

**National Disaster Management Authority,
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PRESS RELEASE

Union Home Minister inaugurates IWDRI 2018

Urges all stakeholders to work towards disaster resilient infrastructure

NEW DELHI, MONDAY: Shri Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister, inaugurated an International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (IWDRI) in New Delhi today (January 15, 2018). The two-day workshop is organised by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in collaboration with United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

Underlining the importance of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Shri Singh said that it creates opportunities for economic growth and is at the core of sustainable development. "The way we build our infrastructure today will either build risk or resilience for the future generations. We need to bring to bear tremendous foresight and rigour to ensure that all our new infrastructure is built to withstand the hazards of the present as well as the future."

As the infrastructure systems are globally interconnected, disruptions in one part of the world can cause havoc in another part of the world. It is, therefore, important that all stakeholders come together to address the challenges and devise solutions to create resilient infrastructure, said Shri Singh.

Reiterating India's commitment towards building resilience and strengthening global cooperation, Shri Singh talked about the Prime Minister's 10-point agenda, outlined during the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in New Delhi in November 2016. "It emphasized the need for investing in infrastructure in a manner so that it can withstand hazards not only now but also in the future."

While reducing losses to infrastructure is one of the specific targets identified under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), 2015-2030, it is also key to achieving other targets identified under the SFDRR. "We cannot reduce the number of deaths, reduce the number of affected people, or reduce economic losses from disasters if our infrastructure is damaged and its functionality disrupted by disasters," Dr. P.K. Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Highlighting India's reconstruction experience after the Bhuj earthquake, Dr. Mishra said that rebuilding to appropriate standards of disaster resilience also delivers co-benefits in terms of improved quality of life. "Investment in disaster resilient infrastructure should be seen as an investment in sustainability," he said.

"This workshop is a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and explore collaborative initiatives," said Shri R. K. Jain, Member, NDMA. He also highlighted the importance of collective efforts towards mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in infrastructure.

The pace of urbanisation around the world today is an opportunity to not only avoid creation of new risks but also to reduce future losses, said Dr. Robert Glasser, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Shri Junaid Kamal Ahmad, Country Director for the World Bank in India, emphasised upon the need to leverage the financial market to build financial resilience in today's world. He also highlighted the importance of institutional mechanisms, federal structures and financial provisions in building resilience in infrastructure.

Shri Rajiv Gauba, Union Home Secretary, was also present during the inaugural session.

Experts from about 23 countries, multilateral development banks, the United Nations, the private sector, academics and other stakeholders are participating in the workshop. Deliberations at the workshop will take the dialogue on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and global cooperation further. It will also help

foster a sustained dialogue and mutual exchange of experiences, lessons and solutions.