

Standing Committee Report Summary

Disaster Management

- The Committee on Home Affairs (Chair: Dr Radha Mohan Das Agrawal) submitted its report on 'Disaster Management' on August 7, 2026. The Committee examined India's vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards. Key observations and recommendations of the Committee include:
- **Revising disaster management frameworks:** The Committee observed that the landscape of disaster risks has changed since the National Policy on Disaster Management, 2009 and National Disaster Management Plan, 2016 were adopted. It noted that increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and rapid urbanisation have created new disaster risks. It recommended revision of the national policy and national disaster management plan to reflect these changes and also give effect to the 2025 amendments to the Disaster Management Act, 2005. It further recommended: (i) updating state and district disaster management plans, (ii) increasing the frequency of mock drills, and (iii) strengthening Specialist Response Forces and State Disaster Response Forces.
- **Urban disaster management:** The Committee noted that urban areas are becoming increasingly vulnerable to urban flooding, heatwaves, building collapses, infrastructure stress, and chemical and industrial hazards. The 2025 amendments also empower state governments to constitute Urban Disaster Management Authority (UDMA) for state capitals and cities with municipal corporations. The Committee noted that only Karnataka has constituted UDMA for Bengaluru. It recommended that UDMA must be constituted in all eligible areas. UDMA must prepare city-specific disaster management plans and conduct risk assessments.
- **Disaster financing:** The Committee observed that several states have maintained substantial unspent balances in state disaster response funds. It also noted that the Centre's fund release for state disaster mitigation funds remained around 80% of the allocation during the 15th Finance Commission period. This was primarily due to delay in constitution of state-level funds and late issuance of operational guidelines by NDMA. It also suggested implementation of the following recommendations of the 16th Finance Commission: (i) inclusion of heatwaves and lightning to the list of notified disasters, (ii) capping releases when unspent balance exceeds the sum of past three years' annual allocations, and (iii) upgrading the technology of the current disaster management information system. It further observed that disaster-related spending remains largely relief-centric, and a gradual shift towards mitigation-focused investments should be made. It also recommended expanding risk financing mechanisms, including insurance coverage for households, agriculture, and MSMEs.
- **Recovery and rehabilitation:** The Post Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs) evaluate the physical damage, economic losses, and human impacts of a disaster. The Committee recommended: (i) standardised PDNA processes and timelines across states, (ii) financial recovery assistance based on findings, (iii) sector-specific guidelines for rebuilding housing, infrastructure, and livelihoods, (iv) higher-level monitoring and reviews to ensure reconstruction standards, and (v) socially inclusive rehabilitation and trauma counselling for vulnerable persons.
- **Risk assessment and early warning systems:** The Committee noted the need for a scientific risk assessment and early identification of hazards. It recommended: (i) multi-hazard risk mapping for town planning, (ii) multi-hazard early-warning platform incorporating AI, radars and satellite data, (iii) hyper-local and multilingual communication systems, and (iv) mandatory disaster risk impact assessments for major infrastructure and urban development projects.
- **River basin flood management:** The Committee noted that several states such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Assam struggle with recurrent riverine flooding, urban waterlogging, and earthquake vulnerability. It recommended: (i) investment in urban drainage and storm water systems, (ii) earthquake-resilient infrastructure, (iii) a national framework for flood management based on river-basin-level planning, (iv) periodic satellite-based mapping of floods, (v) removal of encroachments from riverbeds and floodplains, (vi) mandatory city-level flood and drainage plans for urban local bodies, and (vii) restoration of wetlands, lakes and natural drainage channels. To address riverine flooding, the Committee further recommended: (i) long-term flood and riverbank erosion management, (ii) strengthening embankments, and (iii) improving local response and rehabilitation systems.

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