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India seeks Japan help in earthquake safety and early warning system

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NEW DELHI: India has sought the help of Japan in disaster risk management, particularly in dealing with earthquakes. The first bilateral meeting was held here on Monday on earthquake safety and early warning system where both sides were represented by high-level delegates from the government, scientific departments and IITs.

The meeting is intended to give policy direction to India's disaster risk reduction (DRR) preparedness, learning from the Japanese experiences of DRR policies, including legal and planning framework. The delegates discussed 'how Japan is preparing against mega-scale disasters, in collaboration with government, academia, private companies and citizens'.

A two-day workshop, organized jointly by the Union Home Ministry and the National disaster Management Authority (NDMA), highlighted the need to take measures to bring down the loss of lives and property with the probability of occurrence of an earthquake of the magnitude of more than 8 on the Richter scale in Himalayas.

"The workshop will help learn from the experience of Japan in earthquake safety and early warning system," said R K Jain, member, NDMA. Japan has the expertise in the field of earthquake risk reduction and resilience.

The government has invited 50 delegates from Japan, including experts from the Japanese government, technical institutions and the private sector. The host country had 70 delegates, including experts from the government, NDMA, the state disaster management authorities, IITs, National Institute of Disaster Management and the National Centre for Seismology. Representatives of infrastructure companies and NGOs also participated in the Workshop.

Niti Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar, who inaugurated the conference, underlined the synergy between the two countries in

investing proactively on mainstreaming risk reduction into development. Kumar said that uncontrolled development without proper disaster risk assessment has increased the risk of losses from disasters. “Disaster risk management can no longer remain isolated from the overall strategy of sustainable development”, he said.

Kumar emphasized on strengthening resilience through a six-pronged approach of risk identification, risk reduction, preparedness, financial protection, resilient reconstruction and societal awareness.