

## TAMIL NADU DISASTER MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1) Need for a Policy

Disasters both natural and man-made are the biggest threats the humanity is facing today. They may strike in the form of earthquake, flood, cyclone, drought, **tsunami**, hurricane, hailstorm, fire, nuclear/ chemical warfare, bio-terrorism etc. World over, the number and intensity of the disasters are on the increase. Ecological imbalance and global warming issues along with unplanned development have made the world more risky. More areas and increased number of people are becoming vulnerable to these disasters in the country. These disasters are synonymous with heavy damage to public and private property and loss of lives. Lack of preparedness and mitigational efforts have added to the miseries of the victims.

Tamil Nadu has faced disasters mainly in the form of cyclones. It has a long coastal line of over 1000 K.Ms. which makes it vulnerable to cyclones and floods. In the last century over 50 cyclones have hit Tamil Nadu coast at various locations. **The coastal districts were affected by tsunami on 26-12-2004.** Gale and landslides have also caused heavy damage in some areas in the State. With erratic/non supply of Cauvery water and deficit rainfall, droughts are posing a threat to the State. With increasing modernisation, pollution and global warming, the frequency of such droughts is likely to increase further. Tamil Nadu being in shield region has not faced any major earthquake so far. However, seismic zone classification of many parts of Tamil Nadu has been moved upward, which means increased vulnerability on this account also.

Government of Tamil Nadu is aware of these challenges and recognises the need for a pro-active comprehensive policy management of disasters in the State. Accordingly, the Government formulated the Tamil Nadu Disaster Management Policy for the management of disaster in the State.

## **2) Aim**

The aim of Tamil Nadu Disaster Management Policy is to reduce the negative impact of all kinds of disasters through a vibrant disaster management machinery so that loss of lives, property & critical infrastructure is minimised and economic and development gains made by the State are not lost due to such calamities / disasters.

## **3) Objectives of the Policy**

- To replace the existing approach of re-active relief by a proactive approach.
- To develop a new culture of prevention, preparedness and quick response for management of disasters.
- To reduce the vulnerability of the community through proper risk assessment.
- To put institutions and structures in place for efficient and effective management of disasters.
- To establish a clear chain of command with well defined authority and responsibility of various stakeholders.
- To Identify and utilise the available resources efficiently.
- To ensure transparent, consistent and equitable relief to the victims.
- To make disaster management planning an integral part of development planning.
- To design appropriate disaster prevention and mitigation strategies for different disasters.

- To enhance the capacities of various players including the community in disaster management and mitigation
- To create database about the policies, resources and strategies of disaster management.
- To ensure better coordination among various departments in the State and also with other national/international agencies relating to disaster management.
- To create awareness among all sections of society especially students to develop expertise in the disaster management discipline.

#### **4) Key Components of Tamil Nadu Disaster Management Programme**

- Government would establish a Disaster Management Authority (DMA), a Nodal agency to guide, facilitate, coordinate and monitor various aspects of disaster management.
- Government would take steps for convergence of disaster management and development planning.
- Government would take steps to formulate comprehensive disaster management plans at all levels after taking into account the local conditions.
- Government of Tamil Nadu would focus on the reduction of vulnerability of communities instead of mere disaster relief.
- Government would provide necessary legislative support for recognising the role of present and future stakeholders.
- Government recognises the need for an integral approach based on multi-disciplinary process in dealing with the disaster.
- Government would foster a culture of prevention, among the community and various organs of Government through training and awareness campaigns.

- Government recognises the importance of community as the first stakeholder and accordingly intends to involve it at all stages in the disaster management activities.
- Government would give due importance to NGOs, community based organisations and other voluntary/philanthropic institutions.
- Government would not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, community or sex while distributing the assistance/relief.
- Government would ensure transparency in decision-making and information sharing. It also envisages a dynamic situation to take into account the changing needs of the people.
- Government would take steps to create a trained and committed volunteer force on the line of Home Guards for disaster Management.

## **II A NEW APPROACH TO DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

Government believes that disasters may be inevitable but their adverse impact can be certainly minimised. It also realizes that management and mitigation of any disaster requires coordinated efforts from various departments and stakeholders. Therefore Government shall adopt a multi pronged approach to face all disasters within the integrated paradigm of prevention, mitigation and reduction.

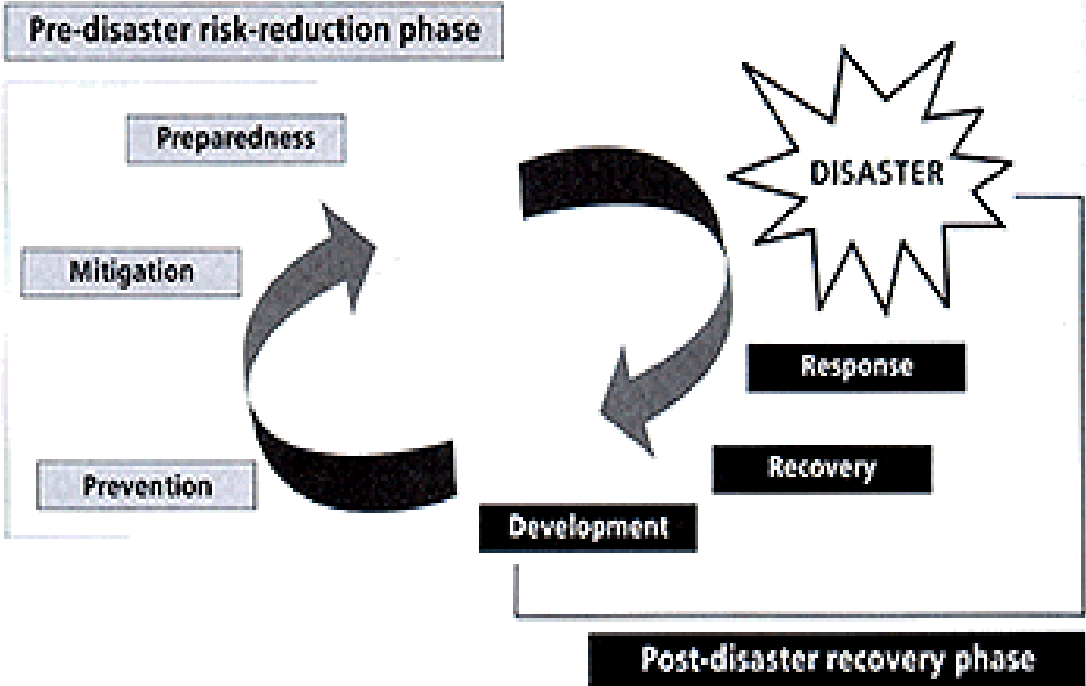
The Government is aware that disaster management can no longer be left to the Government bodies alone. All stakeholders including the community have to play an important role in the management of disasters. The current practice of relief after the disaster needs to be replaced by a pro-active approach, which would give pre-eminence to a culture of preparedness with active participation of the community at risk. Accordingly the Government of

Tamil Nadu emphasizes a holistic approach to disaster management covering the entire disaster life cycle in which Emergency Managers are prepared for the emergencies and disasters, respond to them when they occur, help victims and institutions to recover from such disasters, mitigate the effects, reduce the risk of losses and as far as possible prevent the disasters from recurring. In traditional disaster management, such activities are undertaken in a phased sequence plan as shown in **figure-1**.

However, the Government suggests a new model for disaster management in which it is seen as a continuous process and these disasters are managed in parallel set of activities rather than in a sequence of action. As shown in **figure-2**, different strands of activities/actions continue side by side expanding or contracting as per the need.

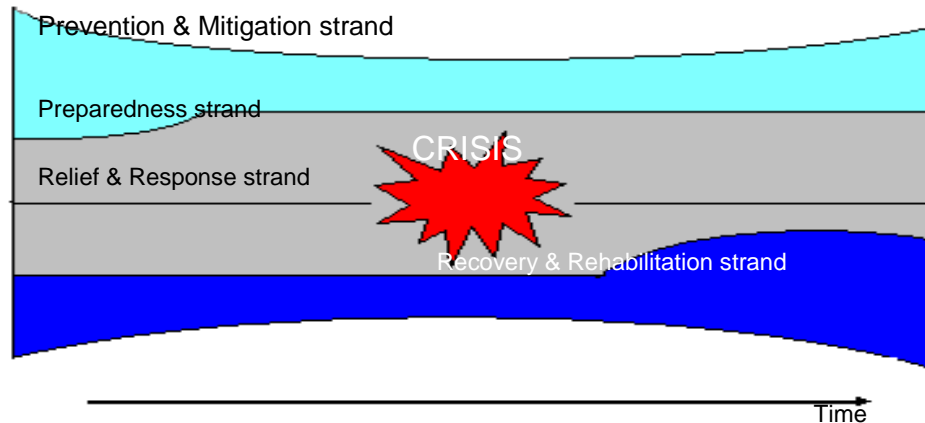
**FIGURE 1**

**Traditional model — sequences of action**



## **FIGURE 2**

### **Expand – Contract Model**



### **III Strategy for Implementation**

Disaster management activities could be divided into three phases.

1. Pre disaster phase. (Phase - I)
2. Impact phase. (Phase – II)
3. Post disaster phase. (Phase – III)

**Pre-disaster phase** activities are the activities related to prevention, mitigation and preparedness to face the disasters. Prevention activities would include all the steps that can be taken to prevent certain disasters like fire, landslides, chemical / nuclear related accidents, outbreak of epidemics etc. Mitigation activities aim to reduce or eliminate hazards associated with disasters or lessening the impact of such disasters. Preparedness means those measures which are undertaken in advance to ensure that individuals and agencies will be geared up to react quickly in the event of disaster. Preventive,

mitigation and preparedness activities could be taken any time and they should be ongoing and regular functions of all players of Disaster Management

During Pre-disaster Phase one needs to collect extensive data, build up resource inventory, develop action plan for various disasters and work for capacity building through training, and awareness activities. Government is conscious of the fact that each disaster requires a different response and accordingly would prepare separate plan for each of the following disasters:

- Cyclone
- Flood
- Earthquake
- **Tsunami**
- Hailstorm
- Drought
- Fire
- Land slides
- Industrial & Chemical disasters
- Accidents
- Epidemic

All the District Collectors would prepare detailed action plans at local body level and at district level as per the local needs. The public and private sectors, voluntary agencies and community would be actively involved in the formulation of such plans. State Disaster Management Authority/State Relief Commissioner would prepare such plans at State level. During this phase, the following activities would be taken up.

- Formulation of appropriate Policies and Guidelines for various stakeholders of Disaster Management.
- Incorporation of Disaster Management measures in the development planning.
- Risk assessment and mapping of disaster vulnerability.
- Formulation of Disaster Management plans at all levels as per local needs.
- Creation/sharing of database relating to Disaster vulnerability, resources, trained manpower etc.
- Establishment of a clear chain of command along with robust communication network.
- Setting up surveillance and early warning system for hazards.
- Enhancing capabilities and expertise of the concerned departments/agencies dealing with disasters.
- Capacity building of individuals and community based organisations, through proper training and awareness programmes and organizing a committed cadre for disaster management.
- Conducting sensitisation meetings and mock drills of stakeholders.
- Identifying various sources of funds.

**Impact phase** is the phase when the disaster has actually struck. It refers to those measures undertaken immediately after the disaster has occurred and for some limited period of time thereafter - primarily to save human life, treat the injured and prevent further injury and other forms of loss.



It requires timely response, delegated authority, faster decision making, clear command and team effort of various players engaged in the response and relief activities. The field staff should provide rescue/relief measures as per the approved plan depending upon the need of the hour. District Collectors are expected to pool all the resources at their disposal to carry out relief activities. The Disaster Management Authority and State Relief Commissioner would facilitate, co-ordinate and monitor the activities. During this phase the following activities would be taken up:

- Warning and evacuation of the people.
- Immediate search and rescue operations.
- Providing essential medical care, adequate health and sanitation to control outbreak of epidemics.
- Provision of safe drinking water, food and shelter to the victims.
- Restoration of basic infrastructure and essential services.
- Providing security to victims and other citizens and protecting the public property.
- Providing proper information and collecting feedback through proper media management.
- Involving community volunteer force and community based organisations for better appreciation and effective delivery of rescue and relief operations.
- Assessing preliminary damages quickly.
- Mobilising funds for relief, rehabilitation and restoration activities.
- Finalising relief packages as per the guidelines/Government instructions.

**Third phase, i.e. Post disaster phase** relates to the measures taken to restore normalcy. It begins soon after the reduction in critical response

activities permits the re-allocation of resources to longer term recovery activities. It may extend over years depending upon the nature and magnitude of the disaster. Typically the activities include reconstruction, financial assistance programmes, and counselling and economic impact studies. During this phase following activities would be taken up.

- Carrying out detailed damage assessment
- Providing assistance to restore/re-construct houses.
- Relocation of affected people to other places if required.
- Finalising detailed reconstruction/rehabilitation plans.
- Disbursement of funds and audit of accounts.
- Monitoring the execution of various projects.
- Redressal of disputes/grievances.
- Documentation of the lesson learnt.
- Modification/updation of disaster Plans.
- Updation of resources inventory.

#### **IV Organisational Set up**

To carry out various activities during these phases, we need to have an elaborate framework of structures / institutions with clear responsibility and chain of command, Government recognizes the fact that Disaster Management requires dedicated political commitment and accordingly **the State Disaster Management Authority shall be constituted with Hon'ble Chief Minister as Chairperson. Ex-Officio: In addition, the Government would constitute a State Executive Committee to review the status of prevention, management mitigation, response and relief activities..** The State Government envisages management of such disasters through following institutions /organisations.

1. The State Disaster Management Authority headed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister shall be the Governing Council with the following functions:-
  - i) To make suitable recommendations to the Government on various policy issues relating to the disasters.
  - ii) To approve detailed guidelines including the quantum of relief for different kinds of disasters within the approved policy parameters.
  - iii) To approve the State Disaster Management Plan for each disaster prepared by the State Relief Commissioner.
  - iv) To ensure effective coordination among the different departments.
  - v) To ensure integrated approach based on multi disciplinary process in dealing with disasters.
  - vi) To ensure convergence of disaster management and development plans.
  - vii) To review / monitor the progress of the disaster management and mitigation work from time to time.
2. Revenue Administration Disaster Management and Mitigation Department headed by the State Relief Commissioner
3. District administration headed by the Collector
4. Sub Divisional Officers (RDOs) assisted by the taluk Tahsildars and other revenue officials.
5. Local bodies like Corporations, Municipalities, Panchayat Unions, etc.
6. Non-Governmental Organisations.
7. Public Sector/Private Sector
8. Community.

Management of disaster requires inter disciplinary approach in which the various organizations would complement and supplement the works of each other. The resources available with the institutions would be pooled to make disaster management most efficient and effective. Successful management of such disasters would require a working environment which enables capacity building, mobilization of resources and sharing of information by various role players.

Revenue Department in the Secretariat shall be responsible for formulation of policy with regard to disaster management. The Secretary in charge of Revenue will liaise with Army, Para-military forces, Railway, telecom and other concerned departments of Government of India. The department shall also be responsible for providing necessary funds to the State Relief Commissioner.

The State Relief Commissioner would be the head of Emergency Operation Group (EOG) and will act as the nodal agency for prevention, mitigation and management of all disasters at State level. He shall coordinate the activities of all departments for effective Disaster Management and all the concerned departments will extend necessary co-operation in this regard. He shall formulate State level plans for various disasters in consultation with District Collectors and other departments of the State Government. He shall also be responsible for sending necessary proposals to Government for declaration of disasters like drought and seeking necessary funds for relief/rehabilitation of the victims.

The Collector shall be head of the Emergency Operation Group (EOG) and act as the nodal Officer for prevention, mitigation and management of disasters of all types at district level. All State Government Officers including

the police, home guard, and forest shall work under his control, supervision and direction during the period of disaster. He will coordinate the activities of NGOs, Community Based Organisations, and philanthropic organizations. He will liaise with Military, Para Military forces, Railways, Telecom and PSUs. of Government of India. The Collector would be provided necessary authority so that he can start search, rescue and relief works without waiting for orders from State Government. He shall be responsible for sending necessary proposals to Government through the State Relief Commissioner, for declaration of disaster in their respective areas. He shall also be responsible for preparation, modification or updation of district level plans.

#### **V Funding**

Funds allotted under State Disaster Response Fund would be able to meet the requirement in normal circumstances. If additional resources were required the same would be sought from National Disaster Response Fund. In case of industrial/chemical disasters, concerned unit would be asked to provide the required funds. Relief to victims of road accident will be available from the extant schemes of State Government.

Acceptance of donations or aid from international/ national/ philanthropic agencies would be allowed only with prior Government approval. Collectors shall keep such money in separate account and would spend as per the guidelines issued from time to time.

#### **VI Disaster Management Agency**

A Disaster Management Agency with the following functions will be created under the control of the State Disaster Management Authority with Commissioner of Revenue Administration / State Relief Commissioner as

Chairman of the Executive Council of the Agency and the Director (Disaster Management) as Chief Executive Officer / Member Secretary to provide technical support.

1. To act as the executive agency for the State Disaster Management Authority for coordinating the various Disasters related activities in the State at all levels.
2. Guiding and assisting the District Administration in delivering of various rescue and relief measures.
3. To act as a resource centre for information, trained man power, experts, NGOs and community based organisation.
4. Capacity building, training and awareness relating to Disaster Management and Mitigation.
5. Provide technical assistance and consultancy services to the Government.
6. To undertake research and study regarding causes for losses on account of natural disasters and to suggest remedial measures for minimizing the same.
7. To develop approach, philosophy, policy guidelines, Management and action plans for meeting out disaster of any kind.
8. To formulate and implement externally aided projects on disaster management.
9. To obtain funds for rehabilitation and settlement and to ensure optimum utilization of these funds obtained in the form of grant, aid, assistance or loan from

Government of Tamil Nadu, Government of India, World Bank and ABD, USAID, DFID, IFRC, Donors, NGOs and from financial institutions, public and private trusts or any other organization.

10. To provide or to arrange financial assistance, so as to achieve the objects of the Society.
11. Management, Administration, Investment & Re-investment of funds out of sale proceeds received from the sale of land, buildings, equipments, furniture, fixtures, debris or any other things or articles or infrastructure.

This agency would provide assistance in preparation/modification and updation of various disaster management plans. A Resource Centre / Training Cell of this Agency would help in enhancing capacities of various functionaries through proper training and refresher courses. This cell shall collect and disseminate technological and scientific knowledge on disaster management. The cell will also document the work done and lessons learnt from various disasters. In a nutshell it will be a referral cell for all kinds of disaster related activities. Till such cell is established, Government would identify an institution for extending necessary technical help in this regard.

## **VII Community Awareness and Participation**

Government expects community to provide first information and help in search and rescue operations. Therefore, it needs to be aware of all aspects of disaster management. Government therefore would create awareness through school and college curriculum so that the coming generation is well equipped with required information. Dos and Don'ts relating to various disasters will be

included in their syllabi. In addition to forming a volunteer force, Government would fully utilise the services of NCC, NSS, Scouts, Residential Associations, self help groups and community leaders in disaster management and mitigation activities.

### **VIII Role of Central Agencies**

Government recognises the importance of Military, Para Military forces, Civil aviation authorities, Railways, Telecom, Port authorities and central PSUs., in effective management of disasters. Accordingly their representatives would be involved in various meetings/Committees and Government would maintain regular interaction/contact with them to facilitate their cooperation in all disaster management and mitigation activities.



## **ANNEXURE I**

### **State Disaster Management Authority / Governing Body**

- Hon 'ble Chief Minister - Chairperson, Ex - officio
- Hon'ble Minister for Revenue
- Chief Secretary, Ex – Officio
- Secretary, Revenue
- Secretary, Home
- Secretary, Finance
- Special Commissioner and Commissioner of Revenue Administration
- Dr. S. Rajarathinam, Director, Centre for Disaster Management and Mitigation, Anna University, Chennai – 600 025
- Professor, C.V.R. Murty, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai – 600 036.

## **ANNEXURE II**

### **State Executive Committee**

- Chief Secretary to Government -Chairperson, Ex- officio
- Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Ex-Officio
- Secretary to Government, Finance Department, Ex-Officio
- Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Ex-Officio
- Secretary to Government, Highways Department, Ex-Officio
- Secretary to Government, Home Department, Ex-Officio
- The Additional Chief Secretary / Commissioner of Revenue Administration who is a special invitee to all the meetings of the State Executive Committee