

Together, towards a safer India

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Unprecedented flood situation in the States of Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra, especially Mumbai --- massive response endeavor by Central and State Governments

During the current South-West Monsoon season, heavy rains and severe floods/flash floods occurred in the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. Floods of a varying yet lesser intensity occurred in 18 States/UTs in all. The provisional estimates of damages, as reported by the State Administrations of affected States/UTs show that 196 districts and 28,451 villages were affected directly impacting a population of over 210.25 lakhs. The death toll in the floods is estimated to be 1941 with 96,372 livestock lost. The floods affected a cropped area of 17.71 lakh hectares damaging 9.04 lakh housing units.

The concerned State Governments, with assistance from the Central Government and agencies, launched a major rescue and relief operations in the affected areas including evacuating and shifting people to safer places, setting up relief camps, providing gratuitous relief, distributing essential commodities, provision of safe drinking water, health and hygiene measures etc.

The Central Government closely monitored the situation and rendered requisite financial and logistic support to deal effectively with the flood situation. The National Crisis Management Committee, under the Cabinet Secretary and Inter-Ministerial Committee under Union Home Secretary reviewed the flood situation regularly and followed up with the State Governments and the Emergency Support Ministries to extend due assistance. The Central Government deployed Air Force helicopters, Army boats and Central para-military forces to assist in rescue and relief operations. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provided the requisite stocks of essential medicine and drugs, bleaching powder, chlorine tablets, ORS packets to meet the requirements and to prevent outbreak of water-borne diseases and epidemics. Additional stocks of essential commodities and petroleum products were provided to some of the severely flood-affected States. The Ministries/Organizations of Shipping, Road Transport, Highways, Telecommunications, Power, Drinking Water Supply, NHAI, BRO were instructed to ensure immediate repair and restoration of damaged infrastructure on priority.

Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Home Minister visited the flood affected areas in different States and announced financial assistance of Rs. 500 crores to Maharashtra, Rs. 300 crores to Karnataka and Rs. 500 crores to Gujarat. In addition to the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF), assistance was also extended to States from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF).

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Bursting of artificial dam on Parechu river in Tibet floods vast areas in Himachal Pradesh

Last year, landslides in a remote and inaccessible region of Tibet had created an artificial dam on Parechu river, a tributary of Sutlej river, blocking the flow of water leading to formation of a massive artificial lake. It created an imminent danger for the downstream areas including the Naptha-Jhakri Thermal Power Plant in the event of the artificial dam bursting under pressure from the accumulated water body. With winter setting in, the danger receded though it retained its destructive potential with melting of snow.

The artificial dam burst this year leading to a massive and sudden discharge of water into Sutlej threatening the inhabited areas. The preparedness measures put in place over the period helped in responding to the situation. The inhabitants were shifted to safer places and mechanisms were put in place to protect or to minimize the damage to Naptha-Jhakri Thermal Power Plant.

The combined efforts of the State and the Central Governments and their agencies helped in minimizing the catastrophic proportions of the flash floods and as a result of this no human life was lost during flash floods in Himachal Pradesh.

Workshop to develop a techno-legal regime for earthquake risk mitigation in Dhanbad, Jharkhand

The District Administration, Dhanbad organized a workshop to develop an appropriate techno-legal regime for multi-hazard risk reduction in the State of Jharkhand and in Dhanbad in particular. The workshop was attended by nearly 150 participants drawn from the civil administration in the State of Jharkhand, the Civil Engineers in various Departments and in Mineral Area Development Authority (MADA), BDOs, Circle Officers and heads of different departments.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Shri Jayant Munigala, Secretary, Department of Disaster Management, Government of Jharkhand in the presence of Dr. Beela Rajesh, DC, Dhanbad, Divisional Commissioner, Northern Chhotanagpur Division, Director, Central Mining Research Institute, Director, Indian School of Mines and resource persons from eminent institutions and organizations.



In his opening remarks, Shri Munigala referred to the high seismic risk in Dhanbad and nearby areas due to underground collieries and the conflagration in these mines. In order to meet the hazard posed, an extensive awareness generation campaign targeted at the common man has been initiated in addition to development of an appropriate techno-legal regime effecting due improvements in the building by-laws and their stringent implementation by MADA. He also informed that the State of Jharkhand has already established Control Rooms in 22 districts in the State and the site for State-level EOC has also been identified. These EOCs would also be strengthened with adequate state-of-the-art equipments to enhance their effectiveness.

The proposed techno-legal regime is undergoing the required processes of consideration and approval in the Government.

Launch of a website for information on disaster management and relief in Rajasthan



Dr. Kirori Lal Meena, Minister for Disaster Management and Relief, Government of Rajasthan launched the website <http://rajrelief.nic.in> to provide

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Task Force members to strengthen the response mechanism of the local administration and community, the PRIs, Block-level administrative functionaries, the common people etc. The villagers were also trained in First-aid and Search & Rescue and oriented about their roles and responsibilities. The scenario of a cyclonic situation was created and the preparedness levels of nodal persons, community and the DMTs with regard to early warning, dissemination of warning, search and rescue, first-aid, shelter and relief management, damage assessment were assessed. The villagers and the Task Force members gave an excellent response and people from neighboring villages came to witness the exercise.

- **MAHARASHTRA:** In Dhule district, a Training of Trainers Workshop for school teachers was organized with focus on school safety. The ToT had participation of nearly 96 teachers who found the workshop innovative and a good learning experience in the field of first-aid, fire safety precautions, preparing school safety plans and for undertaking risk reduction measures at the school level. In Pune, a toll free hotline telephone 1077 has been activated in the district EOC and in order to popularize the hotline, the Pune Disaster Management Committee has put inserts in the highest circulation daily 'Sakal' and has also disseminated the same through the cable network in the district. In addition, a training programme for teachers from all district government schools was conducted at Maharashtra Rajya Shaikshanik Sanshodhan va Prashikshan Kendra, Pune with a module on disaster management focusing on concepts of disasters, disaster risk management, school safety and preparedness etc. Nearly 105 teachers participated in the programme conducted under the aegis of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Coordinator assured incorporation of disaster management in other training programmes as well.
- **GUJARAT:** In Bhavnagar district, a meeting of the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) was held with participation of line departments and other stakeholders for strengthening preparedness measures for the Monsoon season. It was proposed to streamline the Incident Command System and to popularize the disaster helpline number 1077 among the people.
- **WEST BENGAL:** Department of Relief, Government of West Bengal organized a Workshop on "Importance of Early Warning in Disaster

Management" to identify gaps and suggest measures to improve dissemination of early warning for effective disaster management. Shri Srikumar Mukherjee, Minister of State for Civil Defence emphasized the need to raise a cadre of trained volunteers to facilitate proper information about an impending disaster to the community. Shri Ansar Alam, Special Secretary, Department of Relief and Shri Atanu Purkayastha, Secretary, Department of Relief underscored the need to develop a coordinated approach at all levels to minimize disaster impact. In West Bengal, five districts have activated the Toll Free Disaster Helplines.

- **DELHI:** (i) The North-East District and the Civil Defence jointly organized an Earthquake-Fire Mock-drill with active participation of male and female volunteers. On activation of the simulated scenario, Incident Command System was operationalized, Quick Response Teams and Field Response Teams demonstrated the methods and techniques of evacuation and fire-fighting. In the end, an Evaluation Meeting was held to assess the preparedness and response levels. (ii) In New Delhi District, a Bomb Blast and Earthquake Mock-drill was organized with participation of residents, divisional wardens, volunteers of Civil Defence and Home Guards. Steps to improve the preparedness levels were discussed and community-based disaster preparedness activities initiated. (iii) The first state-level off-site chemical mock-drill was organized in West District, Delhi at BPCL with participation of IOL, HPCL, Ordinance Depot, Railways, Red Cross Society, NYKS and all line departments and the NGOs. The drill witnessed high level of coordination between various Emergency Support Functions and different Departments. All agencies and the unit team leaders including the Incident Commander were familiarized with duties and responsibilities.

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