

## A GENERAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE PART OF PANCHAYATH RAJ BODIES IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN KERALA

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### Abstract

*In India the National Disaster management authority of india and Kerala State Disaster Management Authority of Kerala have crucial role in Disasters happening in India. The government is the main element of disasters .While it is the government's job to assist those in need, it is the people's bigger duty to assist the government in helping them deal with calamities. The best local organizations to engage the public in natural disaster preparedness are Panchayati raj bodies. Panchayati Raj organizations are involved in every stage of disaster management. The analysis that follows goes over the key functions that PRIs play in times of crises. PRI have very significant role of State Disaster Management Authority of India. Panchayati raj was the one of the important part of Local Self Government of Kerala.*

**Keywords :** Panchayati Raj, Ndma, Ksdma

One of the main responsibilities assigned to local self governments is the management of natural disasters and the subsequent implementation of relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction efforts. Institutions under Panchayati Raj have previously been acknowledged as being qualified and able to carry out their constitutional duties. Its potential for disaster management has been downgraded and degraded without adequate examination and facilitation environment. the 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution assigns the Village Panchayats exclusive responsibility for village development and empowers them to serve as institutions of local self-governance. Their main responsibilities are as follows: (a) Safe habitat development, including zoning for sites that are safe; (b) Basic infrastructure provision, including roads, electricity, drainage, waste management, safe drinking water, and sanitary facilities; (c) Enough employment to ensure food security and prevent starvation and deaths; and (d) Disaster preparedness and response. management (Report of the Planning Commission, New Delhi, December 2001 Task Force on Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)). In addition to these mandated functions, section 243G of the Indian Constitution designates "29 other areas such as, but not limited to, land and water management, vulnerability reduction, social security, and child development" as the responsibilities of Village Panchayats.

### Panchayats' Role in the First Phase of Disaster Management

The three-tier systems of local self-government have the following main tasks and obligations prior to, during, and after the disaster management period.

Gram panchayat or village level

- Call meetings to ensure timely warning
- Keep people and livestock safe

- Make plans for the evacuation of the elderly, the disabled, children, and women
- Provide medical and sanitary facilities at relief camps
- Disconnect power lines during strong winds or gales; store food, drink, etc

### Block Panchayath

- Assessing the preparedness of primary health centers, evacuation plans, and other related things; supervising the readiness of Gram Panchayats (GP); consolidating village-level data on items listed under GP.
- Roads, canals, drainage systems, etc. should be repaired by engineering staff at the Block/Mandal level.
- Make contact with former members of the armed forces, security personnel, and volunteers to form a task force.
- Purchase and maintain rescue equipment, such as boats; • Serve as a liaison between counter disaster efforts at the village and district levels.

### Zilla Panchayat/ District Panchayat

- Prior to the commencement of the possible cyclone periods (May to June & October to November), the District Collector/CEO should call a meeting of all District Heads of sectoral departments and ZP members.
- Set in motion the necessary maintenance, repair, and related tasks for all affected departments to ensure readiness.
- Establish "Task Forces at the district, block, and village levels.
- identify non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that can be of assistance during disasters;
- check inventories of items needed for emergency rescue and relief efforts;

- call a meeting of the Crisis Management Group (CMG) and notify blocks and villages
- All CMG members to maintain their personnel in a state of complete preparation.
- District Collector ought to be appointed CMG Leader and create a control room staffed by senior officers twenty-four hours a day throughout the emergency.

**Gram Panchayats or village level play a crucial role in rescue and relief efforts both before and after the impact of natural disasters.**

**Village Level**

- They can establish temporary shelters or relief camps following an initial warning, store food and water for people and livestock.
- coordinate with village volunteers and task forces to evacuate people and livestock as soon as possible.
- They can also organize veterinary aid teams to care for livestock and remove carcasses,
- Dispose of dead bodies to prevent the spread of disease, and assess the loss of life, livestock, and damage to farming, property, etc.

**Block Level**

- Determine which places are at risk and assign task teams or volunteers to oversee safety precaution
- Get people out of these regions and assist General Practitioners in setting up relief camps.
- Set up emergency communication via ham radios and police wireless, among other means.
- Ensure sufficient supplies of food and other supplies are delivered to relief camps.
- Assist armed forces in rescue and relief operations;
- oversee rescue and relief operations with district-level officers;
- notify CMG if assistance from police and defense forces is required;
- supervise rescue and relief efforts and cooperate with various agencies, including NGOs.

**District Level**

- The actions to be taken include: monitoring the situation, identifying the blocks and villages that are most likely to be affected.
- Issuing warnings, activating the control room.
- Keeping a close eye on the situation.
- Arranging emergency communication using tools like police radios and ham radios.
- Assigning Crisis Management Group to assist block and village Panchayats with counter-disaster steps .

- Arranging transportation for the evacuation of people and livestock, setting up temporary shelters or relief camps, and, if needed.
- Requesting assistance from the armed forces

**Role Of Panchayat In Reconstruction And Long Term Mitigation Planning In Three-Tire System**

In accordance to that, The Local Self-Government Department, Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) and Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) jointly engaged in the 'resource-intensive, time bound, pan-Kerala grassroot-level consultations' for developing the DM plans at local level. The overall objective of the mission which was rolled out in the first week of December 2019 was to identify and understand the ground-level challenges faced by citizens who were the first responders in light of the recent natural calamities that struck the state. Kerala, in its 14 districts, has 941 grama panchayats, 87 municipalities, and 6 corporations (See table 1). It was directed by the Government<sup>3</sup> that disaster management plans to be formulated for all these local bodies in the State. Thus, first of its kind, in the Country (Perhaps in the whole world), an extensive disaster prevention/response programme at the local level was initiated. Directions were given vide G.O(MS)No.156/2019/LSGD, dtd. 4/12/2019 for ensuring people's participation and leader-driven intervention of local self-government institutions in disaster mitigation, preparation, and disaster management areas and for the planning and implementation of such plans at the local self-government level as part of annual plans. Besides this, detailed instructions with respect A Local Self Government Disaster Management Draft template was prepared under the leadership of Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) and Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA). Grama/ward sabhas were convened for discussing the inclusion of Disaster Management and mitigation projects into annual plan for the forthcoming year. Project ideas evolved from situation analysis that was presented in grama/ward sabhas by the respective working groups. To assist the working groups in these activities, 20-member local resource groups were proposed to be formed at the ward level and local self-government level by the local body. Guidelines regarding the formation and function of local resource groups were issued vide the GO (MS) No.9/2020/LSGD. Process flow The Local self-government department vide GO (MS) No. 156/2019/LSGD, dated. 4/12/2019, laid down the roles and responsibilities of the working group on Biodiversity, environmental conservation, climate change, and disaster management along with the process involved in the formulation,

formation of disaster management plans at the local level. It also highlighted the formation and responsibilities of ERTs (Emergency Response Team), responsibilities of the Local Resource Group to the integration of disaster management plans with annual plans have also been issued vide GO (MS) No. 157/2019/LSGD, dtd. 5/12/2019 and GO (MS) No.9/2020/LSGD. The Local self-government department vide GO (MS) No. 156/2019/LSGD, dated. 4/12/2019, laid down the roles and responsibilities of the working group on Biodiversity, environmental conservation, climate change, and disaster management along with the process involved in the formulation, formation of disaster management plans at the local level. It also highlighted the formation and responsibilities of ERTs (Emergency Response Team), responsibilities of the Local Resource Group (LRGs). The DM Plans prepared are specific to each LSGIs which has data scaled down to gramasabha /ward sabha. Apart from the basic demographic, hazard, vulnerability and infrastructure details, the strengths and weakness of particular LSGIs, disaster mitigation measures were also identified while preparing the plans. These measures were then converted to specific projects and fed into the annual plan of the local bodies for implementation. Grama sabhas in each ward were aided by a team of local facilitators for sectoral discussions on the analysis report and for identifying local action points through participatory process. The reports also focused on identifying the scope of interventions at the panchayat, block, and district levels. Along with these, possible interventions that could be made specific to the LSG by disaster management authorities were also identified. The concluding part States that A mix of Infrastructure and Risk Reduction Measures, Community Engagement, Localized Response and Coordination, Building Capacity, and Policy Advocacy , these elements is probably required for Panchayati Raj institutions in Kerala to function 12.

effectively during disasters. Coordination, community involvement, and the capacity to incorporate local expertise into disaster management plans are essential to their success in this capacity. These organizations must collaborate with other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties to develop an all-encompassing and durable disaster management system.

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