

## 63 National Disaster Management Authority

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NDMA

The Government of India, recognising the importance of disaster management as a national priority, had set up a High Powered Committee in 1999 and a National Committee in 2001 after the Gujarat earthquake, to make recommendations on the preparation of disaster management plans and suggest effective mitigation mechanisms. However, after the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, the Government of India took a defining step in the legislative history of the country by enacting the Disaster Management Act, 2005<sup>1</sup>.

The Act provided for the creation of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to spearhead and implement a holistic and integrated approach to disaster management in the country. Initially, the NDMA was constituted in 2005 by an Executive Order of the Government of India. Subsequently, the NDMA was notified in 2006 under the provisions of the Act<sup>2</sup>.

The NDMA consists of a chairperson and other members, not exceeding nine. The Prime Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of the NDMA. The other members are nominated by the chairperson of the NDMA. The chairperson of the NDMA designates one of the members as the vice-chairperson of the NDMA. The vice-chairperson has the status of a Cabinet Minister while the other members have the status of a Minister of State.

The NDMA is the apex body for disaster management in the country. It works under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

The NDMA was established with this vision: 'To build a safer and disaster resilient India by a holistic, pro-active, technology driven and sustainable development strategy that involves all

stakeholders and fosters a culture of prevention, preparedness and mitigation’.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE NDMA

The objectives of the NDMA are as follows:

1. To promote a culture of prevention, preparedness and resilience at all levels through knowledge, innovation and education.
2. To encourage mitigation measures based on technology, traditional wisdom and environmental sustainability.
3. To mainstream disaster management into the developmental planning process.
4. To establish institutional and techno-legal frameworks to create an enabling regulatory environment and a compliance regime.
5. To ensure efficient mechanism for identification, assessment and monitoring of disaster risks.
6. To develop contemporary forecasting and early warning systems backed by responsive and failsafe communication with information technology support.
7. To ensure efficient response and relief with a caring approach towards the needs of the vulnerable sections of the society.
8. To undertake reconstruction as an opportunity to build disaster resilient structures and habitat for ensuring safer living.
9. To promote a productive and proactive partnership with the media for disaster management.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE NDMA

The NDMA has the responsibility for laying down the policies, plans and guidelines for disaster management for ensuring timely and effective response to disaster.

The functions of the NDMA are as follows:

1. To lay down policies on disaster management.
2. To approve the National Plan.
3. To approve plans prepared by the Ministries or Departments of the Government of India in accordance with the National Plan.
4. To lay down guidelines to be followed by the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)<sup>3</sup> in drawing up the State Plan.
5. To lay down guidelines to be followed by the different Ministries or Departments of the Government of India for the purpose of integrating the measures for prevention of disaster or the mitigation of its effects in their development plans and projects.
6. To coordinate the enforcement and implementation of the policy and plan for disaster management.
7. To recommend provision of funds for the purpose of mitigation.
8. To provide such support to other countries affected by major disasters as may be determined by the central government.
9. To take other such measures for the prevention of disaster, or the mitigation, or preparedness and capacity building for dealing with the threatening disaster situation or disaster as it may consider necessary.
10. To lay down broad policies and guidelines for the functioning of the National Institute of Disaster Management<sup>4</sup>.

## **ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS OF THE NDMA**

In addition to the above, the NDMA also performs the following functions:

1. It recommends guidelines for the minimum standards of relief to be provided to persons affected by disaster.
2. It recommends, in cases of disasters of severe magnitude, relief in repayment of loans or grant of fresh loans on concessional terms to the persons affected by such disasters.
3. It exercises the general superintendence, direction and control of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). This force has been constituted for the purpose of specialist response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster.
4. It authorises the concerned department or authority to make the emergency procurement of provisions or materials for rescue or relief in any threatening disaster situation or disaster. In such case, the standard procedure requiring inviting of tenders is deemed to be waived.
5. It prepares an annual report on its activities and submits it to the central government. The central government causes it to be laid before both Houses of Parliament<sup>5</sup>.

## STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

### Composition

Every state government should establish a State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) for the state. An SDMA consists of a chairperson and other members, not exceeding nine. The Chief Minister of the state is the ex-officio chairperson of the SDMA. The chairperson of the State Executive Committee is the ex-officio member of the SDMA. The other members, not exceeding eight, are nominated by the chairperson of the SDMA. The chairperson of the SDMA designates one of the members as the vice-chairperson of the SDMA. The chairperson of the State Executive Committee acts as the ex-officio chief executive officer of the SDMA.

### Functions

An SDMA has the responsibility for laying down policies and plans for disaster management in the state. Its functions include the following:

1. To lay down the state disaster management policy.
2. To approve the State Plan in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the NDMA.
3. To approve the disaster management plans prepared by the departments of the government of the state.
4. To lay down guidelines to be followed by the departments of the government of the state for the purposes of integration of measures for prevention of disasters and mitigation in their development plans and projects and provide necessary technical assistance thereof.
5. To coordinate the implementation of the State Plan.
6. To recommend provision of funds for mitigation and preparedness measures.
7. To review the development plans of the different departments of the state and ensure that prevention and mitigation measures are integrated therein.

8. To review the measures being taken for mitigation, capacity building and preparedness by the departments of the government of the state and issue such guidelines as may be necessary.

## DISTRICT DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

### Composition

Every state government should establish a District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) for every district in the state. A DDMA consists of a chairperson and other members, not exceeding seven. The Collector (or District Magistrate or Deputy Commissioner) of the district is the ex-officio chairperson of the DDMA. The elected representative of the local authority is the ex-officio co-chairperson of the DDMA. But, in case of Tribal Areas (as referred to in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India), the chief executive member of the district council of autonomous district is the ex-officio co-chairperson of the DDMA. The chief executive officer of the DDMA, the superintendent of police and the chief medical officer of the district are the ex-officio members of the DDMA. Not more than two other district level officers are appointed by the state government as the members of the DDMA. In case of a district where Zilla Parishad exists, the chairperson of that Zilla Parishad is the co-chairperson of the DDMA. The chief executive officer of the DDMA is appointed by the state government.

### Functions

The DDMA acts as the district planning, coordinating and implementing body for disaster management and takes all measures for the purposes of disaster management in the district in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the NDMA and the SDMA. Its functions are as follows:

1. To prepare a disaster management plan including district response plan for the district.
2. To coordinate and monitor the implementation of the National Policy, State Policy, National Plan, State Plan and District Plan.
3. To ensure that the areas in the district vulnerable to disasters are identified and measures for the prevention of



disasters and the mitigation of its effects are undertaken by the departments of the government at the district level as well as by the local authorities.

4. To ensure that the guidelines for prevention of disasters, mitigation of its effects, preparedness and response measures as laid down by the NDMA and the SDMA are followed by all departments of the government at the district level and the local authorities in the district.
5. To organise and coordinate specialised training programmes for different levels of officers, employees and voluntary rescue workers in the district.
6. To facilitate community training and awareness programmes for prevention of disaster or mitigation with the support of local authorities, governmental and non-governmental organisations.
7. To set up, maintain, review and upgrade the mechanism for early warnings and dissemination of proper information to the public.
8. To advise, assist and coordinate the activities of the departments of the government at the district level, statutory bodies and other governmental and nongovernmental organisations in the district engaged in disaster management.
9. To identify buildings and places which could, in the event of any threatening disaster situation or disaster, be used as relief centres or camps and make arrangements for water supply and sanitation in such buildings or places.
10. To perform such other functions as the state government or SDMA may assign to it or as it deems necessary for disaster management in the District.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Annual Report 2016–17, National Disaster Management Authority, Government of India, p. 2.
2. *Ibid.*
3. The Act also provided for the establishment of the State Disaster Management Authorities and the District

Disaster Management Authorities.

4. The National Institute of Disaster Management is located at New Delhi.
5. The Disaster Management (Annual Report of National Authority) Rules, 2006.