

National Disaster Management Authority

[UPSC Notes]

What is NDMA?

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is the apex body for Disaster Management in India, headed by the Prime Minister. NDMA is established to coordinate the emergency response to the disaster caused naturally or man-made. NDMA focuses on providing relief responses after the disaster and provides support. They plan policy, strategies, and recommendations to respond to disaster situations.

The Indian government strives to promote a national resolve to mitigate the damage and destruction caused by natural and man-made disasters through sustained and collective efforts of all Government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and People. NDMA has 5 major divisions, viz. Policy & Plans, Mitigation, Operations & Communications & Information & Technology, Administration and Finance.

Historical Background of NDMA

The Government of India established a high power committee for recommending plans for disaster management to deal with the disaster because disaster management is considered a topmost priority of the government. After the Gujarat earthquake (2001), the government formed a Disaster Management Plan Committee. Tackle the issue was the first step toward disaster management from the government. Disaster management was given importance at all levels, which can be evident from the addition of the disaster management chapter in the tenth five-year plan document.

The Government of India enacted the Disaster Management Act 2005, after which they established the Disaster Management Authority led by the PM; State Disaster Management Authorities have a holistic approach towards disaster management, which makes them more concerned about the disaster which happens in India. India is very careful to manage disasters due to earlier consequences in India.

Organizational Structure Of Disaster Management

The Prime Minister is the chairperson of the committee. The cabinet minister is the vice chairperson, along with the 8 ministers of the state as its member.

Guides

There are frameworks and guidelines used to regulate the committee to prepare to respond and mitigate in the case of an emergency.

1. The prime responsibility of the management is to coordinate with all levels of government to provide support to them at the time of disaster.
2. Under the disaster management act, the authority has been established at three levels: state, national, and district.
3. India has signed the standard framework for disaster risk reduction (SFORR); they set targets to manage risk and disaster.

The Authority is divided into two levels- state and district.

State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA)

Chief Ministers are in charge of the State Disaster Management Authority. In this role, they are responsible for implementing the plan and preparing for any situation that may arise.

The State Executive Committees are responsible for managing state disasters under the leadership of the state secretary (SEC). It is also responsible for managing and coordinating the national policy.

District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)

There is a provision for the formation of DDMA under section 25 of the DM Act for each district of the state. District-level authority is responsible for coordinating, planning, and implementing the policy for managing the disasters at the district level limited to a certain region.

They have the power to build any infrastructure in the district for safety measures and to arrange self-relief for responding to the disaster.

Function Of The NDMA

The following are the functions of the NDMA:

- They are the sole power to approve disaster management plans which will be confined to every level of authority to manage the disaster.
- They also create various policies for disaster management to manage disasters effectively.
- They are responsible for creating all the policies and plans followed by ministers of the state and other departments.
- They play a very important role in coordinating with the state government to implement the plan and policies.
- They recommend the provision for mitigation and responsive activities plan by the authority to manage the crisis and restoration. Over time they have built enough ability to deal with the crisis and different types of disasters.
- The organization also provides assistance to foreign countries in case of disasters. In recent times, India has provided support and self-relief to a large number of other nations.

Types of Disaster Management

According to research, there are four types of disaster management :

- **Mitigation:** It is concerned about detecting the disaster earlier to avoid negative consequences, it is an important stage as if anyone fails at this stage and then all other stages will fail.
- **Preparedness:** It is another aspect of disaster management, after detecting the disaster it is important to prepare according to the disaster, with proper expertise and personal, preparation at this stage help to bring the situation under control
- **Response:** It's time, to action, at this stage we are all set to implement the activities which are planned at the second stage the implementation is also required with care at all levels because most failure occurs at this stage.
- **Recovery:** At this stage finally, after the action, finally we plan to recover after the disaster took place to set things as it was before, we recover from the situation where everything is devastated by the disaster.

Scope

Although every authority faces challenges, there is a way to hope and scope to do better in the future and not repeat the mistake, so some steps can be taken by India's national disaster management authority to change their situation.

They need to instill a culture of readiness and mitigation.

- Authority needs to build ways to use disaster management techniques for the development purpose, and use another development program for mitigation should be formulated.
- For more effectiveness of the authority, it s very important to implement the warning system, and an early reaction plan should be implemented at the national, state, and local levels.
- NGOs and CSO is the important organization from the public perspective, so they should include them in all disaster management levels.
- There should be proper adoption and mitigation used to handle the risk
- Huge investment is required for better infrastructure and functioning of the department so that that policy could be formulated properly, and initiatives should also be taken to include more organization to improve disaster response.
- India should learn from the other foreign countries how they are managing their infrastructure to manage the disaster; countries like Korea, Japan, and Hongkong have developed the best infrastructure to deal with the crisis.

India is already doing good in managing the disaster by taking a more holistic approach, but still India needs to be more holistic and apprehensive towards disaster management, which can prove to be safer for people and their life. Many other aspects of disaster management need to be improved by the Indian government.

India's Efforts in Managing Disaster

The National Disaster Reaction Force (NDRF), the world's largest rapid response force dedicated to disaster response, has played a key role in mitigating and responding to all kinds of disasters. Although, over time, India has become more optimistic about the disaster and has had a holistic approach to dealing with it, India has planned everything in advance and after the disaster to ensure that they do not have to face any problems.

India has taken the biggest approach to deal with disaster by establishing a national disaster reaction force, the second largest force to deal with the disaster; this shows how responsible India is towards the disaster and its management.

India's Support For Foreign Countries

India never fails to help others, so in this case, India is always ready to pro-support foreign nations in their bad time to help them in case of serious disaster issues. They also provide disaster relief to the countries to cope with difficult times. India provides their support to other nations through waterways or airways, like naval ships and aircraft.

Indian also Indian foreign humanitarian assistance bilaterally from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Challenges For NDMA

The National Disaster Management Authority faced huge criticism when they failed to inform the public about the flood and landslides in Uttarakhand in 2012. They provided help with the poor resources they relief distribution making us question their authority. They are also accused many times of having poor planning to manage disasters like floods and landslides, which are common in India.

Many of the project under flood management was delayed. They are also accused so many times that policy is not implemented properly, and most of their project ends in ultimate failure like poor flood management due to failure of institution work. Many projects like river management activities and border management works are delayed, which benefits Bihar, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh.

Another problem is the lack of training, equipment facilities, and living quarters, which is again become a bigger hurdle in the case of disaster management in India.