

**NPDRR: A PLATFORM WHICH STRENGTHENS INDIA'S DISASTER RISK
RESILIENCE**

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The run of major disasters through 1999 to 2004 involved the Odisha super storm (1999), the Bhuj earthquake (2001) and the Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004), causing heavy loss of lives and material. The colossal losses led to one decision; that disaster management (DM) in India had to be professionalized and converted from the response-based system of awaiting a disaster and responding with rescue and relief efforts, to a system which prevented disasters and prepared the nation to meet them head-on. The disaster management cycle was recognized for its worth and adopted. It involved planning, prevention, preparedness, mitigation, early warning, response/rescue and relief, recovery and build back better. With the passage of the Disaster Management Act of Dec 2005 the structures for DM were set up. These involved the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) under the Chairmanship of the Honourable Prime Minister of India, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMA) and District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMA). The new approach led to strengthening of institutions and the new framework assigned roles to each Ministry/Department of the Government of India to prepare holistic disaster management plans.

In progression of the successful transformation of the DM domain in India the Government decided to constitute a consultative platform with multi stake holder and multi sectoral capability. The National Platform for Disaster Risk Resilience (NPDRR) was accordingly set up to facilitate dialogue, experience sharing, perceptions, research and development and technologies. NPDRR is chaired by the Hon'ble Home Minister of India and has a large representation of various stake holders, including civil society organizations.

Two sessions of NPDRR have been conducted. The first one on 13-14 May 2013 at New Delhi with the theme 'Mainstreaming DRR in Development: from Risk to Resilience'. It focused on the Hyogo Framework of Action with intent of developing a pool of human resources capable of undertaking the furthering of the professionalization of DM in India. The second session was also held at

New Delhi on 15-16 May 2017 on the theme 'DRR for Sustainable Development: Making India Resilient by 2030'. The session concentrated on the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Ten Point Agenda for Disaster Risk Management, the provisions of Sendai Framework, the Paris Climate Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals.

The third session of NPDRR was scheduled for May 2020 but had to be postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. It is being organised at the Vigyan Bhavan on 10-11 Mar 2023 on the very current theme of 'Building Local Resilience in a Changing Climate' and is being inaugurated by the Honourable Prime Minister.

The importance of the NPDRR may be realized in the context of the fact that disaster preparedness is now becoming everyone's responsibility. Community response is the best and the fastest way to save lives; a notion recognized the world over. Therefore, awareness of threats of various hazards is something which must be spread countrywide. Climate change demands a sense of urgency in creation of greater awareness. Various technical organizations have done yeoman service through research and development and this process too must remain progressive with due encouragement. The third session of NPDRR will offer all stakeholders a chance to take stock, examine challenges, share learning and best practices, and help mainstream DM as a domain in the nation. Participation of DM professionals and administrators is expected in large numbers. Forging of partnerships and exchange of knowledge from the experience of professionals and many responders who have done great service for the nation is expected.

The NPDRR has also ensured that a series of pre-events have preceded it thus creating an environment of learning which is not restricted to the two days of the main session. It's a holistic exercise in learning and knowledge exchange and is proving to be an asset in the advancement of DM practices in India.