

**SIKKIM**

**GOVERNMENT GAZETTE**



**EXTRAORDINARY  
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY**

**Gangtok**

**Saturday**

**24<sup>th</sup> November, 2007**

**No. 523**

**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM  
LAND REVENUE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

**NO.11/LR&DMD**

**DATED :24. 11. 2007**

**NOTIFICATION**

In exercise of the powers conferred by the clause (a) sub-section (2) of section 18 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005) the government of Sikkim hereby makes the following Disaster Management Policies for the State of Sikkim namely :-

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Sikkim is a landlocked hilly state bounded by China on its north and eastern borders, Nepal on the western side and West Bengal on the southern side. Its location is strategic. The State of Sikkim is vulnerable to many disasters, both natural and manmade. The disasters have caused heavy damages to public and private properties as well as loss of lives. Unless preventive measures and careful mitigational steps are taken, the woes and miseries of the prospective victims would increase manifold.

1.2 Sikkim has witnessed deadly disasters mainly in the form of landslides and droughts. The most recent and worst landslide that took place in the State Capital at Gangtok in which Government as well as private properties were destroyed with loss of many human lives. In fact, landslides are more recurrent loss to the public and the Government. Drought is another vulnerable area which has become a matter of grave concern. Not frequent but occasional earthquakes have also caused very heavy damages to public and private properties. Fire, hailstorm, flash floods, landslides, drought, cloud bursts and epidemics are other vulnerable areas of disaster in the State.

1.3 The Government of Sikkim is aware of the challenges and to recognize the need to formulate a proactive and concrete policy for management of disasters in the state.

**2. Objective**

The main object of the Sikkim Disaster Management policy is to maximize reduction of the negative and violent impact of all kinds of disasters through an effective disaster management machinery so that loss of lives, properties and infrastructure are minimized. Another objective is to ensure that economic and developmental gains made by the state are not to be hampered by such natural calamities and disasters.

**3. Principles of Disaster Management Policy**

The principles of the Disaster Management Policy shall be:-

- a) To replace the existing approach of reactive relief by a proactive approach;
- b) To evolve and follow a multi-hazard approach to disaster management;
- c) To create institutions and to develop proper infrastructure for effective and efficient management of disasters;
- d) To develop a new concept of prevention, preparedness and prompt response to management of disasters;
- e) Minimize the impact of vulnerability of disasters by proper risk assessment;

- f) To establish a trigger mechanism for emergency operations;
- g) To evolve appropriate disaster prevention and mitigation strategies for different types of disasters;
- h) To involve and build up the capacity of Zilla and Gram Panchayats as well as Non-Governmental Organizations to play a proactive role in disaster management;
- i) To ensure better coordination amongst various departments and organizations in the state as well as with other national and international agencies relating to disaster management;
- j) To promote a spirit of voluntarism, develop and enlist a band of volunteers who need to be given advance training and modern equipments and whose services are to be utilized during emergencies;
- k) To create awareness amongst all sections of the society especially the student community, to develop expertise in the field of disaster management; and
- l) To identify and recognize the special problems of women, children, elders, physically and mentally challenged during and after emergencies.

#### 4. Strategy

- 4.1 The multi-hazard disaster management will be an integrated approach covering the three phases of disasters namely:
- a) The Pre-disaster phase,
  - b) The response phase; and
  - c) The Recovery and Rehabilitation phase
- 4.2 The focus would be laid on the following stake holders for effective disaster management.
- a) The community affected are vulnerable to disasters
  - b) Volunteer based organizations such as, National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps, Scouts and Guides;
  - c) Non-Governmental Organizations;
  - d) Zilla and Gram Panchayat units;
  - e) Police, Home Guards and Civil Defence;
  - f) District Collectorate
  - g) Special Relief Organizations
  - h) State Govt. Departments;
  - i) Government of India Organizations in the State;
  - j) Public Sector undertakings;
  - k) United Nations Agencies; and
  - l) Sikkim Disaster Management Agencies;
  - m) Women Self-help Groups would be taken as one of the stakeholders for Disaster Risk Management
- 4.3 Pre-disaster phase activities are those activities concerning prevention mitigation and preparedness to face the disasters. Preventive activities mean and include all the steps which can be taken to prevent certain disasters like fire, landslides, accidents, sudden outbreak of epidemics, etc. Mitigational activities are those measures taken to reduce or eliminate hazards associated with disasters or reducing the impact of such disasters. Preparedness includes such measures which are taken in advance to ensure that individuals and agencies will be geared up to react fast in case of disasters. The preventive, mitigation and preparedness activities can be taken any time and they should be ongoing and regular features for all players of disaster management.
- 4.4 During the Pre-disaster phase, there is need to gather extensive data, build up resource inventory, prepare action plan for various disasters and work for capacity building through impact of training and generation of awareness.
- Impact phase is the time when the disaster has actually occurred. It refers to those measures undertaken immediately after occurrence of the disaster and for some limited span of time thereafter basically to save human lives, treat the injured and prevent further injury and other forms of loss.
- It calls for immediate response, delegated authority, swift decisions making, clear command and efficient team effort amongst various players engaged in the rescue and relief operations as per the approved plan and depending upon the need of the hour. In course of this phase, the following activities are to be taken up namely:-
- a) Warning and evacuation of the people;
  - b) Immediate search and rescue operations;
  - c) Providing essential medical care, sound health and sanitation to control the outbreak of epidemics;
  - d) Provision of safe drinking water, food and shelter to the victims;

- e) Restoration of the basic infrastructure and essential services;
- f) Provision of security to the victims and protection of the public property;
- g) Involving and protection of the public property;
- n) Involving the community volunteer force and all available NGOs and agencies for effective and efficient rescue and relief operations;
- i) Assessing preliminary damages as quickly as possible;
- j) Mobilizing funds for relief, rehabilitation and restoration activities;
- k) Finalizing relief packages as per the Government instructions.

4.5 Post-disaster phase relates to those measures undertaken to restore normalcy. It starts soon after the reduction in critical response activities. The activities include reconstruction, financial assistance programmes, counselling and economic impact studies. The following activities would be taken up during this phase namely:

- a) Carrying out detailed damage assessment;
- b) Providing assistance to restore/reconstruction of houses;
- c) Relocating affected people to other places, if required;
- d) Finalizing detailed reconstruction/rehabilitation process;
- e) Disbursement of funds and auditing of accounts;
- f) Monitoring the execution of various projects;
- g) Redressal of disputes/grievances;
- h) Documentation of the lessons learnt;
- i) Modification and/or updation of the disaster plans; and
- j) Updation of resource inventory
- k) Role of DMCS at levels. The District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) would function as the working Group of the districts in all phases.

## 5. Organizational Set-up

5.1 In order to carry out various activities during the three phases, there is an inherent need to have an elaborate framework of structures/institutions with clear responsibility and clear chain of command. The disaster management requires dedicated commitment. One State Level Disaster Management Authority under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Chief Minister is proposed to be constituted for Disaster Management. Besides, one State Level Steering Committee would be formed under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary.

5.2 A Hazard Safety Cell is proposed to be created in the Buildings and Housing Department which shall be designated as the Nodal Agency and shall control and monitor construction works of all Government and private buildings and shall concentrate in Hazard Resistant Design of Buildings and structures and shall establish mechanism for proper implementation of building codes in all future Government constructions. It shall ensure safety of buildings and structures from various hazards and carry out appropriate design reviews of all Government buildings to be constructed in the State. It shall also act as an advisory cell to the State Government on different aspects of building safety against hazards. It shall act as a consultant to the State Government for retrofitting of lifeline buildings.

5.3 The respective District Collector will head the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) and act as the Nodal Officer for prevention, mitigation and management of disasters of all types at the district level. The State Government Officers including Police/Home Guards and Forests will work under the control, supervision and direction during the period of disaster. He will liaise with the military, para-military forces, telecom and other authorities of the Government of India.

5.4 The Collectors should be delegated with all necessary powers and authority so he can initiate search, rescue and relief operations without waiting for orders from the State Government. He will send proposals to the Government through the appropriate authority for declaration of disaster in the respective areas. He shall also be responsible for preparation, modification and updation of District Level Plans and shall constitute different committees and teams as per the guideline of the State Government.

## 5. Funding

Funds allocated under Calamity Relief Fund would be utilized to meet the requirement in normal circumstances. In courses of additional resource requirements, the same would be sought from national Calamity

Contingency Fund. Relief to victims of road accidents will be available from the existing schemes of the State Government.

Donations or financial aid from international, national or philanthropic institutions would be accepted only with prior approval of the State Government. Such money would be kept in separate account to be utilized as per the guidelines/norms framed from time to time.

#### **7. Community Awareness and participation**

It would be the duty of the community to provide first information and help in the search and rescue operations. Obviously, therefore, the community needs to be made aware about various aspects of disaster management. This can be achieved only by generating awareness amongst the public through series of awareness programmes. Since Gram Panchayat union is the lowest one in this State, even then, Gram Panchayat Union Disaster management Committees would be formed which will be headed by elected representative or else nominated as per the relevant rules prevalent in the State. Another effective measure will be to include the Disaster Management in the school or college syllabus as one of the subjects so that the younger generation is kept well equipped with the required information. In addition, the State Government would form a volunteer force and utilize the services of National Cadet Corp, National Service Scheme, Scouts, Guides, Non Government Organizations, Self help Groups and community leaders in Disaster Management and mitigation activities.

#### **8. Role of Central Agencies**

The importance of military, para-military forces, telecom and other central government agencies and well recognized need no over emphasis in effective management of disasters. Accordingly, their representatives would be actively involved in various meetings and committees and the State Government shall maintain regular interaction with them to facilitate their cooperation in all disaster management and mitigation activities.

#### **9. Current status of Disaster Management in Sikkim**

- 9.1 State Disaster Management Authority set up
- 9.2 State Steering Committee set up
- 9.3 Hazard Safety Cell established.
- 9.4 Emergency First Aid Team established.
- 9.5 Disaster Management Act 2005 came into force.
- 9.6 1012 (one thousand twelve) Disaster Management Committees under different Gram Panchayat Units have already been constituted.
- 9.7 Disaster Management included in the school curriculum.
- 9.8 1548 (one thousand five hundred forty six) nodal officers/government officers representing various Government Department sensitized in Disaster Risk Management.
- 9.9 1304 (one thousand three hundred four) school teachers, 2330 (two thousand three hundred thirty) Gram Panchayats and village members, and 14 (fourteen) engineers on Earthquake engineering trained and sensitized.
- 9.10 109 (one hundred nine) master trainer trained in disaster management.
- 9.4 Disaster Management Preparedness and mitigation plans have been prepared of all districts Gram Panchayat, village panchayat, urban local body, school, health sector of the State.

The Disaster Management Plan shall be updated from time to time as per need. All line Departments would be requested to form their own Plan and set aside some budgetary provision so that when need arises, there would be no fund crunch to tide over the crisis.

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