

Be ready to face disasters: Rajnath

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Home minister Rajnath Singh on Monday reminded states of their primary role in disaster management and asked them to be ready to face the new disaster risks posed by growing population, unplanned urbanisation and climate change.

Inaugurating the second meeting of the National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) on "Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development: Making India resilient by 2030," Singh said sustainable development was closely related with better disaster management, and efforts must be made to make all development initiatives disaster-resilient.

Every preventable death should be averted and stakeholders should prepare action plans for vulnerable communities of societies, Singh said,

while appealing to states to continuously upgrade their preparedness and plans for making the country disaster-resilient.

The home minister went on to recall the major disasters that shook the nation. Odisha lost over 10,000 lives in the super cyclone, Gujarat bore the brunt of a big earthquake in 2001, and there was the Tsunami in 2004, he said. Singh said an extra rupee spent on disaster mitigation can save Rs 10 spent after the disaster to make up for the loss, both of life and property. Referring to global agreements like Sendai Framework, Sustainable Development Goals and the Climate Change Agreement, he said that India has prepared a disaster management plan and policy, early warning systems, cyclone shelters and saline embankments, disaster response forces at national and state levels and done capacity building of com-



Ministers at the NPDRR meeting in the Capital

munities.

India's recent initiatives for increasing regional cooperation include launching of a dedicated satellite for South Asian Countries, holding of the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) 2016 and setting up of SAARC disaster management centre.

The two-day NPDRR meeting is a multi-stakeholder national platform headed by the Union home minister and

it promotes participatory decision-making in disaster management with the involvement of states.

Union minister for science & technology and earth sciences, Harsh Vardhan, minister of state for home affairs Kiren Rijiju and additional principal secretary to Prime Minister P K Mishra were present at the meet. Rijiju said India is a disaster-prone country and asked the states to draw up con-

crete plans to implement the 10-point-agenda for disaster risk reduction given by the Prime Minister during AMC-DRR 2016.

R K Jain, member, National Disaster Management Authority, referred to India's achievements including version 3.0 of National Database on Emergency Management (NDEM), which is device and browser independent, and is equipped with latest resource mapping tools and audio-video conference facilities.

Ministers from states highlighted their initiatives in disaster risk reduction. Women and child development minister Maneka Gandhi, agriculture and farmers welfare minister Radha Mohan Singh and ministers from Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh and LG of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, attended the session.