

**“...need to make the region stronger than any other region in the field of disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management by coming together and putting aside political issues between the countries for the greater good”, says MoS Kiren Rijiju**

**New Delhi, 15 December 2014:** The Minister of State for Home Affairs (In-charge Disaster Management) **Mr. Kiren Rijiju** made the Inaugural Address at the conference where he talked about the strides made by India in the field of Disaster Management. He first of all reaffirmed the intention of the Government of India to work with governments in the region for combined and strong action to address disaster risk. He also emphasized the importance of Disaster Risk Mitigation for the region by quoting from his experience.

The Minister suggested a Four Point Principle for Disaster Reduction in South Asia, which includes a greater coordination at the national and regional level between agencies engaging with disaster risk reduction both between and within our countries, need for better response mechanisms in order to minimize manmade errors and ensure timely and effective interventions from responder agencies so as to minimize human suffering, a shift of focus from response oriented approach to one which emphasizes on preparedness and disaster mitigation; and finally strengthening the institution at the local and regional level in order to make them resilient to disasters.

He said that we need to make the region stronger than any other region in the field of disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management by coming together and putting aside political issues between the countries for the greater good.

He pointed out two challenges that our region is facing in addressing disasters. First, we need to minimize the economic costs of disasters so that our hard earned gains are not washed away, and second is to come up with a holistic and well implementable framework for reducing the economic loss from disasters under the aegis of SAARC

**Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister** gave the Theme Address at the Conference where first of all he pointed out that frequency and intensity of disasters in the region is increasing enormously. He pointed out that it is the joint responsibility of all sectors including government, private as well as Civil Society Organisations pointing out that the regional interest is far more important and calls for greater cooperation. Poverty and Inequality, and Disaster Risk is a characteristic of the South Asia and to address this combined scourge we must look at development and improve the governance in these areas. He also urged the participants to commit ourselves for actions to be taken in the Post HFA Framework, and come up with an integrated approach. We must aim to achieve tangible outcomes by strengthening technology, early warning systems, space technology as one of the options. He also mentioned how disasters are being overlooked in our planning processes and this must be corrected. He mentioned how without Business Continuity we cannot ensure sustainable development therefore we must carefully design frameworks for risk reduction, risk financing and the strength of risk Financing Instruments. He also reaffirmed the role of government for providing policy support to the region.

**Ms. Feng Min Kan, Head UNISDR, Asia Pacific** also raised pertinent question about the kind of policies which are needed to secure sustainable engagement of private sector, the data requirements to establish a comprehensive Disaster Risk Profile and the sort of modalities to build private public partnerships for DRR.

**Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary General of FICCI**, said technology innovation is essential for Disaster Management and SAARC countries will have to adopt this new technology. He added that FICCI, as a leader in the field of private sector, will support and work with SAARC in managing disasters and implementing and putting emphasis on all the factors that improve BCP and reduces disaster risks.

Proposing a vote of thanks, Prof. Santosh Kumar said that we have come up the needs and expectations of the victims of natural disasters through multilateral collaborations.

It was attended by Senior Industry representatives and CEOs, Secretaries of Disaster Management Authorities of various Indian States, senior officials from various ministries in Government of India, representatives and professionals from SAARC Countries and a battery of leading professionals in the field.



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