

**AN INTRODUCTION TO DISASTER AND DISASTER-MANAGEMENT IN INDIA****Shivraj Singh Yadav, Ph. D.***Associate Professor, Department of Geography, K. K. (PG) College, Etawah, U.P.***Abstract**

*Although the primary responsibility for disaster management is of the concerned state Governments, the Central Government plays a key role for providing financial and logistic support in case of major disasters and co-ordinate the effort of all Central Ministries/Departments/Organizations. Cabinet Committee on Natural Calamities is placed at the apex level. The scope of the Committee has also been enlarged so as to address mitigation and preparedness measures also. Mitigation, preparedness and response are multi-disciplinary functions, involving a number of Ministries/Departments. Institutional mechanisms which would facilitate this inter-disciplinary approach are being put in place. It is proposed to create Disaster/Emergency Management Authorities, both at the National and State levels, with representatives from the relevant Ministries/Departments to bring about this coordinated and multi-disciplinary with experts covering a large number of branches. The National Emergency Management Authority is proposed to be constituted. The organization will be multidisciplinary with experts covering a large number of branches. The National Emergency Management Authority is proposed as a combined Secretariat/Directorate structure – a structure which will be an integral part of the Government while, at the same time, retaining the flexibility of a field organization.*

**Key Words:** *Natural- disaster, hazard, management of hazards, Biological- disaster*



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**Discussion and Findings:**

**Disaster and Hazards:** A dangerous condition or events that threaten or have the potential for causing injury to life or damage to property or the environment. They can be categorized in various ways but, based on the origin, hazards worldwide are basically grouped in two broad headings:

1. **Natural Hazards** - Hazards with meteorological, geological or biological origin
2. **Unnatural Hazards:** Hazards with human-caused or technological origin.

It is also important to know that natural phenomena are extreme climatological, hydrological, or geological, processes that do not pose any threat to persons or property. A massive earthquake in an unpopulated area, for example, is a natural phenomenon, not a hazard. It is when these natural phenomena interact with the man made environment or fragile areas which causes wide spread damage.

### **WHAT ARE DISASTERS?**

Almost every day we witness in the news, there are many of the reports of disasters all around on the globe. Disaster is defined as: “A serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources.” A disaster is the product of a hazard such as earthquake, flood or windstorm coinciding with a vulnerable situation which might include communities, cities or villages. There are two main components in this definition: hazard and vulnerability. Without vulnerability or hazard there is no disaster. A disaster occurs when There are several important characteristics that make Disasters different from Accidents. The loss of a sole income earner in a car crash may be a disaster to a family, but only an accident to the community. Variables such as Causes, Frequency, Duration of the Impact, Speed of Onset, Scope of the Impact, Destructive Potential, Human Vulnerability etc determine the difference.

### **DISASTER MANAGEMENT CYCLE:**

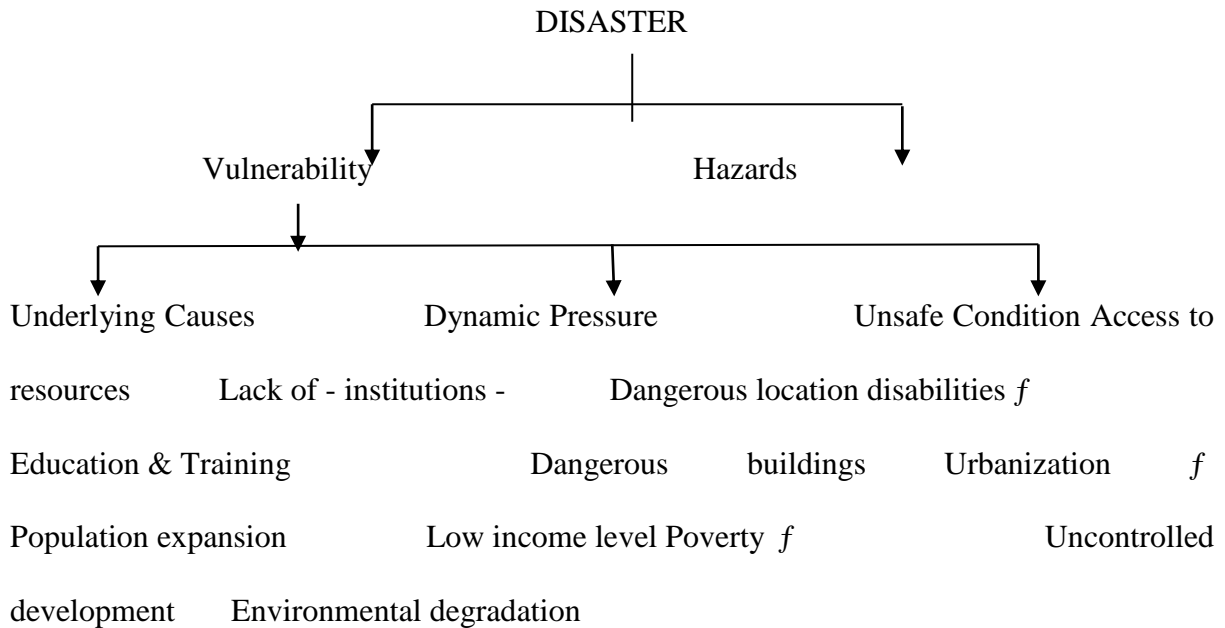
Disaster management can be defined as the body of policy and administrative decisions and operational activities which pertain to the various stages of a disaster at all levels. Broadly disaster management can be divided into pre-disaster and post-disaster contexts. There are three key stages of activity that are taken up within disaster management. They are:

- 1. Before a disaster strikes (pre-disaster):** Activities taken to reduce human and property losses caused by the hazard and ensure that these losses are also minimized when the disaster strikes. Risk reduction activities are taken under this stage and they are termed as mitigation and preparedness activities.
- 2. During a disaster (disaster occurrence):** Activities taken to ensure that the needs and provisions of victims are met and suffering is minimized. Activities taken under this stage are called as emergency response activities

**3. After a disaster (post-disaster):** Activities taken to achieve early recovery and does not expose the earlier vulnerable conditions. Activities taken under this stage are called as response and recovery activities.

**Trigger events:** Earthquake, Tsunamis, Avalanches, Floods, Cyclones, Volcanic eruptions, Droughts, Landslides, War Technological, Accidental industrial activities, Environmental pollution.

### Model of Disaster and Hazards



The disasters have been categorized into following five sub-groups depending on generic (origin) considerations and various departments/ ministries dealing with various aspects:

1. Water and Climate Related Disasters Flood Management, Cyclones, Tornadoes and Hurricanes, Hailstorm, Cloud Burst, Heat Wave and Cold Wave, Snow Avalanches, Droughts, Sea Erosion and Thunder and Lightning.
2. Geographical disasters: Landslides and Mudflows, Earthquakes, Dam Failures/ Dam Bursts and Mine Fires
3. Chemical, Industrial & Nuclear related disasters Chemical and industrial and nuclear disasters have been included.
4. Accident related disasters Forest Fires, Urban Fires, Mines Flooding Oil Spill, Major Building Collapse, Serial Bomb Blasts, Festival related disasters, Electrical disasters and

Fires, Air, Road and Rail Accidents, Boat Capsizing and Village Fire have been included in this sub-group by HPC.

5. Biological disasters: Epidemics ( as COVID -19), Pest Attacks, Cattle epidemics and Food poisoning. Natural disasters are natural phenomenon and occur without any intention while man-made disasters are events which, either intentionally or by accident cause severe threats to public health and well-being. Because their occurrence is unpredictable, manmade disasters pose an especially challenging threat that must be dealt with through vigilance, and proper preparedness and response.

### **Government Efforts and National Disaster Management Act 2005**

The Parliament of India has enacted the National Disaster Management Act in November 2005, which brings about a paradigm shift in India's approach to disaster management. The centre of gravity stands visibly shifted to preparedness, prevention and planning from earlier response and relief centric approach. The Act provides for establishment of: 1 National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) 1 State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) 1 District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) The Act also provides for - 1 Constitution of Disaster Response Fund and Disaster Mitigation Fund at National, State and District levels. 1 Establishment of NIDM and NDRF. 1 Providing penalties for obstructions, false claims, misappropriation etc. It states that there shall be no discrimination on the ground of sex, caste, community, descent or religion in providing compensation and relief.

Indeed, concurrent to these occurrences, the government at various levels too, has responded by taking appropriate measures for prevention and mitigation of the effects of disasters. While long term preventive and preparedness measures have been taken up, the unprecedented nature of the disasters has called in for a nationwide response mechanism wherein there is a pre-set assignment of roles and functions to various institutions at central, state and the district level.

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