripura Building Rules, 2005 by incorporating IS norms and Tripura Engineering College has agreed to conduct a two-week training programme for Engineers. In addition, the process of development of District DM Plans, Block DM Plans and Village DM Plans has also been initiated.

State-level Sensitization Programme on 'EQ Vulnerability Reduction' in Shillong, Meghalaya

A state-level sensitization programme on 'Earthquake Vulnerability Reduction' was organized in Shillong, Meghalaya for the elected representatives and senior officials of Meghalaya. The programme was inaugurated by Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Donkupar Roy. In his address, Dr. Roy referred to the 1897 Great Shillong Earthquake and said that due to absence of required timely aid and assistance a lot

more people lost their lives. He opined that earthquakes do not respect any boundaries and hence it was essential that intense cooperation between the government, the civil society, the non-governmental organizations, the educational institutions and the community is forged.



The programme was presided over by the Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya, Shri P.J. Bazeley who stressed the need to create more awareness among common people on earthquake hazard especially with regard to the preparedness and preventive measures required to be taken by them. Shri Bazeley cited the threat posed by growing number of high-rise buildings and unplanned constructions in the state and emphasized that due to lack of forewarnings for earthquakes, it was essential to usher into safer construction practices.



Shri W.M.S. Pariat, State Relief Commissioner, Department of Revenue made a detailed presentation on the initiatives being taken by the State Government of Meghalaya for building disaster-resilience as also under the GoI-UNDP Disaster Risk Management Programme for dissemination of the DM agenda at the community level.

The Meghalaya Legislative Assembly Speaker, Shri M.M. Danggo stressed the importance of people's participation in all disaster management programmes. At the same time, he called upon legislatures and government functionaries to ensure that relevant information percolates down to the grassroots level.

The resource persons for the sensitization programme were Prof. A.S. Arya, National Seismic Advisor, Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri Y.C. Joshi, Director, Geological Survey of India (GSI), Shillong and Shri Ankush Agarwal, DRM Programme who made presentations related to seismic hazard management and the role of policy makers in ensuring systematic reduction of earthquake risk in the State of Meghalaya particularly and the North-Eastern region in general.



The elected representatives, senior government officials, media persons and officers from the State Nodal Agency attended the programme. The presentations were followed by an interactive session wherein the resource persons answered the queries raised by the participants.

Coordinator:

Joint Secretary (DM)

Editor:

Rajeev Issar, Programme Associate (DM)

For further enquiries, please contact:

National Disaster Management Division

Ministry of Home Affairs, North Block, New Delhi

Tel: 23092456;23094019;55396387;23092705;23092664

Email: dirdm2@nic.in

Website: www.ndmindia.nic.in

