



ADRC Highlights Vol.26

Asian Disaster Reduction Center Biweekly News

June 18, 2001

➤ ADRC Survey Mission to West India

From 4 to 8 June 2001, Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) conducted the multinational survey of West Indian Earthquake occurred in Gujarat state of India on January 26, 2001.



Participants at the affected area

The objectives of the survey were to understand the situation of damage and restoration of the disaster, and also to share and utilize lessons learnt from the calamity with other countries that have same disaster vulnerability. In addition, the participants were to discuss how to arrange multilateral cooperation in such catastrophes.

The member from Armenia, Australia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, and Russia of ADRC member and advisory countries

participated in the survey on the following schedule:

- June 4: Briefing on the damage situation and government countermeasures by Ministry of Agriculture and National Center for Disaster Management (NCDM) in Delhi
- June 5: Briefing of the countermeasures on the spot by Collector's Office in Bhuj
- June 6: Briefing by UNDP, CARE (a NGO), AHBIYAN(a NGO) / Field survey in Lodai, a town near the epicenter and Bhuj
- June 7: Field survey in Anjar, Bhachau, and Rapal which were heavily damaged / Visit a planned city under the construction for the affected people in west Bhachau
- June 8: Wrap-up Meeting in Delhi

It has passed almost 4 months since the devastating earthquake which brought 20,000 casualties, destroyed 370,000 houses, and caused total estimated loss of damage Rs. 21,262 crore (US\$450 billion). The progress of the restoration seemed to be on the rails in city areas. We found vast open spaces and many temporary houses in Bhuj, Anjar, and Bhachau which had remained buried under the mountain of rubble when we had visited in April. In addition, in Indraprastha, 20 km south of Bhachau, a new town was under construction with permanent houses for the affected people, hospitals, banks, a shopping center, and a university.



Temporary Housing Exhibition

On the other hand, the villages in suburbs where remained plenty of rubble were still dragging for the recovery. There seemed to be much difference in the progress of restoration between urban areas and the suburbs.

When we visited the organizations such as Ministry of Agriculture, Collector's Office in Bhuj, and UNDP, there were lively discussions about the future planning of the city against disasters, and effective cooperation among governmental organization, NGOs, and International organization during Q&A sessions. In the wrap-up meeting, each participant made a short presentation about what they learned during the survey.

Now, we are planning to hold the 4th ADRC International Meeting in India in November 2001. At the occasion, we will have a session on the West Indian earthquake disaster to discuss how to make good use of the lessons learnt from the calamity. And also we will focus on the effective international cooperation against the disaster.

The photograph and a brief explanation about the survey is available on our website. <http://www.adrc.or.jp/India/frontpage.htm>

➤ ADRC Staff Profiles 2

□ Mr. Taichi Kusaka, Senior Researcher

Dear my friends and colleagues,

Today I came here to say my final words from ADRC. I have been working at this organization since its foundation in July 1998. My three-year assignment is now coming to an end. I was seconded from Sumitomo Electric, a Japanese enterprise based in Osaka.



At NDMO office in Papua New Guinea

For the last three years, I was involved in various programs and endeavors at ADRC. These include official visits to nine of your countries, creation of databases on disaster management and training of the countries, Papua New Guinea Tsunami Awareness Program, JICA Seminar on Disaster Management, Visiting Researcher Program and editing of the latest ADRC Annual Report 2000.

Though my activities varied, always my focus has been disaster prevention (mitigation and preparedness included). So, first, basic framework, institutional arrangements and planning/mobilization are my concerns. Next, people's awareness and training of managers followed. In order to reduce impacts from natural disasters, it is crucial to fully recognize the latest situation and resources in your country and mobilize them before and after the events at various levels.

This century is said to see more frequent and serious meteorological hazards besides a number of geological hazards, partly due to global climate change. So we must act now well before the next event. The strategic and proactive approach should make a difference in natural disaster reduction. Indeed, prevention is better than cure.

By taking this opportunity, please let me ask you to pay attention to the following aspects once again: First, please grasp the situation in your country and let the people know such risks, prevention and emergency measures. Second, please check your system and its workability in such phases as prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and reconstruction in your country and region. When you have found some room to improve, please just do it.

Three years have gone so fast like a dream. But if this term could be called a success, I owe all this to your kind understanding, cooperation and assistance to ADRC. In this regard, I would like to thank you very much.

Please feel free to contact ADRC for your needs anytime. This Center has abundant resources and global network to assist you in realizing disaster reduction for your country.

Finally, I really wish you all the best. See you again!

➤ Recent Natural Disasters in Asia

□ Drought in Central Asia

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan faces the severe drought caused by hot and dry weather continuing since March 2001. There is a critical need for the creation of alternative sources of drinking water.

(6/12 & 6/13 OCHA Situation Report)

□ Floods in South China

66 people were killed and 3,198 injured in landslides and flooding since early May in the mountainous Guangxi region. About five million people have been affected and 15,800 homes had collapsed in floods.

(6/17 CNN News etc.)

If you have comments or needs for this Newsletter, please write to ADRC in the right box.

Published by : Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC)

3rd Floor, IHD Bld. 1-5-1, WAKIHAMAKAIGAN-DORI, CHUO-KU, KOBE

651-0073, JAPAN E-mail: editor@adrc.or.jp Phone: +81-78-230-0346