

Together, towards a safer India

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Mainstreaming disaster management in regular activities and training programmes of Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and Finalization of Action Plan

The High-Powered Committee on Disaster Management and the Working Group of the National Committee on Disaster Management had emphasized the need to include youth voluntary organizations like the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), the National Service Scheme (NSS) etc. in overall human resource development plan and in capacity building of the communities to initiate mitigation and preparedness activities to minimize the impact of disasters. The National Disaster Management Framework drawn up by the Ministry of Home Affairs envisages association of youth organizations in disaster management activities and its inclusion in their training programmes as well as in their regular activities.

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports with a nation-wide presence. It has eighteen Zonal Offices, 47 Regional Offices and active organizational structure in nearly 500 districts. It is one of the largest grass-root level youth organization with nearly eight million non-student rural youth enrolled through about 2.30 lakh village based youth clubs. NYKS volunteers have traditionally been in the forefront of assisting the civil administration in times of national crisis – be it natural disaster or civil strife. The organization has been active in relief management and distribution. However, it was felt that its organizational structure and trained volunteers have not been harnessed to facilitate the process of building disaster-resilient communities by focusing on disaster mitigation preparedness and response related programmes. A need to expand the scope of activities of NYKS to address pre-disaster aspects while at the same time building their capacity for the post-disaster phase was felt.

Interactions were held with NYKS to identify areas and develop an Action Plan for mainstreaming disaster management in its training programmes as well as to bring disaster management within the ambit of its regular activities. After an intense and in-depth process of deliberations, NYKS submitted a proposal for training their officers, National Service Volunteers and Youth Leaders in disaster management activities to work towards minimizing the impact of disasters on communities. In order to reduce the vulnerabilities of communities in the face of natural hazards, it is envisaged to organize a national level training programme for orienting national, zonal and regional officers. NYKS also proposes to conduct training programmes in all eighteen zones to train the regional and district level officers, National Service Volunteers and Youth Coordinators.

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Training modules are being finalized for their training as well as for incorporating facets of disaster management in their regular training programmes. The focus of activities in the initial phase would be in the seventeen multi-hazard prone states.

The primary objective of involvement of NYKS in disaster management activities is to utilize their vast network of volunteers and youth clubs especially in the rural areas to disseminate the message of disaster risk reduction among the communities. NYKS would focus on awareness building among the people for safeguarding their lives, livelihoods and property against natural hazards by adopting and integrating disaster-resistant practices in their day-to-day activities. They would propagate simple mitigation and risk reduction measures to the common people to help them minimize the severity of natural catastrophes while at the same time facilitating the development of preparedness planning at community level and seek to build their knowledge, attitude and skills in different facets of disaster management. They would undertake simple mitigation exercises to advocate adoption and integration of appropriate mitigation measures for different hazards and involve the community in conducting regular mock-drills to enhance their state of readiness to face a calamitous situation. In addition, capacity enhancement of volunteers to undertake post-disaster relief and rehabilitation activities and to support the civil administration in times of crisis is also proposed to be addressed.

Due to their close proximity with and intimate knowledge of concerns and issues of immediate relevance to the communities, the 'first responders' in any disaster situation, NYKS volunteers are best placed to build a culture of safety and vulnerability reduction. It is envisaged that disaster mitigation, preparedness and response would be built into the charter of NYKS and become an inalienable component of its regular activities and programmes.

Adequate financial assistance to support the organization and conduct of training programmes has been extended to Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) by the Ministry.

24-hour Emergency Operations Cell in Dhubri, Assam

A 24-hour Emergency Operations Centre is being set up in Dhubri district to monitor the situation during disasters and to coordinate the activities of various Departments. The Dhubri District Disaster Management Cell has also formed a mobile blood bank in collaboration with some educational institutions.

Initiation of Project Preparation Activities (PPAs) for identification of cyclone risk mitigation investments under National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP)

Recognizing that hazard risk mitigation is the key to sustainable development, the Ministry propose to launch a National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP) with a view to mitigate cyclone hazard risks and enhance capabilities at all levels in 13 cyclone prone coastal and island States/UTs. The Project is proposed to be undertaken with World Bank assistance. The key components of the Project are (i) upgradation of cyclone forecasting, tracking, modeling and warning systems; (ii) cyclone risk mitigation investment proposals for identification and implementation of high-priority activities viz. construction of cyclone shelters, shelterbelt plantation, regeneration of mangroves, construction of embankments to check sea erosion and missing road/bridges/culverts etc. (iii) technical assistance for hazard risk management capacity building including strengthening national/ regional training institutions, developing techno-legal regime for cyclone mitigation, studies on risk assessment, cost-benefit analysis of cyclone risk mitigation measures.

In order to avail of the assistance under the Project, the States/UTs and nodal institutions/agencies for different components are required to initiate Project Preparation Activities (PPAs) for identification and implementation of sectoral cyclone risk mitigation or capacity building proposals which would form the basis of formulation of the final Project document. The Ministry has also developed a set of detailed guidelines for assisting formulation of investment proposals and the same have also been shared with all concerned. The guidelines can also be downloaded from the Ministry's website www.ndmindia.nic.in Once the PPAs are completed and the Report submitted to the Ministry, the components highlighted and risk mitigation investment proposals formulated would be accorded due assistance under the Project, if they are in consonance with the guidelines.

The services of subject specialist experts have been provided to assist the initiation of Project Preparation Activities (PPAs) and requisite assistance has also been extended in the form of Project Preparation Facility (PPF). The States/UTs have been advised to make appropriate provisions in their annual budgets for ensuing financial year to avail of the assistance.

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Interaction with the Press Council of India to orient and develop a blueprint for an effective role of media in disaster risk management

Holistic disaster management necessitates multi-stakeholder approach involving all segments of society including the media. The media has been unexceptionably constructive in its reporting and coverage of disaster events and has supported national endeavors to provide succor to the affected. However, the need for a more pro-active engagement of media with the subject of disaster management has been felt so that it is not seen to occupy media space only in the aftermath of a catastrophe.

In order to spread the message of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, interaction has been held with the media organizations and the Press Council of India. The Press Council has a membership of 28 national press organizations representing different newspapers and magazines brought out in English, Hindi and vernacular languages. A sensitization workshop for media representatives was organized in association with the Press Council of India to orient press personnel on the growing threat posed to the country's development by natural disasters. Presentations were made on the vulnerability and risk profile of the country and the socio-economic impact of disasters. The need to generate awareness among common masses on the need to adopt and integrate disaster risk reduction measures to secure their lives, livelihoods and property was emphasized as sine qua non for comprehensive disaster risk reduction. The active involvement and support of media personnel and organizations to disseminate mitigation and preparedness measures to people during pre-disaster phase was underscored.

The presentations were followed by an interactive session in which media representatives raised various relevant points/issues and urged regular engagement between media and disaster managers for transparency and correctness of information. It was felt that the process should be taken further and an Action Plan developed in mutual consultation.

Workshop on Incident Command System in Patna

A one-day workshop on Incident Command System (ICS) was organized in Patna by Government of Bihar in association with Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) and UNICEF with focus on flood hazard. Shri N.K. Agarwal, IAS, Member, Board of

Revenue and Shri A.R. Sinha, IPS, DGP, Bihar inaugurated the Workshop.



Shri N.K. Agarwal, IAS, Member Board of Revenue & Shri A.R. Sinha, IPS, D.G. Police during the Inaugural Session

Forty-seven senior field level officers i.e. Divisional Commissioners, DMs, SPs and Officers from departments associated with flood relief management attended the workshop. The course material for the programme was developed by Centre for Disaster Management, LBSNAA. A case scenario based on flood situation was used for group exercise during the workshop. Specific presentations were made on application of Incident Command System, its organization and principles.

Technical Workshop on model building by-laws by Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) in Lucknow

A technical workshop on model building by-laws was organized by BMTPC in Lucknow in collaboration with Government of Uttar Pradesh to highlight the recommendations made in the Experts' Committee Report to develop model amendments in Town and Country Planning Act, Zoning Regulations, Development and Control Regulations and Building Regulations. Senior Officers of the Housing Department, Department of Disaster Management, Department of Urban Development, Town and Country Planning department, Relief Commissioner, District Magistrates, Municipal Commissioners, Professionals like Chief Engineers, Engineer-in-chief of CPWD, private builders, practicing engineers & architects etc. participated in the workshop. It was decided to constitute a Committee of Experts in the State to review State building by-laws and ensure strict implementation of the same. It was also decided to have more interactions with practicing engineers, architects and private builders to apprise them of amendments to building by-laws, town and country planning acts and building regulations.

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

- **GUJARAT:** Vadodara District Administration has launched a website <http://disasterresponse-vadodara.gujarat.gov.in> for information on flood response in the aftermath of recent floods in the district, for inputs on relief management and for experience sharing. In Rajkot city, awareness on disasters and the need for preparedness and response planning is being supported by vernacular press, NGOs, Lions Club, Rotary Club etc. for facilitating Community Based Disaster Planning. Training of 500 NCC Girl Cadets on first-aid, search and rescue and Ham Radio was organized in Jasani Hospital. In Junagadh, 225 NCC cadets from 4 districts, 8 talukas and from UT of Diu took out two rallies showing IEC material on disaster management and health. A City Consultation meeting was held in Junagadh to orient Government functionaries on UEVRP, review progress, share experiences and discuss future strategies etc. It was decided to constitute City Disaster Management Committees and Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) for better response and coordination during emergencies. A two day workshop was organized in Rajkot to train and orient school teachers on disaster risk management, school disaster management plan and developing their capacity to teach disaster management in schools. 170 teachers from 100 municipal schools in the city participated in the workshop.



- **DELHI:** A community disaster management planning exercise was organized in North-East District with participation of 34 office-bearers from 11 Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs). The RWAs agreed to complete DM planning exercise in their areas at the earliest. A workshop on “Role of Builders and Town Planners in Disaster Management” was inaugurated by Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Shri B.L. Joshi with presentations by Prof. A.S. Arya, National Seismic Advisor, Shri V. Suresh, ex-CMD, HUDCO, Shri A.K. Jain, Commissioner (Planning), DDA, Prof. Subir Saha, Director, School of Planning and Architecture and Shri Anil Sahai, Builders Association of India.
- **MEGHALAYA:** A meeting to review implementation of DRM Programme in East Garo Hills district was taken by District Commissioner. He urged the Block Development Officers and District Project Officers to expedite community based DM planning at block and village levels. It was decided to initiate awareness generation campaign, constitution of DMTs and training of volunteers under the Programme.
- **ORISSA:** The Orissa State Disaster Mitigation Authority (OSDMA) has prepared short films directed by professionals on Disaster Risk Management, Heat Wave and Cyclone Shelters and these are being telecast on GRAMSAT programmes in evening hours so that people can watch them. The copies of the films are being distributed in the local language through District Administrations and NGOs for awareness generation and wider dissemination.
- **BIHAR:** Begusarai District Administration conducted a seven-day residential Ham Radio training programme with resource persons from ATI Patna to create a pool of Ham Radio experts to strengthen communication network in remote areas of the district. The trainees would undergo an examination to obtain the license.

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