



Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurates 13th Formation Day of NDMA

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The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the 13th Formation Day of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) here today. The theme of this year's formation day is 'School Safety'.

Delivering the inaugural address, Shri Rajnath Singh said that NDMA has covered a long distance in short time span of 13 years since its formation. He said that NDMA has established credibility of India across world. He further said that there was no institutional framework for disaster management earlier, but after the setting up of NDMA, a mechanism has been developed not only for disaster management, but also for disaster risk reduction. He expressed happiness that India got appreciation due to NDMA's work at Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting on Disaster management held in Kyrgyzstan last month, where he had participated. He said that NDMA has done good work for enhancing the disaster management capabilities. The Home Minister said that he had also moved a proposal to organise a joint Urban Earthquake Search and Rescue exercise to improve collective preparedness and this proposal was accepted unanimously by all the members of the SCO.

The Home Minister said that all countries stand together when there is any humanitarian issue. He said that there could be differences on some issues among the countries, but we stand together in case of any disaster in the world. He said when any country enhances its capabilities and expertise; it gets success in getting others close to it. Shri Rajnath Singh said that every country has a boundary, but the nature does not recognise these boundaries. Any disaster happening in any country is bound to affect the neighbouring country in that geographical area, he added. He said that India had extended help to earthquake-hit Nepal in 2014 and also India had sent NDRF team to Japan for help.

Shri Rajnath Singh said that diplomatic efforts are also required in managing disasters arising out of floods. He said that hydrological data on rivers should be shared by the neighbouring countries and a consensus needs to be developed in this regard. He expressed hope that a beginning in this regard will be made during BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise next month.

Speaking on this year's theme of 'school safety', Shri Rajnath Singh congratulated NDMA for focussing on integrating children in their disaster management exercise. He said that the children can volunteer in this area and their energy and imagination can be of great help to NDMA. He further said that children should be involved based on their interest in this subject. He congratulated NDMA for making efforts for disaster safety and he expressed belief that NDMA will fulfil dream of a 'Safe India'.

The Union Home Secretary, Shri Rajiv Gauba said that legal and institutional systems in place for disaster management should be further strengthened. He said that our climatic conditions and density of population make us prone to disasters. He added that 2% of GDP is lost due to disasters. Shri Gauba said that now there is a paradigm shift from relief-centric approach to holistic approach towards disasters. Speaking on the theme of 'School safety', he said that lot of school infrastructure is lost in disasters and education services also get affected in post-disaster phase. Children become more vulnerable, so special care and attention needs to be given to them, he added.

The Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, Shri Anil Swarup said that implementation of the laws and regulations on ground is very important. He also said that the department will extend all support in the efforts of NDMA for school safety.

On the occasion, Shri R. K. Jain, Member, NDMA highlighted the activities undertaken by NDMA during the last one year since the last formation day. He said that in November last year, India had hosted the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in New Delhi which was first such conference after Sendai framework. He said that New Delhi Declaration, Asian Regional Plan were adopted during the AMCDRR, 2016. He also said that second meeting of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was held in New Delhi in May this year. He also informed that India is hosting first 'BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise- 2017' from 10th-13th October this year. He highlighted India's efforts in conducting joint exercise by SAARC nations (SAADMEx) to respond to simulated disaster situations, urban flooding and cyclones. He also said that a comprehensive plan to mitigate the effects of earthquake and landslides is also being formed.

During the event, a message of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was also presented to the participants.

On the occasion, the Union Home Minister also released National Disaster Management Guidelines on Boat Safety and Cultural Heritage Sites & Precincts. A study report on "Tamil Nadu floods: Lessons learnt and best practices" was also released by Shri Rajnath Singh.

During the event, the stakeholders are discussing the roadmap, their roles and key challenges in the implementation of the School Safety Policy across the country. States are sharing their experiences in terms of best practices and lessons learnt through their efforts towards school safety initiatives.

The event is being attended by NDMA Members and officials, former NDMA members senior officials from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Ministries/Departments of the Central Government, State Governments, Municipal Commissioners, District Collectors, NGOs, and ex-Members and Advisory Committee members of NDMA. Representatives of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), technical institutions, educational institutions such as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, District Education Officers (DEOs), school principals, teachers and schoolchildren are also present.

The Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju will address the Valedictory Session of the Formation Day here in the evening.

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