Guest Lecture under Special Sessions

Title: ***Disaster Management in India - Chennai Floods 2015***

Overview

Disaster situations in India, both natural and manmade pose great risks to lives and economy, as disaster preparedness is beyond the common mans comprehension. The frequency and intensity of disaster situations have been on the rise in India, and though policies and protocols are in place, governmental authorities and non-governmental agencies are often overwhelmed when disaster strikes.

India ranks amongst one of the most disaster prone countries in the world and is witnessing a steady rise in disasters during the recent past. The Metropolitan city of Chennai, down south India, has historically not been prone to natural disasters, but has seen no less than four deadly calamities in the last two decades, with a constant threat of the fifth disaster looming large in the form of an earthquake, with Chennai moving from seismic zone 2 to seismic zone 3. In the winter of 2015, Chennai was flooded due to heavy rainfall, affecting over 10 million people across every socio-economic strata, claiming the lives of over 500 people and damage of property worth $14 billion. This misery not just shook the entire nation, but it saw the heights of human resilience and resolve, stirring the emotions of people of all sects, and portraying a deep sense of humanity and grit, also raking up a barrage of questions on disaster preparedness.

A distressing coup d'oeil which would reveal heart wrenching stories shared by victims, experiences visualised from the eyes of average Indian citizens, limitations faced by officers at the helm of affairs, and remedial measures and strategies which are currently being offered to cope up with the calamities.

Where is the second most populous country in the world headed towards dealing with disaster situations. What is the solution for this staggering population and the common man. Is the government having to look for volunteers beyond their rescue teams and paramilitary forces. A thought provoking presentation awaits.