Step up Stories

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

13 October, 2011
**Bihar**

*(Contributed by Vishal Vasvani, Consultant, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority)*

State Disaster Management Authority, Bihar step up on the occasion of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction by working towards creating a safer world for all. The key to which lies in mainstreaming DRR in all development policies.

**Highlights of the DRR day:**

- A meeting was organized for all officials of various line departments, briefing them on their roles and responsibilities during emergency.
- Presentations on legislations and policies, global initiatives like Yokohama strategy, Hyogo Framework of Action, High Powered Committee, DM Act-2005 and National Disaster management Policy-2009 were made for the employees to sensitize them about organizational goals.
- It was decided that each year, 6 November, will be celebrated as “State Volunteers Day” to promote volunteerism across the sections of society. The theme for 2011 focused on making children and young people partners in reducing disaster risk.

Disasters can strike anytime, anywhere. The past experiences have shown that Disasters do not kill anyone. However, unsafe buildings do! Keeping this in mind, SDMA Bihar will take initiatives to sensitize people on importance of safe construction and basic dos and don’ts in the time of disasters.

State Disaster Management Authority will also prepare the office Disaster management plan and conduct trainings on hazard resistant construction for engineers, architects and masons.

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**Himachal Pradesh**

*(Contributed by D.C. Rana, State Project Officer, Himachal Pradesh)*

The Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (HP SDMA) launched a **Mass Awareness Campaign titled as ‘Samarth- 2011’ to mark the celebrations of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2011 (IDDR 2011)**. The programme launched by Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority aimed at making the people of the state more aware and prepared to reduce the risks posed by natural hazards. During the week from 8–13 October, 2011, various awareness generation and capacity building programmes were organized at state as well as district level with involvement of stakeholders like DDMAs of respective districts, Department of Education, Department of Health & Family Welfare, Himachal Fire Services, Department of Civil Defence, Municipal Corporation, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Himachal Pradesh University, etc.

Through ‘Samarth 2011’, the people and the government of Himachal Pradesh extended solidarity with the global community and observed the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR 2011) through a number of thematic events.

The highlights of the events are:

**Citizen’s Solidarity March** – Hundreds of students and teachers from schools across the capital city of Shimla, Scouts of National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Service Scheme, volunteers of Civil Defence and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and a number of citizens took part in the solidarity march. As a symbol of cooperation and solidarity, soldiers of Indo-Tibet Border Police (ITBP) and Sashatra Seema
Bal (SSB) also participated in this march.

**Launch of the website of HPSDMA** – The official website of the Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (www.hpsdma.nic.in) was launched by the hon’ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. Various Disaster related information; vital information on resources, hazard vulnerability profile, current updates and activities related to DRR undertaken by the HPSDMA, IEC material can be accessed in the website.

**Mock Drills on Emergency rescue and relief operations**
Mock drills were organized across the city by civil defence, fire services and home guards. The organizers demonstrated the use of different types of fire extinguishers. The Department of Civil Defence and HP Home Guards jointly demonstrated the ways of carrying out different rescue and relief operations in real-life environments during emergencies.

**Exhibition on Disaster Management Equipment**
An exhibition on Disaster Management Equipment was hosted by the City Disaster Management Cell of the Municipal Corporation, Shimla. Various tools and equipment crucial for emergency response were displayed and the visitors were briefed about various fire safety equipment and the ways to operate them during emergency situations.

All districts of the state organized different events in connection with the International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR). These events witnessed an unprecedented participation of different stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. While some events were based on promoting awareness about school safety, other events focused on building the capacities of health workers, media professionals and volunteers over disaster-related issues. District Chamba organized a workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction to build capacity of the district administration. As the district falls in seismic zone V, special emphasis was given on the Do’s and Don’ts to be followed before, during and after an earthquake. District Hamirpur conducted a workshop on the role of health workers in disaster management in which nurses and other hospital staff were oriented on emergency health preparedness. A workshop on “role of media” was also organized. Apart from this, mock drills were conducted in many districts with huge participation of local community. The drills were facilitated by the fire department and civil defense.

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**Jharkhand**
*(Contributed by Nitish Sinha, State Project Officer, Jharkhand)*

District Administration organized an awareness programme in one of the most hazardous coal mine location, Putki. The area has huge coverage of coal mining comprising both open cast mining and underground mining and is highly affected by land subsidence and underground fire problem. The objective of the programme was to sensitize the common mass and orient the identified local community volunteers on the issue of risk reduction and preparedness for disasters like earthquake, land subsidence, fire, etc.

The programme was attended by 65 participants including community leaders, disaster management committee members and media professionals. In Ranchi, a mock drill and essay competition was organized in Girls High School in collaboration with the District administration, education department and fire department.
Kerala

(Contributed by Dr. Thara K.G, Member, SDMA, Govt. of Kerala and Ajith Chako, State Project Officer, Kerala)

The State Disaster Management Authority, Kerala, United Nations Development Programme and Institute of Land and Disaster Management representatives jointly commemorate the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction by conducting various awareness programmes across the state.

The highlights of the event are:

**A Rally by NCC Cadets** to create awareness on Disaster Management was organized that covered the busy hubs of the capital city. A street play was put together by the police force on various dos and don'ts in disasters.

In a move to step up the involvement of the youth and children, **painting, slogan and poster competition** on the theme of Disaster Reduction was organised by the Institute of Land & Disaster Management (ILDM). A **quiz on disaster management** was also organised by ILDM for officials of various government departments. ILDM also issued a three minute message of the Hon'ble Revenue Minister to be telecasted during the prime time and most of the local dailies carried the gist of the message.

**A manual on safe building practices named “Kudumba Surakshakku Surakshithamaya Bhavna Nirmmanam” was released** on the occasion of DRR Day. The manual was published under the GoI-UNDP URR Programme in association with the Habitat Technology Group. **Thirty-five School Safety Plans prepared** under the Urban Risk Reduction Programme by Trivandrum Corporation in association with the partner NGO Trivandrum Social Service Society was also released on the occasion by the Mayor.

**Awareness Generation Activities:**

- A **poster on do's and don'ts** during flood, cyclone, earthquake, lightning, chemical disasters compiled by Institute of Land and Disaster Management was released.
- The State Government departments conducted **quiz competition on Disaster Management** for its employees. The Kerala Fire & Rescue Services displayed different types of firefighting and rescue equipment used in an emergency.
- Awareness Generation Programmes for Self Help Groups were organized in the corporation office in association with the partner NGO Cochin Social Service Society.
- A ‘**walkathon’ was organized by the District Authorities** to spread awareness on the importance of Disaster Risk Reduction Day.
- **Film show on Disaster Management** was organized at the corporation office. Since there is a huge inflow of visitors in the corporation for remitting taxes and utility bills, it was an opportunity for them to learn about disaster management.

Mock drill was organized at the district collectorate as part of the observance of the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day. It was conducted by the Revenue and Disaster Management Department with support of fire and rescue service, Kerala Police, health and other departments. A fire mock drill was organized at the Government Secretariat. The drill was coordinated by the Department of Disaster Management, SDMA and UNDP DRR in association with Fire & Rescue Services, Kerala Police, Secretariat Security Service and General Administration Department. The City unit also organized a mock drill exclusively for the young kids of the Government Cotton Hill Girl's High School. Mock drill exercises were
conducted in the schools. NCC volunteers helped the students in the evacuation drill.

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**Maharashtra**

*(Contributed by S.C. Mohanty, State Project Officer, Maharashtra and Aruna Gajbhiya, Associate Professor, Tirpude College of Social Work, Nagpur)*

The state of Maharashtra observed disaster awareness fortnight from 28 September to 13 October 2011 with focus on spreading awareness among the districts and cities. All districts and cities in Maharashtra organized various awareness generation programmes like Exhibitions, essay and printing competitions, rallies, training programmes, demo and mock drills. A review meeting to chalk out a road map was held and it was decided that a national workshop on IEC material will be held in the state.

A workshop was organized by Pune Municipal Corporation to train students on their role in disaster management. More than 350 students of Pune University attended the workshop which covered sessions on Early Warning System, basic dos and don'ts during disasters and roles and responsibility of students during emergency. A Public Awareness Programme for NSS Pune University Students was conducted in which 1200 students and professors participated in a rally to create awareness on Disaster Management in Pune city to commemorate International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. Similar Programmes were held in all the municipal corporations.

Tirpude College of Social Work, Nagpur conducted a focused group discussion on Disaster Management Practices role of social workers in Trauma Counseling and earthquake. A total of 33 students participated in the discussion.

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**Mizoram**

*(Contributed by Dominic Lalhmangaiha, State Project Officer, Mizoram)*

The Department of Disaster Management and Rehabilitation, Mizoram and the District Disaster Management Authorities observed the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day on 21 October, 2011. In the state capital Aizawal, a school evacuation drill was conducted in one of the prestigious schools. A total of 1200 students and 40 teachers attended the drill. The teachers and students were trained to prepare the school safety plans. In Lunglei and Mamit districts also, a school evacuation drill was conducted with involvement of students and teachers. District Search & Rescue team also presented a demonstration on basics of search & rescue post emergency. The rescue operation team comprised of police personnel and medical experts. Lawngthlai District organized high school level essay writing competition on the topic "Preparedness against Disaster".

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**Tamil Nadu**

*(Contributed by C. John David, State Project Officer, Tamil Nadu)*

The state of Tamil Nadu organized programmes involving school children and young professionals. Poster Competition and seminar on the role of students in Disaster Management was held in one of the Tsunami affected coastal districts of Tamil Nadu on 12 October, 2011 to commemorate the Disaster Risk Reduction Day. Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Tamil Nadu and the department of Revenue Administration, Disaster Management and Mitigation Department organized a two day seminar from 12-13 October. Delegates from across the country participated in the programme and presented papers on various themes cutting across law through disaster management. Various themes discussed during the seminar include National
and International legal responses to disasters, human rights and the population affected by disasters, enquiries and investigations, as part of disaster management and scope and limitations in handling the legalities of weather related disasters. Student fraternity from universities, colleges, technical institutions like India Meteorological Department (IMD) participated and presented papers that served as a valuable resource material to develop a training module on legal aspects in disaster management. A talk show on disaster management was aired in All India Radio in view of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Uttar Pradesh**
*(Contributed by Aditi Umrao, State Project Officer, Uttar Pradesh)*

Educating Children about Disaster Management is a step towards ensuring a safe future. With this aim in mind, Ghaziabad city administration in collaboration with Rotary Club organized an Inter school competition among the school students to prepare them deal with emergencies. Over 200 students and teachers from 25 selected schools participated in the programme. The theme of the event was “Safety from disasters”.

A sensitization programme was conducted at Meerut College to orient the students on the adverse effect of global warming on natural resources and its environmental, social and political implications. Students raised many questions on issues about prevailing environment concerns including keeping natural flow of Himalayan rivers intact and encouraging people to adopt carbon credit system for a more greener and healthier life. Drawing competition was organized amongst school students on the theme of disaster management and awareness. Students, teachers and parents participated.

Rally in rural and urban areas on IDRR Day was organized in Kanpur. Close to 500 people participated in the rally that aimed at creating awareness on disaster management. In order to create about awareness about do’s and don’ts in wake of an Earthquake, the DDMA-UNDP-GOI-Urban Risk Reduction Project conducted a fire safety and Earthquake drill on International Disaster Risk Reduction Day.

**New Delhi**
*(Contributed by Anurag David, New Delhi, Manu Gupta, Director, SEEDS)*

- **Sambhawna Natya Manch**, a theatre group organized mock-drill exercises in three sub-divisions in New Delhi to enhance level of preparedness to commemorate the International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction.
- **SEEDS, New Delhi**, On the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2011, SEEDS ongoing projects in Leh short a video clip on the theme of ‘stepping up’. Leh is the highest altitude disaster recovery site in the world. SEEDS and other humanitarian agencies have strived throughout the last one year to help victims of flash flood in this remote region with a harsh climate. We found the recovery process to be a stepping stone to much needed DRR activities for the region. Our media team, Safer World Communications, has produced this video and I felt you might find it interesting and perhaps useful for the Step Up campaign. The video can be viewed at the following link: [http://www.saferworld.in/StepUp.html](http://www.saferworld.in/StepUp.html)
Meghalaya
(Contributed by Sukant Bhattacharya, State Project Officer, Meghalaya)

On the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction, Meghalaya Administrative Training Institute (MATI) organized an awareness generation programme for the All India Radio, Shillong. The programme focused on earthquake safety, structural and non-structural mitigation of buildings. The programme was broadcasted on International Disaster Risk Reduction Day. To instill the culture of disaster preparedness amongst school fraternity, mock drill exercises were conducted in various schools of the state. The students were trained in Evacuation drill, first-aid and search & rescue.

Odisha
(Contributed by Jyotiraj Patra, Bhubaneswar)

Towards an enabling environment to step up for Disaster Risk- In an effort to highlight the need to contextualize this year’s IDDR theme one of the members wrote an article entitled ‘Towards an enabling environment to step up for disaster risk’ (available at http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/news/v.php?id=22757&a=email and www.orissadiary.com/ShowOriyaColumn.asp?id=29689)

In the present flood recovery and rehabilitation scenario in Odisha, the opportunities to institutionalize the engagement of children and youth in DRR programmes and planning are many.

Jammu & Kashmir
(Contributed by Aamir Ali, Officer in Special Duty, Divisional Commissioner Office, Srinagar)

On the occasion of International Disaster Reduction Day, an impressive rally was organised by Civil Defence J&K, in collaboration with Disaster Management Cell of Divisional Administration Kashmir. Many prominent NGOs and senior officers from Police and Civil Administration participated in the rally. The rally was flagged–off from Regional Civil Defence Control Room located at Kothibagh on Maulana Azad Road, Srinagar and passed through various parts of the City and culminated at Civil Defence Control Room. Students from various schools along with volunteers carrying placards, raised slogans to make people aware about the various precautions required to be taken during disasters and distributed pamphlets, free of cost amongst the bystanders and shopkeepers.

Speaking on the occasion Divisional Commissioner said that all necessary measures should be taken to reduce the vulnerability and create an atmosphere of disaster preparedness. He stressed on the need to take disaster preparedness to each and every school of the State by starting School Safety programmes, so that the young children are better prepared to handle any eventuality. He said that young people should be empowered, so that can actively get involved in disaster risk reduction, which will ultimately make our cities, towns and villages disaster resilient.

Manipur
(Contributed by Simanchal Pattnaik, State Project Officer, Manipur)

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction was observed by Relief and Disaster Management Department, Government of Manipur on 12 October 2011. An awareness motor cycle rally was flagged off to spread the awareness in the city. The rally was carried out by Royal Riders Association, Imphal, Manipur. 1000 Posters and 2000 Pamphlets on Earth Quake Safety Measures/ tips were distributed among the general public by the Royal Riders at different places during the rally.

The photographs can be accessed at:
http://www.facebook.com/media/set/set=a.2496555570807.2140105.1160382640&type=1&l=3dd647ee

Haryana
(Contributed by Sarat Panda, State Project Officer, Haryana)

The International Day for Disaster Reduction was commemorated in the districts of Faridabad, Rohtak and Panipat. At Panipat, in collaboration with NDMA and NDRF, an awareness campaign was launched. The NDRF's 8th Battalion, Noida is supported the initiative. School children, youth volunteers from National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps participated in the campaign. The awareness campaign was spearheaded by the district administration. Awareness rallies, poster competition, school awareness cum orientation meetings, display and demonstration on disaster preparedness, rescue equipment and techniques was conducted by NDRF in the district of Panipat.