



**Webinar Report**

**On**

**Contextualizing Resilient  
Development in Himalayas:**

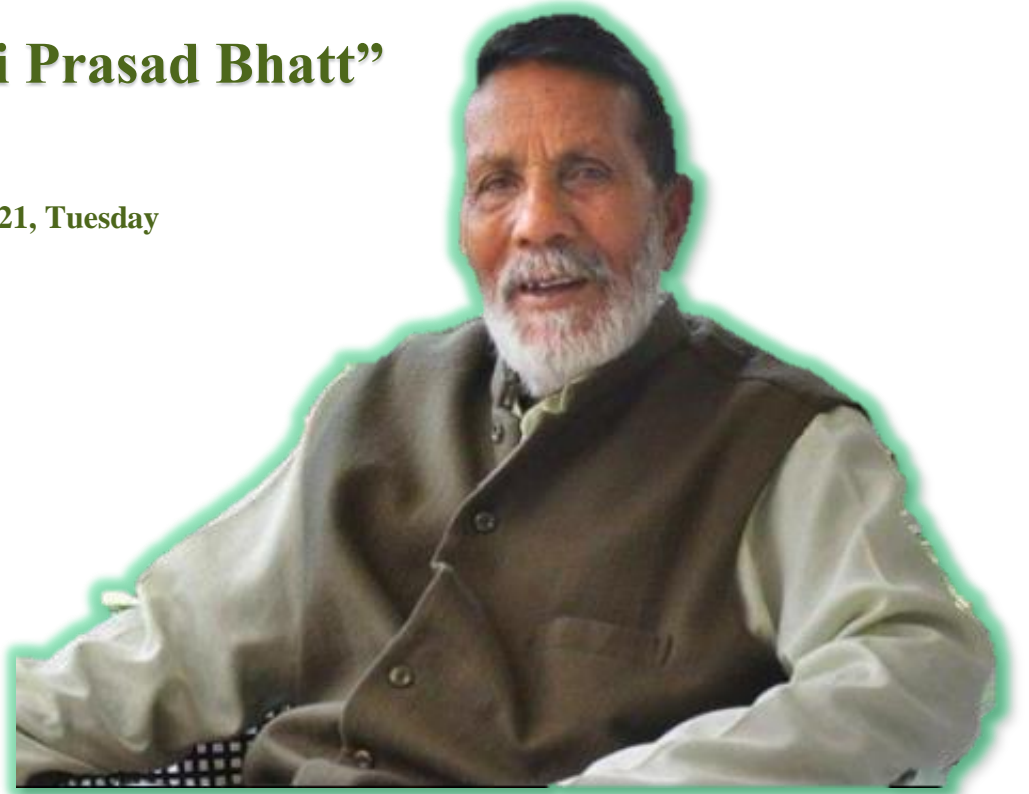
**In conversation with**

**“Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt”**



**Date: 23rd February 2021, Tuesday**

**Time: 12:00- 1:30 pm**



**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

**MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS.**

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

# Contents

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Background .....          | 3  |
| About NIDM .....          | 3  |
| About the Speaker .....   | 4  |
| Programme Team .....      | 5  |
| Programme Schedule.....   | 6  |
| Session Summary .....     | 7  |
| Key Takeaways .....       | 8  |
| List of Participant ..... | 10 |

## Background

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Over the recent years, the Himalayan ecosystems have been severely affected by climate change and anthropogenic activities. The communities living in the remote mountain areas face greater challenge for survival. Uncertainties in the availability of water, fuel, energy, fodder etc. also affect the quality of life and livelihoods of the people living in the region.

Uttarakhand is one such state that has been badly affected by the disasters in the past and also recently. The disastrous flooding in summer, also called as the “Himalyan Tsunami” of 2013 which claimed more than 6000 lives was a result of climate change and poorly planned development. The glacial melting due to rising temperatures and continued development in the region with an unpredictability has become a major concern.

Recently, the Uttarakhand flood disaster that began on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021 in the environs of the Nanda Devi National Park was believed to be a result of the landslide, an avalanche or a glacial lake outburst flood. The satellite imageries imply that a landslide may have triggered the event. It caused flooding in Chamoli district. About 58 people were confirmed killed and more than 150 went missing.

In this context, it is imperative to ensure resilient development of the region. Little can be done to prevent such kind of flash floods, however, their frequency and destruction cause can still be minimized by using technology. Case studies in this context demonstrating the differential experiences and vulnerabilities of the region, will give us a better understanding of the issue.

This webinar is thus an initiative to understand the situation of the mountainous regions and discuss the resilient developments and solutions in the Himalayas.

## About NIDM

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National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) was constituted under an act of Parliament with a vision to play the role of a premier institute for capacity development in India and the region. The efforts in this direction that began with the formation of the National Centre for Disaster Management (NCDM) in 1995 gained impetus with its re-designation as the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) for training and capacity development. Under the Disaster Management Act 2005, NIDM has been assigned nodal responsibilities for human resource development, capacity building, training, research, documentation and policy advocacy in the field of disaster management. Both as a National Centre and then as the National Institute, NIDM has performed a crucial role in bringing disaster risk reduction to the forefront of the national agenda. The Institute believes that disaster risk reduction is possible only through promotion of a "Culture of Prevention" involving all stakeholders. The Institute works through strategic partnerships with various ministries and departments of the central,

state and local governments, academic, research and technical organizations in India and abroad and other bi-lateral and multi-lateral international agencies. NIDM is proud to have a multi-disciplinary core team of professionals working in various aspects of disaster management. In its endeavour to facilitate training and capacity development, the Institute has state-of-the-art facilities like class rooms, seminar hall and video-conferencing facilities etc. The Institute has a well-stocked library exclusively on the theme of disaster management and mitigation. The Institute provides training in face-to-face, on-line and self-learning mode as well as satellite based training. In-house and off-campus facet-face training to the officials of the state governments is provided free of charge including modest boarding and lodging facilities. NIDM provides Capacity Building support to various National and State level agencies in the field of Disaster Management & Disaster Risk Reduction. The Institute's vision is to create a Disaster Resilient India by building the capacity at all levels for disaster prevention and preparedness.

## About the Speaker

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**Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt**

*(Environmentalists and Social Activist)*

Chandi Prasad Bhatt (born 1934) is an Indian Gandhian environmentalist and social activist, who founded Dasholi Gram Swarajya Sangh (DGSS) in Gopeshwar in 1964, which later became a mother-organization to the Chipko Movement, in which he was one of the pioneers, and for which he was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1982, followed by the Padma Bhushan in 2005.

Today he is known for his work on subaltern social ecology, and considered one of India's first modern environmentalist. In 2013, he was the recipient of the Gandhi Peace Prize.

# Programme Team

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## ***Patron***

Major General Manoj Kumar Bindal VSM, ED, NIDM

## ***Convenor***

Prof Santosh Kumar

Head, G&IDRR Division, NIDM Email: [Profsantosh@gmail.com](mailto:Profsantosh@gmail.com)

## ***Coordinator***

Dr. Anuradha Maurya YP, NIDM

Email: [anuradha.nidm@gmail.com](mailto:anuradha.nidm@gmail.com)

## Programme Schedule

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| <b>Time</b>              | <b>Session</b>   | <b>Resource Persons</b>   |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| <b>12:00 - 12: 05 pm</b> | <b>Inaugural/<br/>Welcome<br/>Session</b>                | <b>Prof Santosh Kumar,<br/><i>Head GiDRR, NIDM</i></b>                              |
| <b>12:05 - 12:15 pm</b>  | <b>Introductory<br/>Remarks</b>                          | <b>Maj General Manoj<br/>Kumar Bindal, VSM,<br/><i>ED, NIDM</i></b>                 |
| <b>12:15 - 12:50 pm</b>  | <b>Special<br/>Lecture/<br/>Discussion</b>               | <b>Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt<br/><i>Environmentalist and Social<br/>Activist</i></b> |
| <b>12:50 - 1:00 pm</b>   | <b>Discussant's<br/>Remark</b>                           | <b>Shri Kamal Kishore,<br/><i>Member NDMA &amp;<br/>Chairman CDRI</i></b>           |
| <b>1: 00 - 1: 20 pm</b>  | <b>Sawal Jawab<br/>(Q &amp; A)</b>                       |   |
| <b>1: 20 - 1:30 pm</b>   | <b>Summing<br/>up<br/>and<br/>Concluding<br/>Remarks</b> | <b>Prof Santosh Kumar</b>   |

## Session Summary

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### **Shri Kamal Kishore**

Chairman CDRI and Member NDMA was the first speaker. He spoke about the book of parvat parvat bastoi basti and talked about disasters that are inevitable. Chandi prasad bhaats work and his unconditional work in this field. He spoke about Uttarakhand disasters and the physical factors and the underlying cascading effects. He also iterated the human made factors.

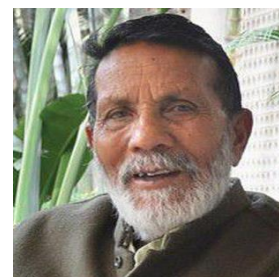


We should focus on following:

- At a village level a minimum response capacity should be created and made functional.
- Community based disaster risk management. Every village should have a DM plan and the drills should be done. In next 5 years 100 percent coverage CBD DM plan should be there in mountains.
- How to ensure that all infrastructure, road bridges how can they become climate resilient. Need to work towards this in the hill towns, a special time bound programme for building codes implementation.
- In mountains climate change adaptation and disaster management should work together at local level.

### **Shri Chandi Prasad Bhatt**

He spoke about the fragility of the mountains and his experience of Uttarkashi and kedarnath disasters. He talked about earthquake preparedness. Giving examples from past, he spoke about the changed topography of the region of Assam and Arunachal, which



will further create damage. So, he suggested that people should be made aware about these issues and work together with each other. He also advised that after occurrence of disasters like earthquakes, in glaciers burst areas and glacier lake region people should be made aware about the changing topography. These disasters have led to massive landslides in the Mansoravor region, malpa where all the hills have come down. So, priority is on awareness so that the effect of it can be minimized.

He gave various examples such as in 1950 Arunachal- 600 people died. The house buildings were not seismic safe. Therefore, earthquake resilient buildings should be constructed. He highlighted that all the developmental projects should only proceed if there is no harm to any lake mountain land environment etc. He also said that in the small villages there are no maps or building codes given to build houses. There is no model for that, therefore, simple, cheap and easy technology is used. Awareness amongst people also need to be for promoting afforestation and in saving trees and environment. He stressed that “Awareness should be in a group which also focusses on togetherness”. He advised on various programmes on how to stop waste n rivers and encouraged the audience on practicing them. He gave an example of the Nepal earthquake in 2017, where a lot of sand flew in eastern UP and Bihar. He emphasized on the people’s movement and silt flow that needs to be avoided and stopped. Silt in river will raise water level will lead to flood, therefore highlighting the importance of silt treatment.

He stressed on the fact that today, it will be all development everywhere but this will not stay on the mountains, people shall see the repercussions and then again natural things will take over”. He also gave various examples of disaster times and linked it by raising several questions. During Kedarnath disaster, houses were not insured and due to closure of shops, people suffered a lot of losses. How to cover these losses was one of his major concerns. He also warned that in future, more severe disasters are bound to happen.

## Key Takeaways

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1. Mountain area research and development should be rigorously done.
2. The local level needs to be involved all the Disaster Management process: response, preparedness etc.
3. The disasters in mountains causes destruction in both the plains and the hills.

Therefore, a hill and plain area integrated DM plan should be constructed.

4. At an international level, all the national boundary nations should be in regular correspondence with each other for monitoring and issuing of early warning in terms of any disaster situation.
5. At the local level, some insurance and financing schemes for the local villagers should be adopted.
6. An amount of trust needs to be created in the local people that the infrastructure would not cause damage to the locals in future.
7. Role of community awareness and preparedness is very important.
8. Construction in hills should actually focus on the local development of the area and not just on monetary gains of agencies.
9. Scientific agencies need to take up more research and adopt a multidisciplinary approach to analyse the projects and create awareness amongst the locals for the same.
10. Women play a very important role in any movement; therefore, they need to be involved in all activities of disaster management.
11. Search and rescue teams should reach in time without delay as it further delays the operations

## List of Participant

| S.NO | Name                  | Email                         |
|------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1    | Dr Rambabu Botcha     | botcharg@gmail.com            |
| 2    | Dr.Ashok Maddela      | ashokmaddela@icloud.com       |
| 3    | Manoj Kumar Sharma    | ms.001729@gmail.com           |
| 4    | Vanam Nagaraju        | rajn05955@gmail.com           |
| 5    | DR. MEENAKSHI         | meenakshi2584@gmail.com       |
| 6    | Ajit Sutradhar        | tarunsutradhar790@gmail.com   |
| 7    | Tultul Deb            | tultuldeb2@gmail.com          |
| 8    | Sanjay Sehgal         | sehgalsunju@yahoo.co.in       |
| 9    | Sanjay Bhalke         | sbhalke72@gmail.com           |
| 10   | Bulti Dey             | bultidey011987@gmail.com      |
| 11   | ILANGEERAN P          | nesamorgindia@gmail.com       |
| 12   | RAJKUMAR THOTA        | totarajkumar@gmail.com        |
| 13   | Sheetal Rani          | sheetal0610@yahoo.com         |
| 14   | Dr Satyanarayan Hota  | drsatyahota111@gmail.com      |
| 15   | Dr. M.Suganya         | suganyaaravazhi2015@gmail.com |
| 16   | Tulsiram              | tulsiramsiyag1975@gmail.com   |
| 17   | R Yadagiri            | giri.ramavath@gmail.com       |
| 18   | Dr Anuradha           | anuradha.nidm@gmail.com       |
| 19   | Sanjib Debnath        | sanjibisoffice@gmail.com      |
| 20   | R Renuka              | renukareddy563@gmail.com      |
| 21   | Mr. PRAHALAD DHAKER   | dhakerpr92@gmail.com          |
| 22   | Dr. Anil Kumar Sharma | aks10061961@gmail.com         |
| 23   | Sukendu DebBarma      | sukanebr@gmail.com            |
| 24   | Dr Mahaveer Prasad    | drmp1977@gmail.com            |
| 25   | S RANJITH KUMAR       | ranjithgoud152@gmail.com      |
| 26   | Pranay Kumar Gupta    | pranaykrgupta@gmail.com       |
| 27   | K Srilatha            | madugulasrilatha@gmail.com    |

|    |                           |                                    |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 28 | Balwinder kumar           | sunnyg.gill34@gmail.com            |
| 29 | Sijo Sabu                 | sijosabu94@gmail.com               |
| 30 | Jagroop Singh             | jagroopsingh@hotmail.com           |
| 31 | Sumit Sarma               | sumitsarma1984@gmail.com           |
| 32 | Surinder Kumar Sharma     | sksharma54@gmail.com               |
| 33 | Anaya Pradhan Rowdy       | rowdyy143@gmail.com                |
| 34 | ansuman sahu              | sahoo.ansuman4@gmail.com           |
| 35 | Abhijit Baidya            | abhijitbaidya444@gmail.com         |
| 36 | Dr.Mohan Lal Verma        | mohanlalverma392@gmail.com         |
| 37 | Dr.B.MANICKAVASAGAM       | drmanickam_au@yahoo.com            |
| 38 | Rubi                      | rubi12378@yahoo.co.in              |
| 39 | Dr.KAMAL KANWAR RATHORE   | kamal.k.rathore@gmail.com          |
| 40 | Narayan Hari Sonone       | nhsonone0@gmail.com                |
| 41 | Lopamudra Das             | lopamudradas849@gmail.com          |
| 42 | Dr. Mahima Gupta          | mahi24jan@gmail.com                |
| 43 | Er.Mukesh Kumar Saubhagya | mukesh_saubhagya124@rediffmail.com |
| 44 | Om Prakash                | omprakash1960@gmail.com            |
| 45 | Dr.Britto                 | santhiyabritto@gmail.com           |
| 46 | Dr Jagdeep Kaur           | drjagdeep.2007@gmail.com           |

|    |                         |                                 |
|----|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 47 | Dr.KUSUMA<br>AGRAHARAM  | drsumavsu09@gmail.com           |
| 48 | jagannathsethi          | jagasethi533@gmail.com          |
| 49 | jagdish prasad khora    | jagdish371@gmail.com            |
| 50 | Jamunaprasad Mahanta    | jamunaprasadmahanta@gmail.com   |
| 51 | baitura deep            | baituradeep@gmail.com           |
| 52 | jayalal nayak           | jayalalnayak95@gmail.com        |
| 53 | Bindu Choudhary         | chaudharyb1972@gmail.com        |
| 54 | Tsewang Dolma           | tsewadolma@gmail.com            |
| 55 | Satyabrata Jena         | Sbjena2020@gmail.com            |
| 56 | Kavita Damodarrao Joshi | kavita.joshi411@gmail.com       |
| 57 | Rajkumar Tukaram Rathod | rajkumarrathod1984@gmail.com    |
| 58 | PRASENJIT DAS           | das049@gmail.com                |
| 59 | Ramsingh Meena          | ramsinghmeena979@gmail.com      |
| 60 | Dr. M.Balasubramaniam   | balasubramaniambu@gmail.com     |
| 61 | Vijaya kumari           | 9010630431@Email.com            |
| 62 | Nethravathi R Siri      | nethravathisiri@gmail.com       |
| 63 | Lavanya R               | lavanya.official30@gmail.com    |
| 64 | Vijaya kumari           | chandrashakerazadazad@gmail.com |
| 65 | Balaiah kankati         | kanakati@gmail.com              |

|    |                        |                              |
|----|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 66 | Puja Ghosh             | pujag391@gmail.com           |
| 67 | Aman Kumar             | dmpddmabgs@gmail.com         |
| 68 | Dr. Sk. Md. Nizamuddin | nizamsm.pu@gmail.com         |
| 69 | Dr. K.S. Malathi       | malathibharat@gmail.com      |
| 70 | G .Susheela            | goggalasuseela@gmail.com     |
| 71 | 1                      | ksatyavedam53@gmail.com      |
| 72 | Anand Kumar Chhetri    | achhetri99@gmail.com         |
| 73 | Benjamine              | benjjisu@gmail.com           |
| 74 | BIJOY DEBNATH          | dbijoy998@gmail.com          |
| 75 | Narendra Singh Malik   | nsm300365@gmail.com          |
| 76 | SHIKHAR VIJAY          | vijayshikhar2000@gmail.com   |
| 77 | Dr. A. MALLESWARI DEVI | malleswaridevi1967@gmail.com |
| 78 | Dr. DHIRAJ KUMAR YADAV | dheerajforestry@gmail.com    |
| 79 | Gangadharan Nagarajan  | dharan2211@gmail.com         |
| 80 | Navaratan Gusaiwal     | navaratangusaiwal@gmail.com  |
| 81 | KUMANAN.S              | skmn2015@gmail.com           |
| 82 | Rama Pradeep Reddy     | pramadeep@gmail.com          |
| 83 | Mrs. RAJNI VARUN       | rajnivarun28@gmail.com       |
| 84 | Tultul Deb             | tultuldeb2@gmail.com         |

|     |                         |                                      |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 85  | Dr. Surojit Sen Gupta   | meghaboy@yahoo.com                   |
| 86  | VAIRAVAMANI M           | vairavamani1996@gmail.com            |
| 87  | Y.Nirmala               | kalakonda104@Gmail.com               |
| 88  | Gouramohan Hembram      | hembramgouramohan@gmail.com          |
| 89  | Gouri Sankar Mishra     | gourisankar84@gmail.com              |
| 90  | gupteswar               | gupteswarkuanr15@gmail.com           |
| 91  | Gyanendra Behera        | bgyanendra5@gmail.com                |
| 92  | Kanak Umredkar          | kanak25umredkar@gmail.com            |
| 93  | Dalbir Singh            | dalbirdhadwal1958@gmail.com          |
| 94  | Dr. M.Suganya           | suganyaaravazhi2015@gmail.com        |
| 95  | Dr Sunita chawala       | drsunitachawala@gmail.com            |
| 96  | R DEEPIKA               | deepikajmss@gmail.com                |
| 97  | Dr C Prakasam           | C.prakasam@chitkarauniversity.edu.in |
| 98  | Kavita Damodarrao Joshi | kavita.joshi411@gmail.com            |
| 99  | BRAHMAJI RAO PANDU      | drbrahmajirao@gmail.com              |
| 100 | Baljeet kaur            | deepaman101992@gmail.com             |
| 101 | Md. Jahadul Kazi        | jkazi786@gmail.com                   |