

## Disaster, *Raksha* (Safety) and *Shakti* (Resilience)

Reducing disaster risk is everyone's business. All sections of society have to come together to make India safe from such risks. The police and security forces can play a unique role in the pursuit of disaster resilience. The All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), Ahmedabad is making a modest contribution in enhancing the capacity of security and police forces to effectively respond to disasters and other emergencies. The following is one such example.

On April 03, 2018 AIDMI organized an orientation programme on Local Level Disaster Management Planning for eight students and a faculty of Raksha Shakti University, India's first internal security/police university. The objective of this programme was to introduce the participants to key issues and best practices of disaster risk reduction. Some of the key themes highlighted in the discussion that followed were:

- 1) Practical exposure and experience in the field.
- 2) Organization working style.
- 3) How organization is dealing with government authorities at local to national level.

- 4) Role in Sustainable Development Goals.
- 5) AIDMI Contributions to society.
- 6) Planning and process at local level.

The participants also shared their experiences from the field. For instance, they highlighted how local government institutions especially those in rural areas lack proper water management and utilization methods.

The strengthening of disaster management mechanisms through understanding and inter-linking the roles of various departments in a disaster scenario at various level is very much required in India. The approach of working in the field and dealing with government authorities should owned by the agency, the support must come from the government and stakeholders for better implementation. Nature of work at policy level or the operational level should be demand driven to handle governance issues from local level to national level.

Other programmes like school safety, local level planning like

DDMP, City DMP, Departmental DMP, Office DMP etc. were explained with roles and responsibilities of the local government and concern agencies also discussed in orientation. At present, hazard orientated and specific aims for crowd management, heat wave and hospital safety are the need of the hour.

The role of police and security forces is crucial in every phase of disaster management as first responder or proximal at incident sites and relationship with the people. Some specific tasks can only be done by police and security forces like search and rescue of the affected people in disaster, they have well developed communication systems which could be used in emergency for information dissemination and liasoning between other stakeholders in the emergency.

The Standard operating procedure for the police and security forces during emergency operations should be evolved and followed. The SOP is the major documented guidelines for the Police in Pre, during and Post Disaster operations. The participant spoke on these aspects of the orientation at length.

As mentioned earlier, the key issues discussed by the participants covered topics such as heat wave action plans and road safety action plan. In discussion participants also drew attention to road accidents and security issues with respect to the city of Ahmedabad. The discussion ended with a detailed feedback from the participants wherein they appreciated the efforts of AIDMI and suggested that more of such orientation programmes be organized in future but of longer duration. ■

- AIDMI Team



Local Level Disaster Management Planning - orientation at AIDMI office with Raksha Shakti University participants and faculty.

Photo: AIDMI.