

CIVIL DEFENCE IN ODISHA

“Civil Defence” connotes the performance of humanitarian tasks intended to protect the civil population against the dangers and to help recovered from the immediate effects of HOSTILITY or NATURAL DISASTERS and also to provide the conditions necessary for its survival. Civil Defence does have the International set-up. It is reckoned as a humanitarian work.

In India, it functions under the Civil Defence Act (Central Act-27) of 1968 and Rules and Regulations framed there under. The basic objective of this organisation is to (i) save life (ii) minimize damage to property (iii) maintain continuity of production, and (iv) boost the morale of the people high during HOSTILE ATTACK. It is organized as an integral part of the defence of the country. It is basically a voluntary organization. Planning, guidance, training and provision of equipment are being provided by the Government while citizens are subject to provide manpower, leadership and enthusiasm.

Civil Defence is functioning in Odisha prior to the commencement of Civil Defence Act, 1968. It was earlier guided by ARP Act in pre-independence era, and under Defence of India Act, 1962. Subsequently, in accordance with the Civil Defence Act, Rules, Regulations and directives issued by the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs. Civil Defence now has been organized in Odisha. At present, Civil Defence is functioning in the towns like (1) Talcher, (2) Rourkela, (3) Koraput, (4) Bhubaneswar & (5) Paradeep. Further, Government of India have declared for establishment of Civil Defence Set up in five multi-hazard prone districts viz., Balasore, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara basing on the vulnerability to the disasters in these districts. The Assistant Fire Officers of the District Headquarters Fire Stations of the said five multi-hazard prone districts have been declared as Deputy Controller of Civil Defence of the concerned district. The Civil Defence organization is functioning under the Home Department and the Additional D.G. of Police, Fire Service and Commandant General, Home Guards, Odisha has been appointed as the Director of Civil Defence for co-ordinating the activities of the Civil Defence Controllers of the State. Government have decided for establishment of Civil Defence Training Institute in the premises of Odisha Fire Service Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.

At district level, Civil Defence is being implemented by the District Magistrates as the controller of Civil Defence. A very small nucleus skeleton staff only has been engaged in facilitating planning, training and implementation of all Civil Defence activities. Other than the regular training programme, to acquaint the volunteers with their jobs during emergencies and also to attract general public for the cause of this organization, demonstrations and exercises are also being conducted regularly. To highlight the role of the organization, good number of philanthropic works has also been undertaken by the volunteers.

Since the staff and the volunteers are well trained in the subjects like First-Aid, Rescue and Fire Fighting, etc, training on the subject have also been imparted to good

number of members of other voluntary organizations. Civil Defence training has also been imparted to the members of NCC, Scout and Guides, St. John Ambulance, Red Cross, NSS, School and College students in a massive number since they are treated as auxiliary manpower to Civil Defence.

Although natural calamity has not been included in the CD Act, yet Central Government has issued directives to utilize all sources of Civil Defence for Disaster Relief and Mitigation Programme. The services of Civil Defence manpower and equipment however, could be utilized for the following emergency works during and after any calamity.

- i) Dissemination of Warning in the likely affected areas and evacuation of people.
- ii) Management of shelter and blackout measures, if necessary.
- iii) Rescue of casualties, restoration of essential service, repairs and clearance of roads by cutting off falling trees and debris, salvage and properties etc.
- iv) First Aid and Medical attention to victims of road accidents, emergency sanitation, prevention of epidemic, animal care and disposal of corpses and carcasses.
- v) Emergency feeding, sheltering and clothing of the homeless, and
- vi) Establishment of communication network through VHF/HF sets for easy command and control.

In the last super-cyclone the Civil Defence personnel did commendable job. Their contribution and dedicated service is detailed below, provides a clear picture.

1. Clearance of Roads by cutting trees and removing debris immediately after cyclone.
2. Collection of new and old garments on door-to-door campaign, in aid of the victims.
3. Preparation of relief food packets for Air-dropping in the distressed areas.
4. Disposal of carcasses in the roadsides of Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts, in the initial days.
5. Disposal of human dead bodies in the inaccessible areas, being dropped from the Air by Helicopter.
6. Disposal of huge human dead bodies and carcasses in the areas of Erasama and Balikuda remaining in the camp for fifteen days.

The organization however is running shortage of manpower, equipment and vehicle. Since State Government has to bear 75% of the total expenditure, due to financial constraints adequate budgetary provision has not yet been made

to activate the organization.

The Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs have been requested vide this Deptt. Letter No.1988/CD dt.24.10.2000 to consider sanction of 100% grant-in-aid for revamping of Civil Defence Set-up in the State of Odisha since the State is facing financial constraints due to last Super Cyclone in the State. As per intimation of Govt. of India the above proposal is under consideration of Ministry of Home Affairs.