

DISASTERS UPDATE

www.nidm.gov.in

Date: 21.08.16

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

National

'Don't blame nature, bolster disaster preparedness,' says parliamentary panel on Chennai deluge

PTI, August 21, 2016 21:14 IST



The Hindu, Residents of Ram Nagar, Velachery rescued in fibre boats by Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Departments in Chennai.

A Parliamentary panel has rejected Union Home Secretary Rajiv Mehrishi's contention that there cannot be preparation for a disaster like the Chennai floods which "occurs once in 100 years".

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs in its report on 'Disaster in Chennai caused by torrential rainfall and consequent flooding', submitted to the Rajya Sabha, strongly recommended that the Ministry of Home Affairs, through its subordinate concerned agencies, bolster its disaster preparedness.

Deposing before the committee, headed by Congress MP P Bhattacharya, the Union Home Secretary had said, "There can be no preparation for a disaster that occurs once in hundred years because the cost of preparing for the disaster would be disproportionately high."

The panel said it does not quite accept the argument that since the rainfall was unprecedented and was more than the hundred years' average the damage was also huge.

“In the opinion of the committee, any natural disaster of bigger intensity has the propensity to cause damage. Thus instead of putting the blame on the forces of nature, we should use advanced technology to fight it,” it said.

The standing committee suggested that separate action should be taken to prepare calamity map of all important cities by developing standard vulnerability indices so as to minimise loss of life, loss of private and public property and vital installations.

“Moreover, the administration of both centre and state should work together and remain vigilant to tackle the situation,” it said in its 198-page report.

When contacted, a Home Ministry spokesperson said the Ministry would examine the Parliamentary standing committee’s report.

“However, mitigation efforts are largely a state subject and Government of India can assist to the extent possible through various central government schemes,” the spokesperson said.

The committee also observed that natural disaster of high magnitude will always adversely affect people in large numbers and the administration has to respond in a fastest possible manner.

“Accordingly, the National Disaster Management Authority and all concerned bodies of central and state governments should have established procedures so that vital time is not lost in wriggling out procedural delays,” it said.

The panel observed that since urban floods are taking place in cities like Mumbai, Surat, Srinagar and Chennai, these indicate that the problem may further escalate in future.

“Therefore, the committee recommends that the guidelines prepared by NDMA should be scrupulously followed and they should also review town planning of each city by giving due importance to clear flood channels, proper drainage, safe passage to excess water in lakes, other water bodies, de-siltation of river bed, removal of illegal encroachment,” it said.

Devastating floods submerged Chennai and its neighbouring areas in November-December 2015 claiming the lives of over 400 people.

27 killed as rain lashes three States

PTI, August 21, 2016 02:02 IST

Heavy rain in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand since Friday claimed 27 lives, even as rivers continued to be in spate in Bihar.

Fifteen deaths were reported in Madhya Pradesh since Friday evening as the Met department predicted more showers and sounded heavy downpour alert for some districts on Sunday.

Three Indian Air Force aircraft dropped food packets and medicines in flooded areas of Rewa district, Collector Rahul Jain said.



Villagers move to safety, carrying bare essentials on a boat, after their hamlet was submerged in floods near Maner in Patna district on Saturday. —PHOTO: RANJEET KUMAR

Seven people, including a woman and four minors, were killed and three others were injured when a house collapsed in Rahatgarh area of Sagar district on Saturday.

Two people, including an old woman, were also killed and seven others were injured when a newly-constructed building collapsed due to incessant rains at Maihar in Satna district. A jeep carrying two persons was swept away in the swollen Betwa river as it attempted to cross a bridge in Raisen district. Three bodies were recovered from a nullah on Saturday in Chhattarpur district. The victims were travelling in a car that was washed away off a bridge on the flooded nullah on Friday.

In Rajasthan, five people were killed when their house collapsed in Phool Baroda village in Baran district due to incessant rains since Saturday morning that created a flood-like situation in several parts of the State.

Several people are feared stranded in Chabra, Chipabarode, Kawai, Harnavadashahaji areas as the Parvan, Parwati, Ujjad and other rivers are overflowing after the rains.

Seven of family killed

Seven members of a family were killed when their house was razed to the ground by huge boulders that rolled down the hill following a cloudburst in Pauri district of Uttarakhand on Saturday.

The Army was called in to the flood-affected areas of Baran district as senior officials also rushed to the spot.

At least 24 people were airlifted in Baran district and nearby areas. Several villages remained inundated after water entered buildings, houses and a private power plant in Baran.

Meanwhile, two youths were reportedly swept away by strong currents in the Balapura Dam near Chipabarode town of Baran district. However, one of them was rescued later.

Dengue in Lucknow forces new dress code for school children

The Hindu, August 21, 2016 08:20 IST

With the menace of dengue spreading in the Uttar Pradesh capital, the district administration has asked all schools to ensure that a new dress code - with full sleeve shirts and pants - be implemented without any delay, an official said on Saturday.

District Magistrate Raj Shekhar informed that most schools, after being alerted about dengue and its prevention, have told children and their parents that Monday onwards all students up to class VIII will have to wear full sleeve shirts, trousers and the girls will have to wear leggings or stockings with full sleeve shirts and skirts.

School children above class VIII have been asked to wear full sleeve kurta or shrugs (for girls), and boys have been asked to come in full sleeve shirt and pant. "We are taking all precautions to ensure that dengue does not spread further and as part of our drive, schools have been sensitised with do's and dont's and I am happy that most have complied with the orders," the district magistrate said.

School managements have also been asked to ensure fogging in the campus. More than 50 dengue patients have been reported from the city in the last one week. As many as four persons, including two policemen, have died due to the vector-borne disease.

Officials said that the municipal corporation has been put on the alert, asked to clean up garbage dumps and take out drainage plugs while hospitals have been asked to stock adequate medication and platelets. - IANS

3 hurt in Kolkata building fire

PTI, August 21, 2016 08:20 IST

Three persons suffered burn injuries as a fire broke out on the first floor of a five-storied building in central part of the city triggering panic among the residents.

The Kolkata Police and fire brigade officials said that five fire tenders were immediately pressed into service to contain the fire.

The officials said fire started at a godown, possibly due to short circuit, and spread to the adjacent area causing panic among the residents in Bowbazar area.

All the residents of the building were immediately evacuated. A portion of the building was damaged. - PTI

Fresh low pressure over the Bay

TNN | Aug 21, 2016, 06.55 AM IST



Rain and thundershower would occur in most places in Odisha. (Representative Image)

Bhubaneswar: Amid signs of improvement in the flash floods situation in Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts, a fresh low pressure over the Bay of Bengal has spread panic among people living in those areas. It is likely to trigger more rain in several parts of the state from Sunday. The India Meterological Department (IMD) has issued warning of heavy rainfall at one or two places in the coastal districts in the next 24 hours. The flood situation in the Subarnarekha river improved on Saturday as the water receded and stood at 10.66 metre at Rajghat by the evening against the danger level of 10.36 metre.

Fire destroys two shops in Arunachal

TNN | Aug 21, 2016, 06.40 AM IST



more than 1 lakh buildings in the city lack proper fire-safety systems.

ITANAGAR: A fire in the Swami-Camp area, about 3km from Hayuliang town, has gutted two shops and three rooms of a building recently. Five injured have been provided an immediate relief of Rs3,000 each by ADC in-charge Tojum Ete.

The district administration has constituted a high-level inquiry committee, headed by District Incidence Commander Tom Ratan, to find out the reason behind the frequent

fires in Hayuliang township and Swami Camp. The district administration has appealed to the people to take precautionary measures while handling gas cylinders. Meanwhile, deputy commissioner M Riba announced a relief of Rs 1 lakh for the fire victims.

Flood situation grim in UP, 3,000 moved to camps TNN | Aug 21, 2016, 12.33 PM IST



Varanasi: The rising Ganga and Varuna have inundated almost all localities along the rivers. On Saturday, about 3,000 people were taken away from the flood affected areas to relief camps running at 11 places. The situation in the 6 km stretch from Sarai Mohana to Sadar Tehsil along Varuna is grim. The condition is same in the localities along Ganga. The flood situation is grim in Ballia, where Ganga was flowing over 2 metres above the danger mark. According to the flood bulletin of the Central Water Commission, Middle Ganga division-III, the river was flowing above the danger mark in Ghazipur and Varanasi, while the water level was just 0.15 m below the danger mark in Mirzapur on Saturday evening. In Ghazipur, the river was flowing 1.4 m above the danger mark. In Varanasi, it was flowing 0.6 m above the danger mark.

As many as 52 boats have been engaged to take people from flood affected areas to relief camps and other safer places. Food packets have been arranged at relief camps. Besides the government officials and staff, the teams of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and flood companies of PAC have also been engaged for quick rescue of people.

Flood situation remains grim in 12 districts TNN | Aug 21, 2016, 11.41 AM IST



Patna: The flood situation in the stretches along the riverine areas of the Ganga over 400km of its distance through 12 districts of the state is likely to persist over the next couple of days, as the inflow of Sone water into it is most likely to increase from late Sunday night or by early Monday.

At present, the opening of the gates of Farakka barrage across the Ganga in West Bengal has facilitated quick outflow of the water during the last 24 hours. However, the Madhya Pradesh government has released water from its Bansagar Dam on river Sone on Friday, which is most likely to reach Patna and flow into the Ganga near Maner from late Sunday night or Monday morning.

"The water level of the Ganga in 12 districts of the state is dependent on the water inflow into it from river Sone," said a source in the flood control cell of the Bihar water resource department (WRD), adding that the water discharge through Indrapuri barrage at Dehri in Rohtas district was 3.22 lakh cusecs on Sunday afternoon.

*Compiled by
Dr.AD Kaushik*