

CALLING ATTENTION TABLED BY SHRI VIJAI SARDESAI , MLA FATORDA, SHRI SANKALP AMOMNKAR, MLA MORMUGAO AND SHRI ALTONE D' COSTA, MLA QUEPEM.

REGARDING: CALLING ATTENTION UNDER RULE 63 OF THE “RULES OF PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OF THE GOA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY”.

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“Fear and anxiety in the minds of the people of Goa about the floods due to heavy rainfall affecting many parts of Goa, whether the State Disaster Management Authority lacks the capability of promptly dealing with such weather phenomena and whether the Government’s lacks of consideration of climate change while planning mega infrastructure projects is only worsening the situation”.
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STATEMENT BY THE HON’BLE MINISTER FOR REVENUE

SHRI ATANASIO MONSERRATE ON 11/07/2022

REPLY TO CALLING ATTENTION BY HON’BLE REVENUE MINISTER

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Sir, since its inception, the SDMA has taken several measures for responding to and mitigating disasters in the State of Goa. A comprehensive disaster management plan is in place for the State as well as at the District levels.

The State Disaster Management Authority headed by the Hon’ble Chief Minister reviewed the works required to be done by various line departments on 28/04/2022. Directions were issued to the Collectors, Directorate of Municipal Administration, Directorate of Panchayats, Electricity Department, PWD and WRD to ensure timely completion of the pre-monsoon work which included de-silting of nallahs, gutters, trimming of trees on roadsides, removal of dangerous buildings and closing of roadside works.

The Collectors being the Chairpersons of the respective District Disaster Management Authorities have convened meetings with all the line departments for the monsoon pre-preparation and to do a vulnerability assessment. Consequently, the Dy. Collectors & SDMs of concerned Sub-Divisions have mapped the Flood Prone Areas and Landslide Areas. Further, they have also mapped the routes for evacuating people residing in the low-lying areas. They have also prepared a list of relief materials and suppliers that have been identified along with Self Help Groups in affected areas. Directions have been issued to Director, Civil Supplies to ensure that adequate stock of essential commodities is kept ready which can be utilized during emergency.

The State Emergency Operation Centre as well as the District Emergency Operation Centres which are functional 24x7 have been instrumental in catering to any emergency/distress calls, especially in the past few days. Control Rooms have also been set up at the Taluka Level and the contact numbers have been duly publicized through social media, newspapers and radio. The SDMA has also issued an SMS alert on 08/07/2022 for the first time; which has reached over 16 lakh mobile users all over Goa, using NDMA's Common Alert Protocol. The Communication Plan with contact numbers of all line departments is printed in the form of pocket diary and shared to all the line departments to enable smooth communication for co-ordination with the concerned during Floods.

The Collectors have deputed Talathis on the field round the clock, to assess the situation and take precautionary measures with the help of the locals. In anticipation of flooding, each Taluka Mamlatdar has identified Shelter homes to give shelter to the affected people. Also, 10 Multi Purpose Cyclone Shelters which have been constructed by the Water Resources Department under National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP), to evacuate and provide shelter during the flood, can be made operational if required. The WRD is frequently monitoring the water levels in every water basin and in the dams to alert the general public, if it is in the danger zone. Motors and Pumps have been installed to pump out the water wherever required.

The Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services plays a major role as the Local Fire Station in the respective Zone is the First Responder in any Emergency. It also diligently collects information regarding emergency calls received & attended and publishes them in real time to the departmental website. Concerned officials of the Disaster Management Cells and the Media are well informed about the same for an early response. The Department has partnered with NDMA to enrol 350 Community Volunteers (Aapda Mitra) whose services will be utilized during Disaster Response, Relief and Rehabilitation in the State. A total of 15 Aapda Sakhi & 81 Aapda Mitra have been trained till date. 350 Emergency Responder Kits for Aapda Mitras have been purchased to strengthen the community response to any exigency. The Directorate has well trained personnel for Swift Water/Flood Rescue, Urban Search and Rescue and to function as Medical First Responders equipped with necessary machinery and equipment. Directions have also been issued to local bodies to engage additional labourers to be placed at the disposal of fire stations at the Taluka level.

Further, capacity building has also been done for officials from line departments through Trainings and Awareness Programmes by GIPARD. The Government is also in

the process of raising a dedicated State Disaster Response Force-SDRF. The Government has recently signed an MoU with the NDRF (Pune) for access to inventory of National Disaster Response Reserve (relief material).

In the past few days, the State Disaster Management Authority has promptly responded to emergency situations all over Goa. There have been landslides at various places such as at Anmod Ghat in Dharbanodra, Davoxet tanki in Quepem, Vishvambar Wadi Sanvordem in Sanguem, Betora in Ponda, St. Britto High School in Mapusa and Mahakhajan Dhargal in Pernem Taluka due to which the roads were blocked. The PWD department, Police and team of Dy Collectors & SDMs and Mamlatdars of the concerned talukas reported immediately to the incident site wherein JCBs were deployed to clear the blockage at the landslide areas. The vehicular traffic resumed immediately after the landslide areas were cleared. There has been damage to the infrastructure under the beautification project on the Colva beach. The teams of disaster management in coordination with GCZMA, Tourism and WRD have been instructed to take remedial measures at the site.

Due to heavy rains, water entered in to the houses in Paroda, Cuncolim, Velim, Navelim, Nirankal, Usgao in South Goa and Amberem-Poroscadem, near Mopa Plateau in North Goa. The water flow through traditional waterway was not sufficient due to heavy rains and silt which got accumulated. The Fire & Emergency Services, Deputy Collectors, Mamlatdars and WRD officials reported immediately to the incident sites and made way for the water to recede. Further, family members of those houses where water had entered were shifted either to their relatives' places or to their neighbouring houses, also grocery items were supplied to the family members of flood affected areas by the concerned Mamlatdars.

There have been many cases of tree fall and the concerned officials have reported immediately to the incident site and cleared the trees. In cases of damages to houses, the teams headed by the Mamlatdars along with Talathis have immediately assessed and conducted the panchanama of the site. Accordingly, compensation will be provided to houses affected due to rain.

The Fire and Emergency services have gone beyond the call of duty in one particular incident in flooded Gudi Paroda by reaching out to a deceased person lying in a marooned house. The family was stranded with the areas around them submerged. A distress call later, the fire personnel responded with all the professionalism and helped the family to perform the last rites.

It is therefore evident that the State Disaster Management Authority is well positioned to tackle any exigency that may arise due to heavy rainfall. Further, with regard to large infrastructure projects, it may be noted that these are undertaken by central agencies especially NHAI, Railways besides the PWD, GSIDC etc. All such projects need to obtain clearance in terms of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) wherever applicable. Some of the projects have also been scrutinised by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) such as the Western Bypass road, Margao. Climate change effects are being felt universally and are not limited to Goa. Diversion of low lying lands which are acting as retention basins are generally not permitted but if at all allowed, it will be with special permission from the Department of Town and Country Planning.
