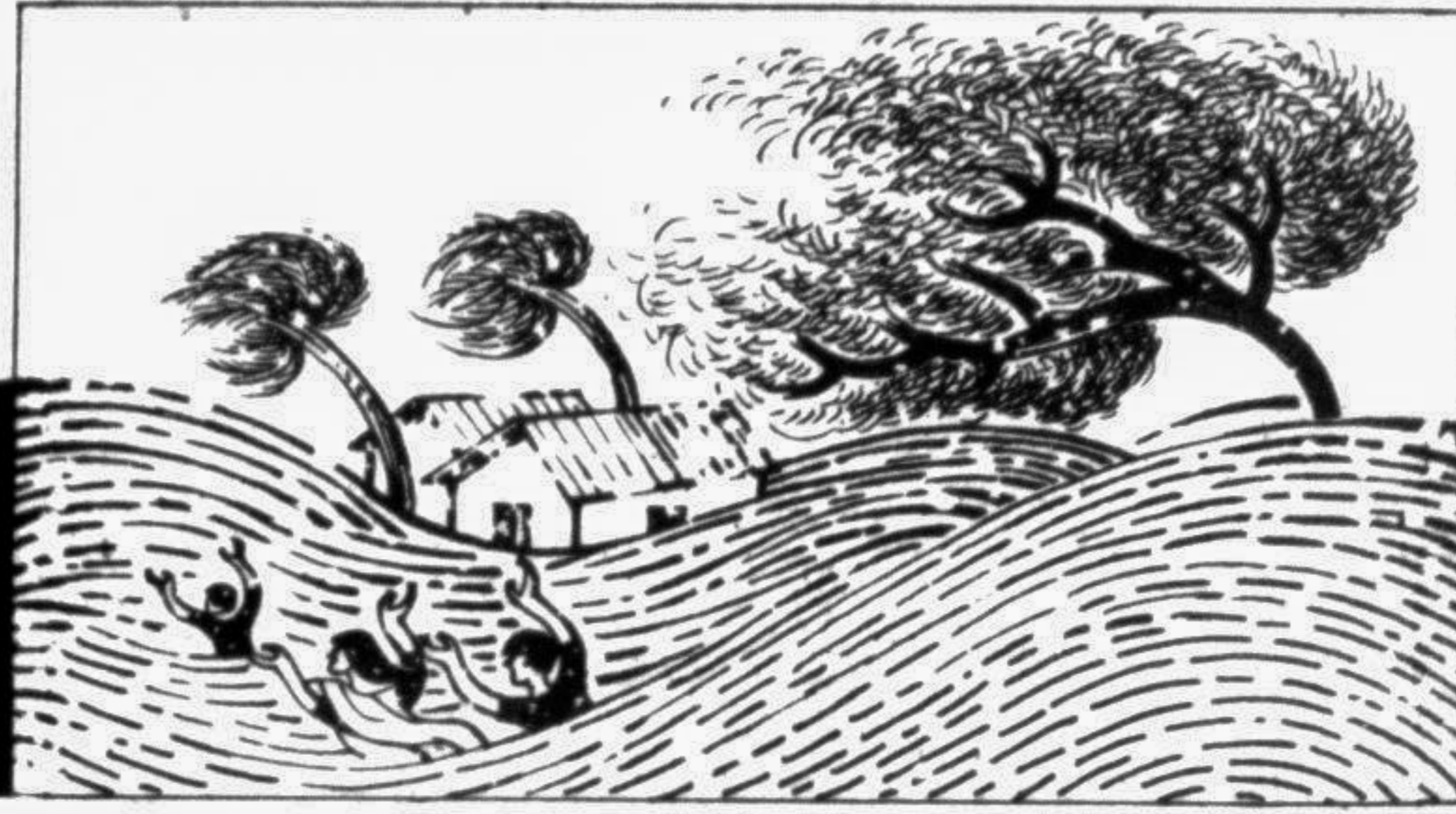
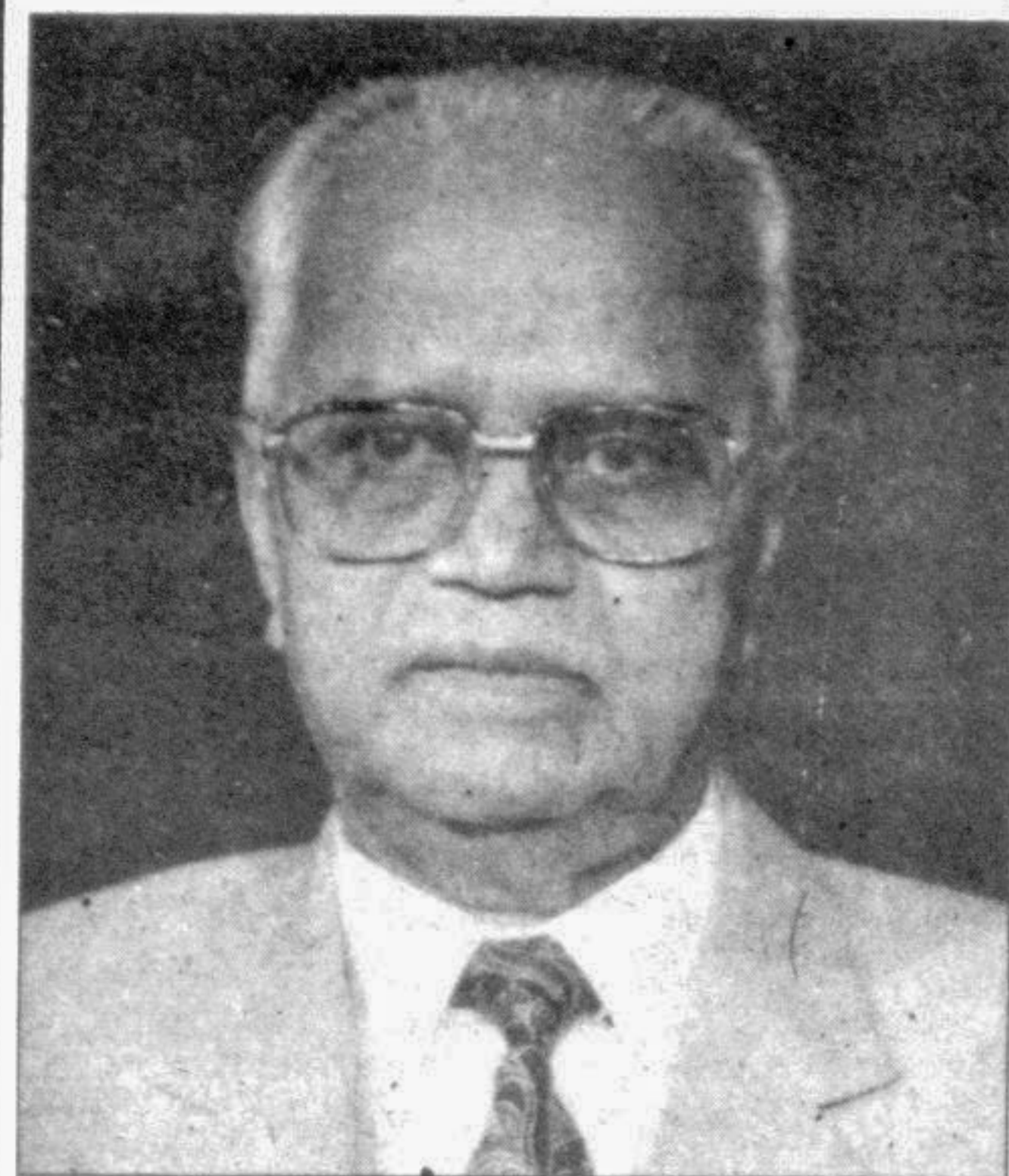


Disaster Management in Bangladesh



Disaster Management Bureau
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief



বাণী

আমাদের দেশ একটি দুর্ভাগ্যপ্রবণ দেশ। প্রায় প্রতি বছর নানা প্রকৃতির প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্য এদেশে আঘাত হানে। ফলে জীবন ও সম্পদের ব্যাপক ক্ষয়ক্ষতি সাধিত হয়। ১৯৭০ সালের ১২ নভেম্বর এদেশের দক্ষিণাঞ্চলের উপর দিয়ে সুরশকালের প্রলয়ঙ্করী ঘূর্ণিঝড় ও জলাচ্ছাদন বয়ে যায়। এই ঘূর্ণিঝড় কেড়ে নিয়েছিল প্রায় পাঁচ লক্ষ মানুষের জীবন। কোটি কোটি টাকার সম্পদ হয়েছে বিনষ্ট। আশি ও নব্বই-এর দশকে আরো বহু প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্য দেশের উপর আঘাত হেনেছে। এদেশের জনগণ দুর্ভাগ্য সাহসে তার মোকাবেলা করেছে। বিগত বছরগুলোতে দুর্ভাগ্য কবলিত হয়ে প্রাণ বিসর্জনকারীদের রূহের আমি মাগফেরাত কামনা করি।

প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্য প্রতিরোধ করা অবশ্য দুরূহ ব্যাপার। তবু দুর্ভাগ্যের মুখে আমরা শক্তি ও সাহসে মাথা উচু করে দাঁড়াই। পরিকল্পিত ও সুসম্বন্ধিত কার্যক্রমের মাধ্যমে দুর্ভাগ্যের বিরূপ প্রতিক্রিয়া বন্ধলাগে হ্রাস করা সম্ভব। বর্তমান দুর্ভাগ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা কার্যক্রমের এটাই মূল কথা। দুর্ভাগ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা বলতে একটি দুর্ভাগ্য সংঘটিত হওয়ার পর বিচ্ছিন্ন গ্রাম ও পুনর্বাসন কার্যক্রমকে বুঝায় না। বাস্তবে দুর্ভাগ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা একটি নিরবচ্ছিন্ন প্রক্রিয়া যার প্রধান অংশ হল দুর্ভাগ্য পূর্ব-প্রস্তুতি। এই দুর্ভাগ্য পূর্ব-প্রস্তুতি গ্রহণ করে, জীবন ও সম্পদের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি উল্লেখযোগ্যভাবে হ্রাস করা সম্ভব। আশার কথা এই লক্ষ্য অর্জনে সরকারের বর্তমান দুর্ভাগ্য সংক্রান্ত কার্যক্রম যথাযথভাবে পরিচালিত হচ্ছে।

দুর্ভাগ্য প্রশমন ও দুর্ভাগ্যের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি হ্রাসের লক্ষ্যে বর্তমান গণতান্ত্রিক সরকার বিভিন্ন কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করেছে। এসকল কার্যক্রমের মধ্যে একদিকে রয়েছে প্রয়োজনীয় ভৌত অবকাঠামো তথা অশ্রয় কেন্দ্র, রাস্তাঘাট ও ডেউড়ীধার নির্মাণ করা। অন্যদিকে দুর্ভাগ্য সম্পর্কে জনগণকে সচেতন করা এবং দুর্ভাগ্য মোকাবেলায় তাদেরকে সম্পূর্ণ প্রস্তুত ও সক্ষম করে গড়ে তোলা। দুর্ভাগ্যের ঝুঁকি হ্রাসে বিভিন্ন অবকাঠামো নির্মাণের কার্যক্রম হাতে নিয়ে বর্তমানে একটি সার্বলীল দুর্ভাগ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা গড়ে তুলতে আমরা সক্ষম হয়েছি। আশা করি এই সাফল্য আরো ব্যাপক হবে এবং মানুষের জীবন-মালের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি হ্রাস পাবে।

শত বৈদ্যের স্বতি বিজড়িত এই দিনে আমাদেরকে প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্যের বিভিন্ন ঝুঁকি সম্পর্কে আরো অবহিত হতে হবে। প্রয়োজনীয় পূর্ব-প্রস্তুতি গ্রহণ করে দুর্ভাগ্য প্রশমন ও দুর্ভাগ্যের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি হ্রাসে তাই আমাদেরকে একযোগে কাজ করতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে সর্বস্তরের মানুষের সহযোগিতা ও ঐকান্তিকতা নিশ্চিত করার প্রত্যয়ী দুটিভঙ্গী আমাদের অবশ্যই গ্রহণ করা অপরিহার্য। আমি এই দিনে দুর্ভাগ্য মোকাবেলায় সর্বস্তরের মানুষের সহযোগিতা কামনা করি।

আব্দুর রহমান বিশ্বাস
রাষ্ট্রপতি
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ

The Role and Responsibilities of Disaster Management Bureau

Akramul Islam
Director-General, DMB

In the World map, Bangladesh stands in the disaster prone area. So, almost every year, disaster of one kind or other strikes this country. Cyclone, Storm Surge, Tornado, Flash Flood, Flood, River Bank Erosion Drought and Earthquake are main hazards which occur in Bangladesh. The statistics of last one hundred years show that, on an average, five thousand people are killed every year in Bangladesh and this figure stands highest in the World, although there are more disaster prone countries in the world than Bangladesh. This is due to high density, illiteracy and poverty of people living in the disaster prone areas of Bangladesh. They are unable to take appropriate preparedness measures to save their life and property.

After the devastating cyclones and storm surges of

1970 and 1985 and floods of 1981 and 1988, the Government started thinking as to what can be done to reduce loss of life and property by disasters. A technical Assistance Project Proforma was submitted to the planning commission and when this was being examined, another devastating cyclone with storm surge struck Bangladesh on April 29, 1991 and killed 1.38 lakhs people. After this event, the Government immediately commissioned a study to find out ways and means to mitigate disastrous events and engaged national and international Experts under the financial assistance of the UNDP. The reports and recommendations of this study were examined by a group of Experts and a panel

of Professionals. Following recommendations of the study, the Government established a Disaster Co-ordination and Monitoring Unit under the Ministry of Relief which was subsequently renamed as Disaster Management Bureau. This Bureau came into existence in the 1st half of 1993 and it is still in the formative stage but it has started activities in a very limited scale. The responsibility of the Disaster Management Bureau is not to prevent disaster which is not practically possible. The primary responsibility of this Bureau is to carry out activities with a view to reducing loss of life and properties by disasters. Every disaster has three phases, pre-disaster, on-disaster and post-disaster. The main function of the Disaster Management

Bureau, consists in activities to be carried on, mostly during pre-disaster period, to make people of disaster prone areas aware of disasters and its impact, to make them capable of facing disaster with due preparation, so that loss of life and property can be reduced to minimum. In addition to this, Disaster Management Bureau will also train all Crisis Managers, both Government and non-Government organisations, to make them more efficient and effective so that they can, very quickly, alleviate sufferings of affected people in post-disaster phase. These Crisis Managers always try to meet disaster situation without pre-planning and preparation i.e. on ad-hoc basis and that is why, they fail to respond effectively and efficiently. As

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Message

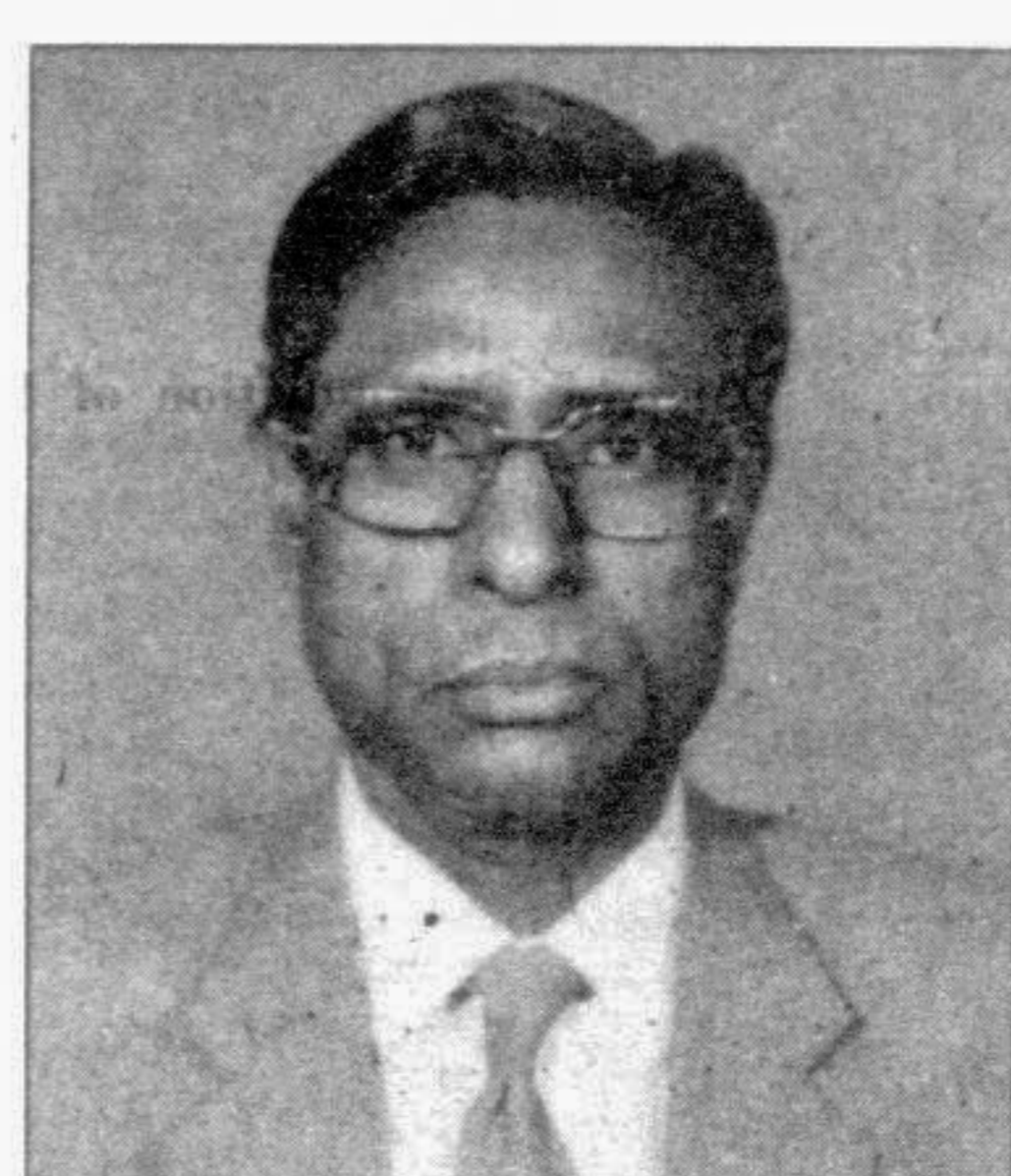
Natural disaster occurs more or less, in almost all countries of the world. Disasters are the common phenomena of our life due to geophysical position of Bangladesh. Various natural calamities took place in the country and caused huge losses of lives and damage of properties in the past. The cyclone and tidal surge of 12th November 1970 was the deadliest catastrophe since immemorial time. This catastrophe caused to kill about five lakh people and destroy assets worth crores of taka. It is certain that any sort of disaster will also hit somewhere in Bangladesh in future. Therefore we must be prepared to face disasters.

Awareness and cooperation of the members of the public, and efficient manpower is essential

for a proper disaster management. The Government has established a Disaster Management Bureau with a view to achieving the goal. The Bureau has already started disaster management programme with the cooperation of various departments and organisations of the Government, NGOs, and national and international organisations. Cyclone and tidal surge are the two main disasters of our country. Safe shelter is most important in such situation. To meet this requirement high priority has been given on construction of multipurpose shelters in the coastal area and the off-shore islands. Besides, steps are being taken to create massive awareness of people what to be done before, during and after a disaster.

Natural calamities can not be prevented. However, the adverse effect of disasters can be reduced through planned preparedness programme. We also have to be alert on the maintenance of ecological balance by identifying and removing causes of disasters. The social afforestation programme will have to be made successful. We must build roads and embankments with proper planning. Prompt action in disaster management should be ensured through improved telecommunication and transport facilities. Natural disaster creates social problems. Therefore we must face this unitedly irrespective of party affiliation or belief. Let us endeavor for disaster mitigation and disaster reduction through improved disaster preparedness.

Harun-Al-Rashid
Minister of State in charge
The Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief



Message

Today is the 12th November. Twenty four years ago this day a disastrous cyclone hit five districts of the southern region of Bangladesh. This was accompanied by tidal surge. This cyclone erased many human habitations, snatched away about five lakh valuable lives and destroyed assets worth crores. Disasters visit many countries of the world. It has not yet been possible for the mankind to resist disasters but many countries of the world have shown considerable success in reducing disaster damages through planned preparedness. Basically, lack of public awareness about disaster as well as lack of competence to face disasters has led to large scale damages in various disasters. In Bangladesh, the present government have taken wide ranging measures to reduce damages and sufferings of the people caused by disasters. These measures are directed towards reduction of disaster damages through pre-disaster preparedness.

It is derogatory to a nation's self respect to depend on others charity for post disaster relief. The redesignation of the Ministry of Relief as "The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief" and creation of the "Disaster Management Bureau" are some of the steps signifying the changes in the policy and attitude of the Government of Bangladesh in managing and mitigating disasters. The Bureau is playing an important supportive role in the field of Disaster Management. Disasters are curses for a country. Disasters not only make large scale adverse effect

on national economy through damages to lives and properties but also aggravate poverty condition. Therefore, reduction of disaster damage is a sine qua non for achieving socio-economic development of countries like ours. For this, each one of us must be aware of disaster and their impact and must extend active co-operation to every disaster mitigation effort. I hope that large scale awareness about natural disasters, rather all kinds of disasters, in our country, and support of the people of all strata of the society will assist in building up a powerful disaster management programme in the country.

M Hafizuddin Khan
Secretary
Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief



বাণী

আজ সেই তয়াল ১২ নভেম্বর। ১৯৭০ সালের এই দিনে বাংলাদেশের দক্ষিণাঞ্চলের উপর দিয়ে বয়ে যায় এক প্রলয়ঙ্করী ঘূর্ণিঝড়। এ ঘূর্ণিঝড় উপকূলীয় অঞ্চলের পাঁচটি বৃহত্তর জেলার নিরানব্বইটি ধানার প্রায় পাঁচ লাখ মানুষের জীবন কেড়ে নেয়। বিনষ্ট হয় কোটি কোটি টাকার সম্পদ। ১৯৯১ সালের ২৯শে এপ্রিল আর এক প্রবল ঘূর্ণিঝড় দেশের দক্ষিণাঞ্চলের জেলাসমূহে আঘাত হেনে জীবন ও সম্পদের বিরাট ক্ষতি সাধন করে।

প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্য যেন আমাদের জীবনের অবিচ্ছেদ্য অংশ। আবহমান কাল থেকে আমরা দুর্ভাগ্যের সঙ্গে বসবাস করে আসছি। একটা সময় ছিল যখন দুর্ভাগ্যের কাছে মানুষ ছিল অসহায়। কিন্তু এখন পরিস্থিতি ভিন্ন। দুর্ভাগ্য মোকাবেলায় মানুষের ধ্যান-ধারণার ব্যাপক পরিবর্তন ঘটেছে। আবিষ্কৃত হয়েছে নতুন নতুন কলা-কৌশল। এসব ধারণাকে কাজে লাগিয়ে এবং কৌশল প্রয়োগ করে আমরাও সফল পথে শুরু করেছি। ২রা মে, ১৯৯৪ তারিখের ঘূর্ণিঝড় তার প্রকৃষ্ট উদাহরণ। সময়মত প্রয়োজনীয় পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করার ফলে এই ঘূর্ণিঝড়জনিত পরিস্থিতি সম্ভাব্যজনকভাবে মোকাবেলা করা সম্ভব হয়েছে এবং ঘূর্ণিঝড়ের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি ন্যূনতম পর্যায়ে রাখা সম্ভব হয়েছে। এটা বর্তমান গণতান্ত্রিক সরকারের একটা উল্লেখযোগ্য সাফল্য যা দেশে-বিদেশে ব্যাপকভাবে প্রশংসিত হয়েছে। এ সাফল্যের পেছনে রয়েছে সরকারী ও বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের সকল স্তরের কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদের নিরলস প্রচেষ্টা এবং জনসাধারণের ব্যাপক সহযোগিতা ও অংশগ্রহণ।

দেশে দেশে প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ভাগ্য জীবন ও সম্পদের যে ক্ষতি সাধন করে থাকে তার প্রতি সম্প্রতি আন্তর্জাতিক সম্প্রদায়ের বিশেষ দৃষ্টি আকর্ষিত হয়েছে। জাতিসংঘের ঘোষণা অনুযায়ী ১৯৯০ এর দশকটি আন্তর্জাতিক দুর্ভাগ্য হ্রাসকরণ দশক (International Decade For Natural Disaster Reduction) হিসেবে পালিত হচ্ছে। বাংলাদেশও যথাযথ গুরুত্বের সঙ্গে এই দশকটি পালন করছে।

আন্তর্জাতিক দুর্ভাগ্য হ্রাসকরণ দশকের প্রেক্ষাপটে ১২ই নভেম্বর, ১৯৭০-এর শোকাবহ স্মৃতিকে স্মরণ করে আসুন আমরা আমাদের কাজের মাধ্যমে দুর্ভাগ্য এবং দুর্ভাগ্যের ফলাফল প্রশমনে ব্রতী হই। দুর্ভাগ্য মোকাবেলায় পূর্ব-প্রস্তুতি গ্রহণ করে এর ক্ষয়ক্ষতি হ্রাস করা সম্ভব।

ভবিষ্যতে যদি কোন দুর্ভাগ্য আমাদেরকে আঘাত হানে, আমরা অতীত সাফল্যের অভিজ্ঞতাকে কাজে লাগিয়ে সুস্থ পরিকল্পনার ভিত্তিতে ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে তার মোকাবেলা করব— আজকের দিনে এই হোক আমাদের অঙ্গীকার।

খালেদা জিয়া
প্রধান মন্ত্রী
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

Role and Responsibilities of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in Disaster Management

Motaher Hossain, Deputy Chief (Planning)
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Bangladesh is one of the vulnerable countries in the world prone to natural disasters. The geographical situation of the country is such that it not only gives us the life giving monsoons, but also causes the catastrophic ravages of cyclone, norwester, tornado, flood, tidal bores and drought. The activities of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief are now more of disaster management at pre, during and post disaster phases. The poverty alleviation

programmes like Food for Work, VGD, RMP and other relief activities are also supportive activities towards disaster management. This paper will briefly state all the salient activities including disaster managements. The functions of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief are vast and wide ranging. Major functions are listed below:

a) Formulation and implem-entation of policies relating to planning, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of all relief

activities. b) Formulation of policies and preparation of national disaster preparedness plan and co-ordination of all aspects of disaster management. c) Helping line ministries and agencies in developing their own action plan on disaster management. d) Emergency rehabilitation of temporary nature through distribution of relief materials. e) Administration of relief work and sanction of relief funds. f) Planning, co-ordination

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THE CYCLONE OF NOVEMBER 1970

A.F.M. Sirajul Haq
Director
Disaster Management Bureau

Twenty four years ago this day one of the worst disasters in human history occurred in the coastal region of Bangladesh. More than half a million human lives perished within few hours. Few millions lost their houses and properties and faced starvation. There were no signs of habitation in many off shore islands. This was due to the devastating cyclone which in the night between 12 and 13th November 1970 hit the districts of Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barguna, Barisal, Bhola, Noakhali and Chittagong with a speed of about 100-150 miles per hour accompanied

by tidal surge of about 15-20 ft. high. This article is intended to refresh our memory of that tragedy and suggest measures for minimising losses in the event of such disasters in future. During the ESCAP/WMO Panel meeting on Tropical Cyclone held in Dhaka in September 1970 the system of cyclone warning came up for discussion. It was suggested that the signal numbers used for warning ships and ports need not be used for warning the public. Although no formal recommendation on this subject was made in that meeting, the Regional Director of the Meteorological Department issued warnings of the impending cyclone and tidal surge but there was some difference from the past. During the ESCAP/WMO Panel meeting on Tropical Cyclone held in Dhaka in September 1970 the system of cyclone warning came up for discussion. It was suggested that the signal numbers used for warning ships and ports need not be used for warning the public. 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