

National Disaster Response Force - A Study

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Abstract

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is a specialized force constituted "for the purpose of specialist response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster" under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 .The Apex Body for Disaster Management in India is the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The Chairman of the NDMA is the Prime Minister.

Key Words: Natural Disasters, Massive Losses

Introduction

Natural disasters in India, many of them related to the climate of India, cause massive losses of Indian life and property. Droughts, flash floods, cyclones, avalanches, landslides brought on by torrential rains, and snowstorms pose the greatest threats. A natural disaster might be caused by earthquakes, flooding, volcanic eruption, landslides, hurricanes etc. In order to be classified as a disaster it will have profound environmental effect and/or human loss and frequently incurs financial loss. Other dangers include frequent summer dust storms, which usually track from north to south; they cause extensive property damage in North India[2] and deposit large amounts of dust from arid regions. Hail is also common in parts of India, causing severe damage to standing crops such as rice and wheat.

Objective of the Study

- To study about National Disaster Response Force and their activities

About NDRF

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Two national calamities in quick succession in the form of Orissa Super Cyclone (1999) and Gujarat Earthquake (2001) brought about the realization of the need of having a specialist response mechanism at National Level to effectively respond to disasters. This realization led to the enactment of the DM Act on 26 Dec 2005. The NDMA was constituted to lay down the policies, plans and guidelines for disaster management.

The DM Act has made the statutory provisions for constitution of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for the purpose of specialized response to natural and man-made disasters. Accordingly, in 2006 NDRF was constituted with 08 Bns (02 Bn each from BSF, CRPF, ITBP and CISF). As on date NDRF is having strength of 10 Bns. Each NDRF Bn consists of 1149 personnel. Union cabinet has also approved the conversion/up-gradation of 02 Bns from SSB.

The force is gradually emerging as the most visible and vibrant multi-disciplinary, multi-skilled, high-tech, stand-alone force capable of dealing with all types of natural and man-made disasters.

The DM Act, 2005 envisages a paradigm shift from the erstwhile response centric syndrome to a proactive, holistic and integrated management of disasters with emphasis on prevention, mitigation and preparedness. This national vision inter alia, aims at inculcating a culture of preparedness among all stakeholders.

NDRF has proved its importance in achieving this vision by highly skilled rescue and relief operations, regular and intensive training and re-training, capacity building & familiarization exercises within the area of responsibility of respective NDRF Bns, carrying out mock drills and joint exercises with the various stakeholders.

Vision of NDRF is to emerge as the most visible and vibrant multi-disciplinary, multi-skilled, high-tech force capable to deal with all types of natural as well as manmade disasters and to mitigate the effects of disasters.

Role and Mandate of NDRF

- Specialized response during disasters
- Proactive deployment during impending disaster situations
- Acquire and continually upgrade its own training and skills
- Liaison, Reconnaissance, Rehearsals and Mock Drills
- Impart basic and operational level training to State Response Forces (Police, Civil Defence and Home Guards)
- Vis-à-vis Community- All NDRF Bns are actively engaged in various:
- Community Capacity Building Programme
- Public Awareness Campaign
- Exhibitions : Posters, Pamphlets, literatures

Unique Force

- The only dedicated disaster response force of the world.
- The only agency with comprehensive response capabilities having multi-disciplinary and multi-skilled, high-tech, stand-alone nature.
- Experienced paramilitary personnel specially trained and equipped for disaster response.
- Capabilities for undertaking disaster response, prevention, mitigation and capacity building.

Organization

At present, National Disaster Response Force consists of ten battalions, three each from the BSF and CRPF and two each from CISF and ITBP. Each battalion have 18 self-contained specialist search and rescue teams of 45 personnel each including engineers, technicians, electricians, dog squads and medical/paramedics. The total strength of each battalion is 1,149.

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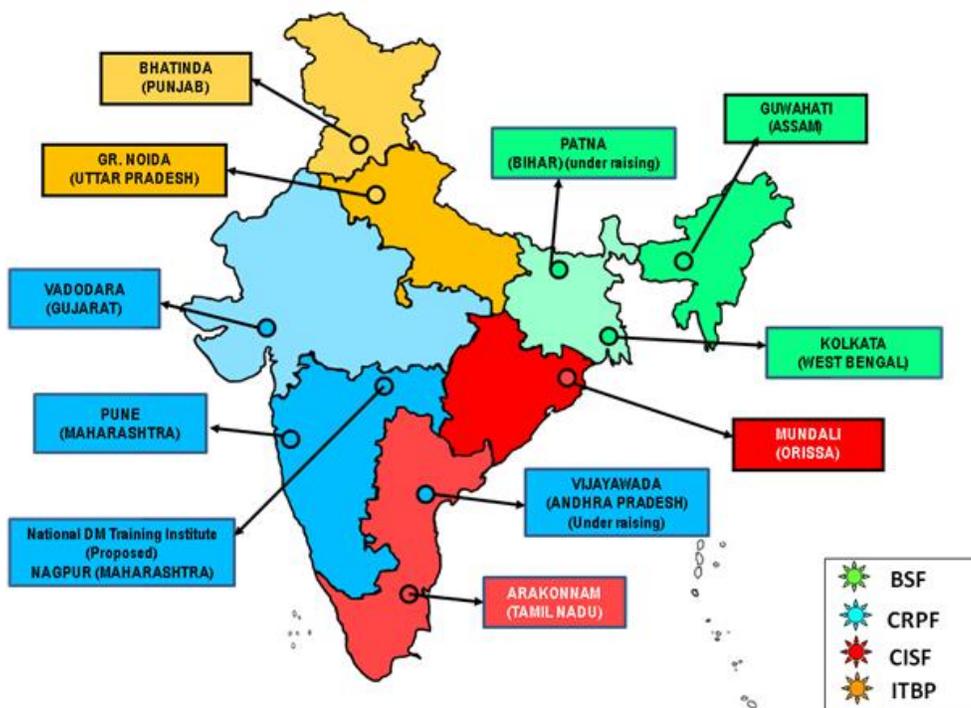
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Union cabinet has also approved the conversion/up-gradation of 02 Bns from SSB. All the ten battalions have been equipped and trained to respond natural as well as man-made disasters. Four battalions of them are also trained and equipped for response during chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) emergencies.

Locations of NDRF BNS

These NDRF battalions are located at ten different locations in the country based on the vulnerability profile of country and to cut down the response time for their deployment at disaster site.



1) Training of NDRF

- INSARAG Asia-Pacific Exercise, China, 4–7 August 2006
- OPCW Chemical Emergency Course, Finland, 21–25 August 2006
- UNDAC Induction Course, Korea, 17–29 Sept 2006
- INSARAG Asia-Pacific Exercise, Mongolia, 31 July – 2 August 2007

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- UNDAC Induction Course, Malaysia, 10–14 July 2007
- INSARAG Meeting, Korea, 3–6 Oct 2007
- UNDAC Induction Course, New Zealand, 14–16 Oct 2007
- INSARAG Asia-Pacific Exercise, Switzerland, 17–20 Nov 2008
- Management of Dead Bodies, Geneva, Switzerland, 4–8 Feb 2008
- Singapore Civil Defence Academy, Singapore, 10–27 March 2008
- INSARAG Asia-Pacific Exercise, Philippines, 15–17 April 2008
- APCSS, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 29 May – 27 June 2008
- Advanced Search & Rescue Course, Florida, USA, 1–5 Sep 2008
- Chemical Exercise, OPCW, Tehran, Iran, 1–5 Nov 2008
- INSARAG Asia-Pacific Exercise, Nepal, 21–24 April 2009
- APCSS, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 20 Aug – 22 Sep 2009
- Bio-terrorism Table top Exercise, Montreux, Switzerland, 7–8 Sep 2009

NDRF Rescue Operation

2007

- Flood in Bhavnagar, Gujarat – 3–5 July 2007 – Rescued 291 people; distributed 3,750 food packets
- Flood in Rajkot, Gujarat – 3–5 July 2007 – Rescued 291 people; distributed 3,750 food packets

2008

- Building collapse (Hotel Shakunt) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat – 3–5 Feb 2008 – Saved 10 people & recovered 6 dead bodies
- Flood in Lakhimpur, Assam – 14 June – 20 July 2008 – Rescued 2,500 civilians
- Flood in Dhemaji, Assam – 16 June – 31 July 2008 – Rescued 600 people
- Flood in Lakhimpur, Assam – 21 July – 4 Aug 2008 – Evacuated 2,000 people
- Kosi breach in Bihar – 20 Aug 2008 – Saved over 1,05,000 people including women, children & aged; distributed medicines and water bottles
- Flood in Lakhimpur, Assam – 31 Aug – 9 Sep 2008 – Saved 750 people

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- Flood in Puri, Cuttack, Kendrapara & Jagatsinghpur, Odisha – Sept 2008 – Saved over 1,000 people
- Flood in Kamrup, Assam – 28 Sep 2008 – Saved 350 people
- Flood in Tiruvarur, Tamil Nadu – 26–30 Nov 2008 – Saved 773 people
- Flood in Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 26 Nov – 2 Dec 2008 – Rescued 1,550 people

2009

- Cyclone Aila (24 Pargana North & South, West Bengal) – 25 May – 10 June 2009 – Rescued 2,000 people; distribution of medicine to 30,000 victims & food packets to 16,000 homeless victims
- Flood in Barpeta, Assam – 27 May 2009 – Saved 300 people
- Flood in Junagarh and Porbandar, Gujarat – 16–29 July 2009 – Saved 2,225 people
- Flood in Kasarkode, Kannur and Ernakulam, Kerala – 17–24 July 2009 – Saved 180 people
- Flood in Sitamarhi, Bihar (Bagmati breach) – 2–9 Aug 2009 – Rescued 1,034 people; distributed medicines to 831 victims
- Flood in Howrah & Hooghly, West Bengal – 8–14 Sep 2009 – Rescue 675 people
- Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka Floods – Oct 2009 – Saved 10,659 people

2010

- Building collapse at Bellary, Karnataka – 27 Jan 2010 – Saved 20 human lives and recovered 27 dead bodies
- Flood in Guwahati, Assam – 20–25 April 2010 – Saved 300 human lives
- Cyclone Laila in Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka – 18 May 2010

2015

- NDRF rushed teams to parts of India and Nepal affected by a late April earthquake.
- Flood in Chennai, Tamil Nadu – 10 Nov – till date – Rescue operation in progress.

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NDRF Rescues Over 53,000 from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh



NDRF has deployed 75 rescue and relief teams to help the people hit by heavy rains in these states.

NEW DELHI: More than 53,000 people have been rescued by NDRF teams from the flood-ravaged areas in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

The National Disaster Response Force has deployed 75 rescue and relief teams, with about 40 rescuers in each, to help the people hit by heavy rains in these states and has also tasked two Deputy Inspector General-rank officers in Bihar and UP for monitoring the situation round-the-clock.

"So far, NDRF teams have evacuated/rescued more than 53,000 persons and provided medical assistance to 12,200 needy persons in this monsoon season. Operations are still continuing," the force said.

The National Disaster Response Force teams are deployed in Bihar's Munger, Samastipur, Begusarai, Fathuha, Patna, Bhagalpur, Didarganj, Danapur, Bakhtiyarpur, Buxar, Vaishali and Chhapra and evacuated over 1,748 marooned people to safer places.

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Similarly, it said, in Uttar Pradesh, these teams conducted rescue and relief operations at Allahabad, Banda, Gazipur, Varanasi and Ballia districts and evacuated 2,163 people, who were stranded in low lying areas.

A team has also been positioned at Mangan in North Sikkim and has helped evacuate more than 280 people to safer places, it said.

The forces' control room at its headquarters here is also monitoring the situation to coordinate with all the stakeholders.

Flood Rescue Operations

Fifty Five teams were deployed in Andhra Pradesh Gujarat, Odisha, Haryana, UP, Bihar, Punjab and Assam team of NDRF during the year 2011 for rescue of flood victims. Teams rescued 19288 persons and distributed 86.5 ton relief materials

Conclusion

It was essential that we look at disaster management from the development angle. It is no longer either a one-off or stand-alone activity. Despite the fact that disaster preparedness has not been identified as one of the MDGs, it is apparent that proper mechanisms for disaster awareness and means of disaster recovery are essential to achieving the MDGs. In particular, the MDG targets such as integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, and reversing the loss of environmental resources can never be achieved without giving due emphasis to effective disaster management strategies.

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