

Flood Preparedness Programme: The Way Forward

Amid the monsoon flood season in Bangladesh, which is responsible for colossal damage of properties and livelihoods almost every year, a national level workshop titled as “Flood Preparedness Programme: The Way Forward”, was held on 14 June 2015 at Hotel Radisson Blu. Flood Preparedness Programme (FPP) is a unique programme being implemented in the two most flood prone districts, Sirajganj and Gaibandha, of Bangladesh. Funded by Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP), the Programme is being implemented by Ansar & VDP, with the technical and professional support from Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC).

The objective of the Workshop was to share the urgency, opportunities and challenges of FPP. Mr. Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhuri Maya, Bir Bikram, MP, Honorable Minister for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief was present as the Chief Guest while Mr. Asaduzzaman Khan, MP, Honorable State Minister of Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. Kamal Kanti Boidya, Additional Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. Mohammad Abdul Qayyum, National Project Director of CDMP and Mr. Nick Beresford, Deputy Country Director of UNDP were present as Special Guests on the occasion.

The Programme started with the welcome speech from Mr. Dilip K. Biswas, Deputy Director General (Ops), followed by a presentation on fledgling Flood Preparedness Programme and the roles, responsibilities of Bangladesh Ansar & VDP by Mr. AKM Mizanur Rahman, Deputy Director General (Training) of Ansar & VDP.

Mr. Muhammad Saidur Rahman, Director, BDPC made a presentation on Flood Preparedness Programme, where he focused on the challenges faced by the Programme and the way forward. Citing the example of the globally acclaimed Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP), he emphasized on the institutionalization of the Programme and incorporating it on the Governments own exchequer.

Mr. Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhuri Maya, Bir Bikram, Minister of MoDMR in his speech appreciated the Flood Preparedness Programme, which is designed in line with the widely acclaimed Cyclone Preparedness Programme and mentioned that the Programme has the potential to reduce the sufferings of the poor and communities at risk. He also stressed the need for the expansion of the Programme in all the flood vulnerable districts of Bangladesh.

At the workshop, various aspects of flood disaster management in Bangladesh and the way forward were discussed by a panel of Experts, which included Mr. Mohammad Abdul Qayyum, National Project Director of CDMP, Mr. Riaz Ahmed, DG of DDM, Mr. Peter Medway , Project Manager of CDMP and Mr. AKM Mizanur Rahman, DDG (Training) of Ansar & VDP . The session was moderated by Mr. Muhammad Saidur Rahman, Director of BDPC.

Mr. Asaduzzaman Khan, MP, Honorable State Minister of Ministry of Home Affairs stated with pride that Ansar & VDP under the Ministry of Home Affairs is the largest organization of the country and is contributing in safeguarding the lives and properties of vulnerable communities. He also mentioned with such initiatives, to reduce the risk and mitigate the impacts of natural hazards, under the leadership of Honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh will once again be proven as a role model of disaster management in the global platform.

Mr. Kamal Kanti Boidya, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs appreciated the initiative of Flood Preparedness Programme to disseminate the flood early warning to the 'Last Mile' and expressed his wishes that this will contribute in reducing the colossal loss of property and life caused by floods in Bangladesh.

Major General Md. Nazimuddin, psc, Director General of Bangladesh Ansar & VDP in his speech reaffirmed his believe that with little incentive his 'Bahini' is ready to do miracle, not only in flood disaster management but also other hazards in Bangladesh.

The Programme ended with the vote of thanks by Mr. Nazimuddin.