

OCTOBER 2019



AAPDA SAMVAAD

15th Formation Day

Fire Safety



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COVER STORY



German Delegation visits NDMA

NDMA officials on September 17, 2019 met a seven-member delegation from Germany. The visit was a part of their visit to India from September 16-20, 2019, with a focus on Civil Safety and Security.

To set the tone of the interaction, NDMA made a presentation outlining the global trends in disasters, the institutional mechanism for DRR in India and the functioning of the Authority. The presentation also touched upon the specific impact of climate change leading to an increase in heat-related mortality in India and the various preparedness measures that are being implemented towards minimising the adverse effects of heat wave in the country. This was followed by a detailed discussion on relevant issues, including Early Warning System, use of cyclone shelters during normal time, private sector infrastructure and building regulations.

Knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices is an important tool for reducing risks and empowering vulnerable communities. Discussions at the meeting would mutually benefit both the countries in their efforts towards Disaster Risk Reduction.

Meeting for preparing guidelines on Glacial Hazards & Risks

NDMA conducted the first Meeting of the Task Force of Experts regarding Preparation of Guidelines for the "Management of Glacial Hazards & Risks especially GLOFs" on September 20, 2019.

GLOFs refer to the sudden discharge of a water reservoir that has formed either underneath, at the side, in front, within, or on the surface of a glacier. Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh are the regions most vulnerable to glacial hazards.

Discussions were held regarding the types of data, responsibilities of various stakeholders in preparing the guidelines and the best ways to facilitate data collection and exchange. The first draft of the guidelines would be discussed at a workshop for gathering inputs from concerned State Governments and other stakeholders towards the finalisation of the guidelines.



Earlier, NDMA in collaboration with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Embassy of Switzerland in India, had conducted a two-day inception-cum-brainstorming workshop on July 3-4, 2019 on the assessment and management of glacial risks.

Nepalese delegation visit NDMA

A five-member Nepalese delegation visited NDMA on September 24, 2019, with an aim to share cross-country experiences, institutional arrangements and best practices, and to further explore the areas of cooperation in the field of disaster management.

Detailed discussions were held on implementation of educational and awareness programmes in



schools and colleges, and capacity building and training and exercises.

NDMA meets delegation from Maldives; discusses DRR

NDMA officials on September 25, 2019 met a delegation from Maldives. The visit was a part of the Second Training Programme for civil servants of Maldives organised by the National Centre for Good Governance, Mussoorie, from September 16-28, 2019.

The Programme aims to integrate cross-country experiences and best practices in field administration. It is led by the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India.

NDMA made a presentation on the global trends in disasters, India's institutional mechanism for DRR and the functioning of the Authority. The presentation also covered the various projects being

implemented by NDMA with effective community participation such as the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP), National School Safety Programme (NSSP) and other Capacity Building projects.

Maldives is one of the most vulnerable countries to the increasing impact of climate change and sea level rise. India's expertise, scientific research and knowledge will support Maldives in dealing with the varied impacts of disasters, said the delegation.

Discussions were held on awareness programmes and mock drills in schools; the subcontinent's preparedness for Tsunami; and saving lives and restoring livelihoods of fishermen in the aftermath of a disaster.

Workshop on DRR for Hill Towns

NDMA in collaboration with Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority held a two-day regional workshop on the challenges of Disaster Risk Reduction in hill towns at Gangtok on September 18-19, 2019.

The workshop brought together all stakeholders to discuss various issues pertaining to DRR in hill towns. Risks arising due to rapid unplanned urbanisation, use of emerging technologies, climate resilience, building regulations, early warning systems were discussed in the context of hilly regions.





For a 'Fire Safe' India

A fire can occur anywhere. If not handled carefully, it can lead to a huge loss of life and assets. In fact, with rapid economic development, emerging technologies, shortage of prime land and lifestyle changes, fire risk continues to be one of the major causes of loss of human lives in the country. As recently as May this year, at least 22 students lost their lives and many others were injured when a fire broke out at a commercial complex in Surat, Gujarat. This incident highlighted the urgent need to improve fire safety preparedness in the country.





Globally, the very recent devastating forest fire in the Amazon basin eroded huge tracts of rain forests and arrested the world's attention. Global warming and Climate Change have increased the frequency and intensity of forest fires and they are a cause of concern in India as well.

While India has an institutional mechanism in place, both at the Central and State levels, and has taken various measures to reduce the country's fire risk, fire accidents indicate certain gaps that need to be addressed. National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), therefore, chose 'Fire Safety' as the theme for its 15th Formation Day.

Inaugurating the celebrations, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri G. Kishan Reddy, stressed upon learning from past incidents and adopting international best practices for fire risk prevention and mitigation. He also emphasized on capacity building of government functionaries, awareness generation among people through mock drills and the need for enforcing rules and

regulations.

During the day-long event, three technical sessions were held covering the various aspects of fire risks and safety. The first session 'Fire Risk in India' focused on emerging issues on Fire Safety Management in the country. The session also saw presentations on issues pertaining to Forest Fires and their linkages with global warming and climate change. Various aspects of Industrial Fires were also discussed.

The second session held discussions on various measures that could be taken to prevent and mitigate fire related events, especially in the urban areas.

During the session on 'Institutional Challenges and Issues', aspects related to the need of modernization and technological upgradation of Fire Services in the country, vis-à-vis the rapid developmental growth, were discussed.

"Fire preparedness requires all relevant stakeholders - from the national right up to the local and community level - to come together," said Dr.

In a global first, India releases National Guidelines on Disability Inclusive DRR - Prof. Asha Hans, Shanta Memorial Rehabilitation Centre, Odisha*

During the Formation Day celebrations on 27 September, 2019, the National Disaster Management Authority released the National Guidelines on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in an important move towards inclusion and 'leaving no one behind'. With this, India became the first country in the world to come out with such guidelines. This major step is a part of the Government of India's policy to address concerns of its 2.68 crores persons with disabilities. These Guidelines were released by the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri G. Kishan Reddy. Together with the Guidelines, a series of awareness generation videos with tips on how to survive a disaster with Indian Sign Language was also made available to the public.

These Guidelines were drawn up after extensive consultations with various stakeholders, especially persons with disabilities and associated organizations, Government Ministries and National Institutes working on disabilities. The draft guidelines were also put up on the NDMA website and comments were sought from the general public.

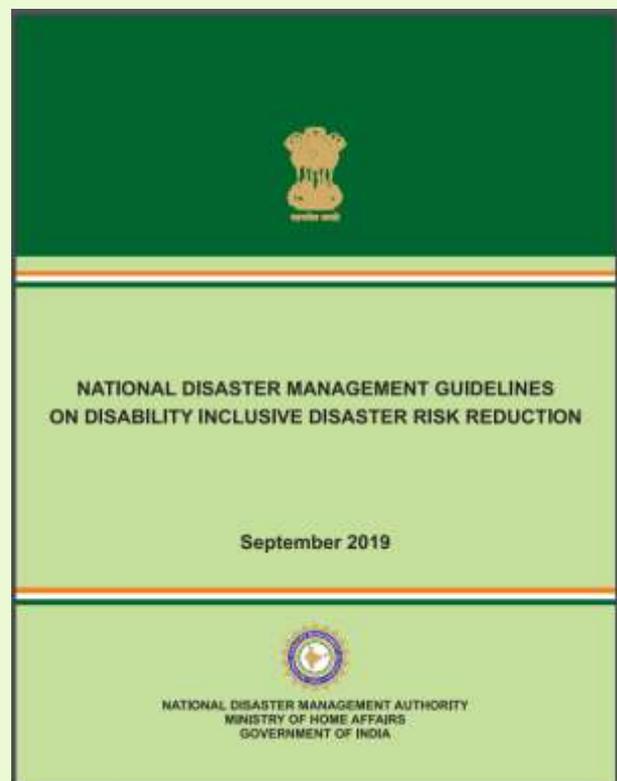
These Guidelines are in line with the new paradigm shift of Disaster Risk Reduction and adoption of appropriate inclusive approaches and strategies to "Build Back Better". It is founded on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to which India is a signatory. SFDRR also emphasises the importance of inclusion and accessibility and recognizes the need for involvement of persons with disabilities and their organizations in the formulation and implementation of DRR policies.

Organisations working on DRR need a better understanding of the challenges faced by persons

with disabilities. Such organisations will find these Guidelines useful as these provide a contextual understanding which can improve standards for inclusion. New communication technologies are being increasingly used in DRR and these have the potential to assist persons with disabilities during disasters.

The most important part of these Guidelines is Chapter IV which provides for specific strategies before, during and after Disasters for implementation by the Centre, State Governments up to village level, and other disability and disaster stakeholders.

These Guidelines provide examples of good practice that could be adapted, replicated or scaled up successfully in India. It makes persons with disabilities a part of the solution in disability inclusion in DRR and foster an inclusive India.



**Prof. Hans has played an important role in the finalisation and writing of National Guidelines on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction.*



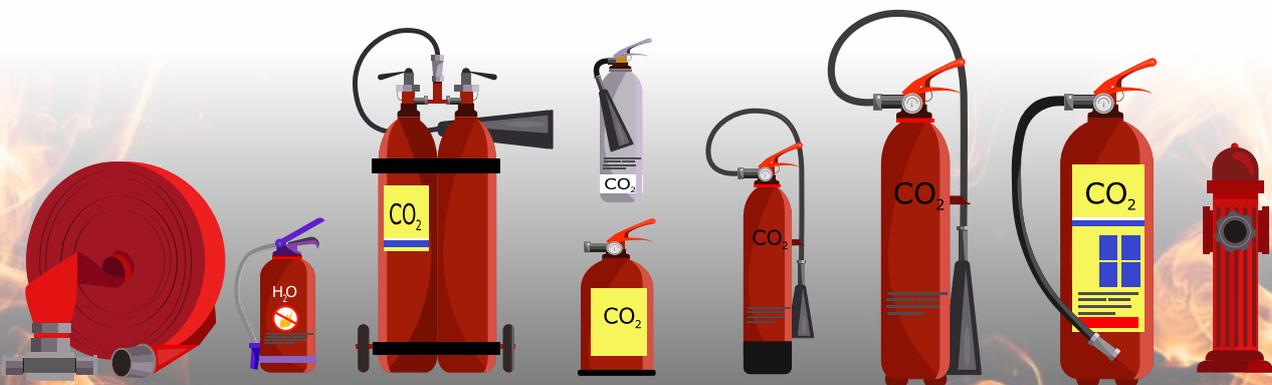
P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. He added that those in charge of enforcing regulations should be trained on legal and technical provisions, fire types, associated risks, fire prevention, mitigation and response mechanisms besides incorporating the latest technology and equipment for fire prevention, mitigation and response.

Shri G. V. V. Sarma, Member Secretary, NDMA, highlighted the activities undertaken by NDMA during the last one year to reduce disaster risks in the country and consolidate India's efforts towards regional and international collaboration for DRR. Shri Sarma also underlined the need for a conscious and planned effort by all the states for improving our firefighting capabilities.

When it comes to disaster planning, the last disaster we faced becomes the benchmark instead of planning for the worst-case scenario, said Dr. V. Thirupugazh, the then Joint Secretary, NDMA. He further emphasised the need to look at the gaps and unresolved issues.

On the occasion, a number of National guidelines and reports prepared by NDMA for disaster risk reduction in the country were also released, which included the National Guidelines on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction. Other publications that were issued include Home Owner's Guide for Earthquake and Cyclone Safe Homes, National Landslide Risk Management Strategy, Temporary Shelters for Disaster Affected Houses, Pocket Book on Do's and Don'ts, Study Report on Gaja Cyclone 2018, Heat Wave Threshold Estimation Study and Earthquake Disaster Risk Index.

To be effective, fire risk reduction needs to strengthen institutional mechanisms, involve the communities at risk, generate public awareness, and ensure there is a constant state of preparedness. Discussions at this Formation Day will go a long way in meeting challenges and reducing our socio-economic vulnerabilities to fire risk. •



Kamal Kishore on Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure



Outlining his ten-point agenda on Disaster Risk Reduction during the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction 2016, held in New Delhi, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said that India will work with other partner countries and stakeholders to build a global Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), envisaged as a knowledge exchange and capacity development partnership.

To give an impetus to the global CDRI, two International Workshops on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure were held in 2018 and 2019, respectively, in New Delhi. Both the workshops saw participation from around the globe.

All the efforts culminated at the United Nations Secretary General's Climate Action Summit in New York when Shri Modi on September 23 2019 announced the launch of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and invited all Member States of the UN to join it.

Aapda Samvaad spoke with Shri Kamal Kishore, Member, NDMA, who is spearheading this coalition to know more. Some excerpts:

Q. Please tell us about CDRI in some detail.

A. CDRI is a knowledge and capacity development platform where developing countries will benefit from access to know-how and developed

countries that are in a phase of replacing their own infrastructure will learn from the new methods and approaches that are being adopted.

Various stakeholders - countries as well as multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, the Global Commission for Adaptation supported the



idea of CDRI and expressed their desire to work closely as part of CDRI.

Q. How is this coalition different from other global initiatives on DRR?

A. CDRI is one of the first initiatives that work at the intersection of Climate Change, DRR and Infrastructure Development. It's an initiative that will bring together a range of stakeholders towards building resilience of infrastructure systems worldwide. Many global initiatives are focussed on

either South-South cooperation or transfer of technology and know-how from North to South. CDRI is a multidirectional initiative so that everyone can learn from everyone and are in it together.

We look at infrastructure as not just assets but as a system in which no country can work alone. This is because in an interconnected world, infrastructure systems are connected globally and the shipping industry is only as resilient as the weakest port in the network.

Q. What are the specific infrastructure class that the coalition would focus on?

A. The coalition aims to look at physical, social as well as environmental infrastructure. In the beginning, we will prioritise physical infrastructure because that is where a lot of investment is going and that is where we see a lot of knowledge and capacity gaps. The four big sectors that we are going to focus on include Power, Telecommunications, Transport and Water infrastructure. In addition to this, we will work on disaster control infrastructure - ones with one of their major purposes as controlling disasters - such as dams, embankments, sea walls, etc.

Q. Why is the coalition important for India?

A. First of all, this will help us connect with the state-of-the-art knowledge. We would be able to co-create new knowledge with other actors in this space. At the same time, it will also be an opportunity for us to share the lessons that we are learning through infrastructure development in our country.

A huge portion of the future infrastructure development is likely to take place in India and China. Consequently, there will be a lot of learning. In that sense, we have an opportunity to get it right and lock in resilience as opposed to risk in these infrastructure systems. We can also engage with the rest of the world and share lessons that we learn along the way.

In sum total, we will benefit in terms of knowledge and capacity, and will be able to contribute to the global system of infrastructure development.

Please visit NDMA's blog, www.ndmablog.in, for the detailed interview.

“India: Partnerships for a better world”



In the first week of September, the Embassy of India, Brussels Exhibition and European Member of Parliament, Ms. Neena Gill hosted an exhibition at the European Parliament on India's contribution towards Disaster Risk Reduction Disaster. The exhibition highlighted the progress India has in the area of DRR domestically, in the region and beyond towards reducing the loss of lives and livelihoods. It also covered the key challenges that need to be addressed such as how do we build on the progress that has been made in the last few years in reducing



heat-related mortality. Heat Waves adversely affect populations in the summer months in both India and the EU countries, and thus, this is one area where India and EU countries can learn from each other.

A key highlight of the exhibition was the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) - the initiative, emerging partnerships, thematic areas - that will bring together both developed and developing countries around the theme of resilience of infrastructure. •





DO's & DON'TS FOR SMOG/AIR POLLUTION

- Remain indoors: Go out when it's bright and sunny. Children's and persons especially suffering from heart and lung ailments are advised to stay indoors as much as possible
- Use nasal filters or air purifiers, if you experience difficulty in breathing. They can provide short-term relief.
- Regular intake of fruits rich in vitamin C, magnesium and omega fatty acids will boost your immunity.
- Drink more water to flush toxins from the body.
- Don't use main roads. Pollution drops away substantially when you're walking in smaller lanes away from the main roads.
- Avoid strenuous activity, which leads to inhalation of greater volumes of minute pollutants.
- If you have to exercise, do it indoors, preferably in the evening.
- Don't step out or indulge in outdoor activities during the early morning or when the levels of air pollution/smog are high.
- Keep some air purifying plants in homes and offices such as Tulsi, Money Plant, etc.
- Try alternative modes of transport; pool your car with friends and fellow commuters.
- Avoid Smoking.
- Do not burn garbage and even do not allow anyone to do so in your neighborhood.
- Consult a doctor or emergency department of nearest hospital in case of difficulty in breathing, severe coughing or onset of any other acute symptoms.



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