

“...businesses need to go beyond the limited CSR based framework for a more comprehensive engagement to address the disaster risk”

– says Cabinet Secretary Ajit K. Seth

on the 2nd day of SAARC Regional Conference on Business Continuity Planning & Disaster Risk Reduction in South Asia:

Redefining Private Sector Engagement for Risk Management and Response

New Delhi, 16 December 2014: Shri Ajit Kumar Seth, Cabinet Secretary, Govt. of India in his valedictory address while congratulated the SAARC disaster management center and FICCI to take up this unique and critically important initiative towards economic resilience of the region through business continuity and private sector engagement emphasized that businesses need to go beyond the limited Corporate Social Responsibility based framework for more comprehensive engagement to address the disaster risk. Mr. Seth re-assured the SAARC community with the firm commitment of the Government of India, for sharing its knowledge, capacity and technology for all humanitarian aspects like disaster response, real time early warning and forecasting etc. He mentioned that the space program of Government of India is already dedicated to the entire region by the Prime minister himself through a dedicated SAARC satellite and various space applications tools and products available with us. India’s investments in advance trauma and medical care can also be reaped by the region. He highlighted his experiences and lessons learnt while addressing disaster situations in the country like the Cyclone Hudhud, Cyclone Phailin and Cyclone Nilofer, wherein the benefits accruing from better Early Warning systems and preparedness measures and work of NDRF and State Disaster Response Forces and other related agencies were acknowledged and appreciated globally.

Mr. Ajay M. Gondane, Joint Secretary (SAARC), Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India made a reference to the importance that the Prime Minister attaches to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, and the efforts that all member states have put into reducing disaster risk in the region. These efforts led to the creation of the SAARC Disaster Management Centre, and the continuation of its efforts towards creating a safer and disaster resilient South Asia. He highlighted the importance of translating and transmitting the policy framework and recommendations to the local and ground level. Over the past one decade Disaster management in South Asia has translated successfully from theory to policy which now needs to be translated into actual practice and action at the field.

Dr. M. C. Misra, Director, AIIMS chaired the Technical Session on “Disaster Risk Reduction and Business Continuity Planning for Health Sector”. While outlining a comprehensive structure for Business Continuity of the Health Sector in South Asia assured the region of all support with respect to sharing India’s advances in health and medical sector. Dr. Misra elaborated upon the incidence command systems in the aftermaths of disasters to ensure uninterrupted critical care and trauma services including a renewed focus on Road Tsunami and Injury Epidemic which leads to over four hundred thousand deaths across India in 2013 alone.

In this session along with **Major General Dr. J.K. Bansal, Ex-Member, NDMA, India Admiral (Dr.) V.K.Singh**, and other eminent experts from the health sector, highlighted the importance of securing proper medical requirements, transportation services and contingency plan for hospital managements especially for the poor and marginalized as well.

Proposing a vote of thanks, Prof. Santosh Kumar said that, cooperation, coordination and partnerships not only at the national level but at the regional and global levels are required to complement and supplement our strengths and weaknesses to capitalize on the limited resources available in the developing world.

The two days long conference attended by Senior Industry representatives and CEOs, members and ex-members of NDMA of India and other SAARC countries, 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. The two days SAARC conference concluded with a solemn resolve of the SAARC disaster management center, FICCI and the business community to create a high level private sector advisory group and task force to work closely with all related stakeholders for effective mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into the corporate sector through business continuity.

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