



AAPDA SAMVAAD

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13TH FORMATION DAY



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First BIMSTEC DMEx-2017

Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the four-day first Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation Disaster Management Exercise (BIMSTEC DMEx-2017) in Delhi on October 10, 2017.

BIMSTEC is a regional organisation comprising seven Member States: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.

Welcoming the delegates, Shri Singh reiterated India's commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with other BIMSTEC nations in reducing disaster losses and exploring all possible avenues of collaboration.

This Exercise served as a platform for sharing Best Practices on all aspects of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and strengthening regional response and coordination for Disaster Management among the BIMSTEC member countries.

A detailed article on the exercise will follow in the next issue of Aapda Samvaad.

NEC Meeting on PM's 10 Point Agenda on DRR

Union Home Secretary Shri Rajiv Gauba chaired a special meeting of the National Executive Committee (NEC) in Delhi on October 6, 2017 to sensitise all the stakeholders about the Prime Minister's 10 Point Agenda on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Calling it a vision document, Shri Gauba emphasized that cooperation among different stakeholders could help achieve the targets announced by the Prime Minister.

The meeting was attended by Members of NDMA, including Shri R. K. Jain, Members of NEC, Relief Commissioners/Secretaries (Disaster Management) and representatives of the States and Union Territories.

The 10 point agenda on DRR was outlined by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi during the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in November last year in New Delhi.

Shri Kamal Kishore, Member, NDMA made a presentation on the subject and highlighted the initiatives taken by the Central Government in this regard.

Making infrastructure investments disaster resilient

Shri Kamal Kishore, Member, NDMA, participated in 'Resilience Dialogue', a special event organised by the World Bank on October 13, 2017 in Washington

D.C., USA. The event, which marked the International Day for Disaster Reduction, saw leaders from the private sector and policy makers explore how infrastructure investments could be made more resilient, especially for the vulnerable populations.



Highlighting India's infrastructure growth, Shri Kamal Kishore said, "We would like to work together with other countries and generate solutions which will build resilience in the years to come."

NDMA Advisory Committee Meeting

The second meeting of the Advisory Committee of NDMA was held on September 29, 2017 to discuss the challenges and road ahead for DRR. The Meeting was chaired by Shri R. K. Jain, Member, NDMA

Ways to monitoring the implementation of National Guidelines on Disaster Management, community participation for DRR, data and information sharing, activation of State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) and improving Early Warning Systems (EWS) were discussed at the meeting. Besides, incentivising individuals for risk insurance and preparation of Engineers Act were also discussed at the meeting.

Mock Exercise on Earthquake Preparedness

NDMA in collaboration with the Govt. of Uttarakhand conducted a State-level mock exercise on earthquake preparedness on the occasion of International Day for Disaster Reduction on October 13, 2017. The exercise was conducted simultaneously across all 13 districts to assess the readiness of various stakeholder departments in the event of a high-intensity earthquake. This exercise is significant as the hill State falls under seismic vulnerability zones IV and V. Such exercises also generate awareness among the local population who are the first responders in case of any disaster.





Workshop on Emergency Response Mobile Vehicles

NDMA conducted a one-day workshop on Emergency Response Mobile Vehicles (ERMVs) in September, 2017. The workshop conceptualised the development of portable ERMVs complete with land and satellite communication network for emergency response during disaster situations.

NDMA officials and representatives from Ministry of Defence, Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) attended the meeting.

Roadmap for mitigation of urban flood

NDMA constituted an expert group in March last year for preparing a road map for mitigating the impact of urban flooding. After extensive deliberations over six meetings, a roadmap was prepared on short term (2016-2020), medium term (till 2025) and long term (till 2030) measures under the following sub heads: Warning, Drainage, Urban Water Bodies, Urban Planning, Response, Capacity Building.

The Roadmap has been circulated to all the States/UTs in July, 2017 for implementation.

National Guidelines on Museums released

With an aim to enable museum professionals to incorporate disaster management within the overall operation of all aspects of a museum, NDMA recently released the 'National Guidelines on Museums'. These guidelines are meant to serve as a template for museums to develop their own disaster risk management plans and strategies through risk assessment, risk reduction measures, emergency response measures and planning for post-disaster recovery.

Revised Heat Wave Guidelines released

NDMA formulated and circulated the 'Guidelines for Preparation of Action Plan - Prevention and Management of Heat-Wave' last year. It significantly brought down the number of heat wave related deaths in 2016.

An expert committee comprising stakeholders from The Central Government, State Governments, scientific and academic institutions, NGOs/ Community Based Organisations (CBOs) reviewed the Guidelines to make it even more effective. NDMA released the reviewed Guidelines in June this year.

Chennai Floods 2015 & Cyclone Vardah: Study of best practices

A team headed by Dr. V. Thiruppugazh, Joint Secretary (Policy and Plan), NDMA, visited Chennai in June, 2017 for studying the impact of the Chennai floods of 2015 and The Vardah cyclone of 2016. The team also studied the best practices and lessons learnt, especially in issuing of duplicate records/ certificates free-of-cost to the flood affected people.

The team interacted with all concerned authorities as well as beneficiaries for a first-hand account of the measures taken by the State Government. The document thus prepared has been circulated to other States to be used as a referral in similar disaster situations.

Module for Masons Certification

As there is no standard training module and certification programme available for masons to ensure that they are able to construct disaster-resilient houses, NDMA in collaboration with UNNATI, a Gujarat-based NGO, is formulating training modules for them. A certificate under the 'Masons' Certification Programme' will be issued to masons who will successfully complete the training.

A meeting of the 'Technical Expert Committee' for vetting the Manual on Masons' training was held in September, 2017 with Prof. C. V. R. Murthy, Director, IIT, Jodhpur as the Chair.

Guidelines on Cultural Heritage Sites

Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh released the National Guidelines on Cultural Heritage Sites and Precincts on September 28th, 2017 on the occasion of formation day of NDMA. The Guidelines, developed after extensive deliberations among experts, provide for Revisions to accommodate national experiences and international discourse on the subject.

The Guidelines outline the roles of each and every stakeholder and list all activities that need to be carried out for implementing the guidelines. •



SCHOOL SAFETY REIGNS AT 13TH FORMATION DAY



Shri Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister; Shri Anil Swarup, Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy; Shri R. K. Jain, Member, NDMA and Shri Rajiv Gauba, Union Home Secretary (left to right).

Children are a nation's future, and they spend a majority of their time at school. Besides being important for effective learning and teaching, risk resilience of the school premises and its staff has a bearing on children's safety and well-being. It is, therefore, imperative that a safe environment for our children is created, starting from their homes to their schools and back.

A definite step towards strengthening the risk resilience of schools was taken in February 2016 when NDMA released National Disaster Management Guidelines on School Safety Policy. In August this year, the Supreme Court

too directed stakeholders to implement the guidelines and policy spelt out by NDMA. To chalk out the roadmap to further ensure its implementation across the country, School Safety was picked up as the theme for NDMA 13th Formation Day.

Inaugurating the celebrations, Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh urged children to volunteer in activities related to Disaster Risk Reduction. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju highlighted the need to integrate DRR education into the school curriculum to give a fillip to the culture of disaster preparedness.

NDMA invited stakeholders to share their



experiences in terms of best practices and innovative technologies for safer schools. Various State Governments spoke about their understanding of safety and risk, and the challenges they face in integrating school safety into the overall scheme of DRR initiatives.

Organisations such as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), which deal with school education, spoke about how they ensure disaster preparedness at the school level and the key challenges that they face while implementing their DM Plans.

Detailed discussions took place on legal and institutional arrangements for school safety, building capacities for implementation of school safety programme and guidelines, structural and functional safety of schools, community involvement, role of children as volunteers and relevant sections of the Right to Education Act.

"Education is the backbone of any kind of development and it starts from the school," said



Dr. P.K. Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. He added that the reopening of schools after a disaster helps boost morale of the the affected people and rebuild lives.

Shri R. K. Jain, Member, NDMA, highlighted the activities undertaken by NDMA during the last one year to reduce disaster risks. The Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), 2016 held in New Delhi in November last year; the second meeting of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) in New Delhi in May 2017; and the first 'BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise- 2017' in New Delhi have played a major role in consolidating India's efforts towards regional and international collaboration for DRR.



Shri Jain also highlighted India's efforts in conducting joint exercise by SAARC nations (SAADMEx) to respond to simulated disaster situations, urban flooding and cyclones. He further added that a comprehensive plan to mitigate the effects of earthquake and landslides is also being formed.

It is important for all stakeholders to collectively work towards preventing the creation of new risks, reducing existing risks, and strengthening the capacities of school staff to make our children safer. The notion of school safety should integrate everyday risks and less frequent but catastrophic risks so as to ensure a safe environment for our children. •

SMALL, SAFE STEPS : A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON SCHOOL SAFETY

- Dhruv Bheda

Class 9, Kunskapsskolan, Gurgaon

When I was small, I happened to go with my parents to different events and workshops related to disaster management. Due to this, I was aware of the disasters that could occur in my surrounding. When I was 5, we went for a beach holiday. As I knew about tsunamis due to the Indian Ocean Tsunami just a few years before then, I was not ready to go into the sea. Whenever the water

moved backwards before the waves formed, I thought a tsunami was coming and ran away. Even though I knew about disasters, I was not aware of their intensity and seriousness. Whenever an earthquake occurred, I quickly ran under the table and followed 'Duck, cover and hold' that I had learnt from some story books and videos. My mother used to say, "ducks under the tables" and I used to take cover.



When I was a little older, I started to try and help people who were affected by disasters by donating from my pocket money, and collecting funds from others to donate for the affected people. I always thought that there were only two types of people, the affected and the donors. I never thought that the helpers or the donors could also get affected someday. As a young boy, I thought that I was totally safe, but I was wrong! Disasters can strike anywhere and affect anyone, educated or uneducated, urban or rural, rich or poor.

During a visit to Myanmar in June 2016, we went to world famous tourist attraction and place of worship called Bagan. We saw many ancient pagodas and temples. Bagan is in an active earthquake zone and has a history of many earthquakes. In 1975, a major earthquake had occurred there and we saw the pagodas that had been damaged by it. Many structures were tilted and some parts were broken down too. We went to see spectacular sunset from atop a very high temple called North Guni. We walked up narrow steps and under very low arches to reach the top where many tourists were sitting at different levels looking at the sunset. Here too, we saw tilted structures and my mother asked what if an earthquake happened while people were atop. The very thought was very scary and made me feel very vulnerable. After just two months, Myanmar was hit by an earthquake of 6.8 magnitude and that very temple was amongst many that were affected. To see pictures and videos of the tumbling pagodas affected me and I realised, even as a tourist we are exposed to the disaster risks.

When I had not read much about disasters, I thought only phenomena like earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis are considered disasters, but disasters occur on different levels. They can occur in a family, a society, a state, a country or even the world. In many cases they can also affect schools.

We have learnt at school about disasters and their types as natural or man-made, mitigation



and prevention. Yet, I feel, I need to know a lot more about them and how to be prepared. We live in Gurgaon and many of my friends live in high rise buildings. Some schools have fire drills and earthquake drills but many a times they are not done. Also, somehow, we the children tend to not take the drills seriously because we think it will not happen to us. In school, sometimes, small children ring the alarm and run away. Thus, we take the drills and alarms very casually.

We need to learn about the safety aspects and preparedness in our school buildings, on way to home from school and at home. We need to discuss in case of a calamity, if our family is at different places like office, school and home, how and where will we try to meet in case communication lines are down.

Schools can teach us a lot to handle disasters and situations when we need to protect ourselves and others. This will not only make schools safer for students and staff but also prepare a new generation that can promote safety and preparedness in our life and our society. [sic]•



MANU GUPTA ON SCHOOL SAFETY

A safe school is the key to safe children. It is upon each one of us to ensure that our children are safe. Aapda Samvaad spoke with Dr. Manu Gupta, who is the co-founder and executive director of SEEDS, a non-profit organization working on disaster risk reduction, to understand issues related to school safety.

Q. How do we know a safe school from an unsafe one?

A. Viewed from the eyes of parents/guardians, a 'safe school' would be one where they feel their kids are being taken care of and are safe from harm, from the point they leave their homes for schools till they return.

In terms of scope, the concept of 'safety' would encompass not just the risk of natural hazards, but also fires, threats from the immediate external settings, to on-campus violence and abuse.

Q. How do we make our conversation on DRR with children interesting so that it stays with them?

A. At SEEDS, we have had the most successful DRR campaigns with children through games and fun activities. Games have been developed for different age groups and introduced in extra-curricular sessions, cultural activities, and environment club activities.

We have also observed keen enthusiasm among students in carrying out risk assessments within their classroom and campuses, and also their immediate surroundings using simple hazard hunt forms.

Important to add practical, real-life based elements of risks and safety in teaching

Q. How do we integrate DRR education into the school curriculum so that the emphasis shifts to the understanding of risks and safety as a life skill?

A. Rote learning cannot ensure Do's and Don'ts will be practiced when needed. What is really needed is working with teachers on adding practical, real life based elements of risks and safety in their regular teaching pedagogy.

Q. What preparedness measures should schools take to reduce disaster risks? How can parents, NGOs support schools in ensuring children's safety?

A. Schools need to have a clearly laid out plan that lays out protocols based on possible disaster scenarios. Plans need to be reviewed regularly. There are now elaborate guidelines on the subject by Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), NDMA.



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Further, each State Government has laid out specific guidelines for schools. The Safe School Plan should be able to incorporate recommendations of these guidelines and put in place protocols that are rehearsed regularly.

Parents, members of local community, NGOs, public emergency services have a responsibility too. Creating mechanisms for participation of all stakeholders is necessary. E.g. every school should have a safety committee that includes, besides the school staff, parents, representatives of local emergency services and NGOs.

Parents can be called upon to volunteer as wardens in large events, and mock drill exercises; NGOs working on DRR can serve as “bridge-builders” in making knowledge and tools available to schools for practicing safety measures.

Ultimately, safe schools concept is much broader and includes:

- a. Reducing losses due to avoidable disasters/accidents.
- b. Improving quality of education by reducing drop-outs and absenteeism.
- c. Building greater community ownership of schools through engagement with citizen groups/local CBOs, business, emergency services and line departments.
- d. Creating a culture of preparedness and safety.

Q. Disasters affect children's well-being in ways that can have both immediate and long-term consequences. What role does psycho-social support play in mitigating the impact of disasters on them?

A. Emergencies erode the social protection cover for children. This gets amplified in poor marginalised communities. Strategies to provide psycho-social support to children must be part of each response action.

In our experiences, children face incidents of abuse at home, and on their way

to school. This has been one of the contributing reasons for dropouts among adolescent girls. Addressing such daily issues would mitigate potential devastating effects of disasters.

Q. What role are the National School Safety Guidelines formulated by NDME playing in building disaster-resilient schools?

The national school safety guidelines have comprehensively addressed the threats of natural hazards in schools. They provide a complete A to Z guide to addressing both structural and process related issues in schools. Some notable highlights of the Guidelines are :



1. The guidance provided for integrating 'safety' in education programming and by using the existing institutional structure.
2. Elaborate guidance on strengthening capacity of students, teachers and non-teaching staff.
3. Listing of possible tools for practice of school safety - such as School Disaster Management Plans.
4. Details on possible role of local stakeholders.

Schools and State and District authorities should actively use and promote the use of the Guidelines through the education department establishment using the training institutions at State level and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs).•



CYCLONE DO'S AND DON'TS

FISHERMEN SHOULD

- Ignore rumours, stay calm, don't panic
- Keep mobile phones charged for emergency communication; use SMS
- Keep a radio set with extra batteries handy
- Listen to radio, watch TV, read newspapers for weather updates
- Keep boats/rafts tied up in a safe place
- Don't venture out in the sea

BEFORE CYCLONE

- Ignore rumours, stay calm, don't panic
- Keep your mobile phones charged for emergency communication; use SMS
- Listen to radio, watch TV, read newspapers for weather updates
- Keep your documents and valuables in water-proof containers
- Prepare an emergency kit with essential items for safety and survival
- Secure your house; carry out repairs; don't leave sharp objects loose
- Untie cattle and animal to ensure their safety

DURING AND AFTER CYCLONE

A) If Indoors

- Switch off electrical mains and gas connection
- Keep doors and windows shut
- If your house is unsafe, leave early before the onset of a cyclone
- Listen to radio/ transistor; rely only on official warnings
- Drink boiled/chlorinated water

B) If Outdoors

- Do not enter damaged buildings
- Watch out for broken electric poles and wires, and other sharp objects
- Seek a safe shelter as soon as possible



Address:

NDMA Bhawan

A-1, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi - 110029

Telephones : +91-11-26701700

Control Room : +91-11-26701728

Helpline Number : 011-1078

Fax : +91-11-26701729