

Disaster Management Act of Bangladesh: Reactive Approach Turns into Proactive Approach

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Abstract: Bangladesh is a disaster prone country. For its geo-climatic nature disaster visits Bangladesh every year. However, for lack of disaster management legislation and disaster management system, Bangladesh has faced huge loss of lives and property. This paper mainly discusses the disaster management in Bangladesh through the Disaster Management Act, 2012 (hereinafter the Act) including the loopholes in it. After a long struggle we have got legislation on disaster management at an important time when disasters have become one of the major problems all over the world. This Act introduces many effective provisions for the first time in Bangladesh. Still the Act suffers from many shortcomings in many areas. It does not cover some important aspects like status of environmentally or internally displaced person, establishment of special disaster response force and giving relief to repay loan etc. These very important provisions can make the Government of Bangladesh more proactive in disaster management. This paper firstly gives an overview of disaster management of Bangladesh and then concentrates on the main features of the Act and suggests some ways to overcome its limitations. Finally this paper argues for implementing the Act with some necessary amendments which can make the Government of Bangladesh proactive in future.

Introduction: There is a significant change in the functioning of a state in the modern time. Earlier a state would concentrate its security than to welfare of its population. The Constitution of Bangladesh also provides many welfare activities for its people. However it does not provide any provision relating to disaster and let alone for disaster management. Bangladesh is a low lying country and it is regularly affected by natural disasters. Political unrest, unfair business practice and terrorist attack are the reasons for increasing manmade disaster in Bangladesh. Previous Governments of Bangladesh have mainly dealt with disaster reactively by relief centric and rehabilitation programmes. Taking into account the duties of a welfare state, Bangladesh's approach regarding disasters has changed from relief-centric to a proactive prevention, to conserve developmental gains and also minimize losses of lives, property and livelihoods. As a result of all concern demand from two decades the Parliament of Bangladesh has passed the Act in 2012 for a standard disaster management system.¹ However the failures of prompt rescue of victims and inadequate responses of two recent tragedies (Rana Plaza

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collapse² and Bhrammanbaria tornado³) have revealed us about the drawbacks of the Act and also the limitations in disaster management system of Bangladesh. The very objective of this paper is to analyze the main features of the Disaster Management Act, 2012 and its limitation as well as to provide some suggestions for more effective disaster management in future.

Objectives

The main aim of this paper is to focus on disaster management through legislation from the birth of Bangladesh to date. Particularly it focuses the approach of Governments of Bangladesh from time to time to respond the disaster management. The other objectives of this paper are:

- To discuss the disaster management process from the birth to present time of Bangladesh
- To review the Disaster Management Act 2012 of Bangladesh
- To find out the shortcomings of the present Act and to suggest a better reform to overcome and to make the Act more proactive

Methodology

The paper is based on various secondary data and sources. Qualitative data are used here to find out the overview of disaster management system of Bangladesh. Relative legislations and policies are reviewed to focus the shortcomings of the Act. Analytical methodology has been used here to analyze the overall situation of the Act and to reach some suggestions for more proactive approach.

Overview of Disaster Management in Bangladesh

Necessity of Disaster Management Act has become important in Bangladesh since its independence. Bangladesh has faced a devastating cyclone in 1970. Lack of legislation on disaster management, lack of taking inadequate and prompt steps on part of the then government are the reasons for loss of lives and widespread damage to properties. The accurate statistics of loss of lives and damage to property are not available in Bangladesh. Approximately 300000⁴ or in some sources 470000⁵ or 500000⁶ lives have been lost and huge damage to crops, properties and killing of animals surely focus the reluctant attitude of the Government of Pakistan towards East Pakistan. Thus their inactive approaches to overcome this disaster, continuous economic exploitation have paved the way of liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971.

Bangladesh has failed to enact any legislation after its birth relating to disaster management though it has an experience of facing a

devastating cyclone in 1970. In absence of specific disaster management legislation and reactive approach of the Government, loss of lives and damage to property have been increasing day by day. Continuous facing of cyclones and floods from 1971 to 1975 has made this new born country more vulnerable and disaster prone. Around 11,205 lives have been lost from 1971 to 1975 by cyclones and have caused huge damage to property though this number of loss is not exact because of unavailable damage data.⁷ In Bangladesh, relief and rehabilitation are two processes for disaster management which have been provided mainly after disaster. This reactive approach of the Government of Bangladesh has continued till 1990. From 1976 to 1990 eight severe cyclones and thirteen floods have attacked the territory of Bangladesh of which the cyclone of 1983, 1985, 1988 and floods of 1980, 1987 and 1988 have been severe and worth mentionable.⁸ These disasters have caused loss of around 16,500 lives and huge damage to crops, cattle, houses, institutions, road and embankment. Both the Government of Bangladesh and NGOs have put emphasis on giving relief in disaster prone area and sometimes provided rehabilitation after disaster. No long term plans for improving the response quality or thinking to change the approach have been found till 1990. Thus continuous floods, cyclones and manmade disasters have made this country more disaster prone and more vulnerable.

However, the severe cyclone of 1991 has caused a huge loss of 1, 45,000 lives and damage to billion U.S. dollars.⁹ This is the deadliest, severest and most devastating cyclone in the history of Bangladesh. This has led the Government of Bangladesh to think for a better ways for disaster management. Besides floods and cyclone, Bangladesh has also faced tornado, river erosion, landslide, salinity intrusion, drought, earthquake and other natural hazards. Floods of 1993, 1994, 1998, 2004, 2008 and super cyclones SIDR (2007), AILA (2009) have proved the most devastating in Bangladesh and has caused huge loss of lives and properties. Natural disasters, thus pose serious threat to lives, livelihood and property of Bangladesh. Manmade activities are responsible for climate change which is now visible in Bangladesh. Extreme temperature, excessive and late monsoon rainfall, extensive floods, cyclone, droughts and excessive cold are the result of climate change. People of Bangladesh are more vulnerable by climate change impact. Around 35 million people of coastal area are directly affected by rising of the sea level.¹⁰ In this situation it is the first priority of the Government of Bangladesh to build a strong network to cope with the disasters and impact of climate change. Bangladesh has a strong desire to

reduce the risk of disaster and already has adopted many plans, policies and enacted laws for protection of environment and to minimize the loses of lives and wealth. Even for disaster management there is a distinct disaster management act¹¹ which is of course a very potential step to introduce a better method for disaster management in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has taken a long time to enact the Act though it has realized its necessity two decades ago. As stated above that the Government has given emphasis on relief and rehabilitation activities as post disaster management which is changed after 1990s. With the help of some development partners such as UNDP, DFID etc., the Government of Bangladesh has taken many projects, plans and policies for pre disaster management programme.¹² Some projects are not successful for lack of then the Government of Bangladesh has issued Standing Orders of Disaster (SOD) in 1997 as legal framework for addressing disaster risk reduction and has issued some rules for Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. However, this body has been situated from local level to national level and has performed their prescribed functions for disaster management. For more proactive disaster response the Government has also approved ten years Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) Phase I and Phase II.¹³ Phase I of this CDMP has successfully continued from 2004 to 2009. Many important institutions have been established through this programme.¹⁴ The Disaster Management Policy Framework is the best achievement of CDMP.¹⁵ This policy framework also includes the Standing Order on Disaster (here in after SOD) in 2010, Disaster Management Policy and National Plan for Disaster Management 2010-2015 and the Disaster Management Act, 2012. However, the Act is one of the main legal tools for disaster management in Bangladesh.

Review of Existing Disaster Management Act of Bangladesh

In this Sub-Continent, India and Sri Lanka have adopted laws relating to disaster management before Bangladesh. The SOD and National Plan for Disaster Management are the main guidelines for disaster management in Bangladesh until 2012. These two instruments are inadequate and ineffective in dealing with the problems raised after recent disasters. For more proactive approach and effective actions before or after disaster Bangladesh has adopted the Act. Thus the Act is passed after approval of National Plan for Disaster Management. Moreover the National Plan for Disaster Management does not revise yet. To maintain the coordination of the institutions from national level to local level a revised National Plan for Disaster Management is essential which will be consistent with

the Act. However, the Act has some distinct features which make the activities of the Government of Bangladesh more prompt and proactive.

The objective of the Act is to establish a strong disaster management system which is capable to deal with natural disasters and manmade disasters. The most important thing is that disaster¹⁶ includes not only hazards created by nature or climate change but also by humankind. So the provisions of the Act are benefitted for the victims of man-made disasters. Every year manmade disaster like capsizing of launch, accident of different vehicles and collapse of building has caused huge damage in Bangladesh. And the Act provides compensation for disaster which is the result of negligence or intention of persons or organizations. That is, section 49 thus provides that manmade disaster which causes loss of lives, property or livelihood of others shall be compensated by the civil court. Thus victims of man-made disasters can get compensation against individual persons as well as organizations also. According to section 27, Government can give assistance to the disaster affected persons and in this respect the Government will give priority to the persons of below poverty and backward specially old, women, child and disable, aborigines, minor community as well as ethnic community.

The preamble of the Act has expressed its main objectives. Section 3 of the Act states effective management of disasters to realize the necessity of enacting provisions regarding establishment of disaster management framework. The Act provides a complete framework of different authorities from national level to local level for effective co-ordination for disaster management. Government has already reorganized the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. The Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation has been transformed into the Department of Disaster Management¹⁷ which is mainly responsible for implementation of the national disaster management related policies and plans. The National Disaster Management Council¹⁸ which is chaired by the Prime Minister has been formed. The duties and functions of these institutions which are provided in section 6 of the Act are mainly proactive. Quick disaster response is essential to minimize the loss. To take proper and effective measure in before or after disaster, the Government of Bangladesh shall form a National Disaster Volunteer Association¹⁹ with the mass people. For speedy response throughout the disaster prone area, a National Disaster Response Co-ordination Group (NDRCG)²⁰ shall be formed. The National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) shall implement its decision through NDRCG. Government can invite any other persons or institutions to join this Co-ordination Group. Besides, for effective and sufficient response to any disaster prone area a National

Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) has been established at Disaster Management and Relief Division of Bangladesh which provides support for a National Disaster Response Coordination Center (NDRCC) which is equivalent to NEOC. To reduce the loss of disaster and to give response promptly at the time of disaster are main goals of NDRCC. The institutional compositions, functions and responsibilities of this Act are undoubtedly very good one and proper implementation may surely reduce the losses of disaster.

Moreover, to strengthen the response quality throughout the country provisions for establishing different Disaster Management Committees from National Level²¹ to Local Level²² may make this Act more effective. To achieve the objectives of the Act seven important committees will be established in National level and six committees and four groups will be established in local level. All areas of Bangladesh more or less are affected by different natural disasters. In national and local level important committees or boards or groups or platforms shall work for disaster management more efficiently. Moreover, according to section 19 and 20, the Government of Bangladesh shall pass national disaster management policy which and shall pass management plan for Bangladesh. Section 53 provides that it can also make necessary contracts or treaties, conventions or other legal documents for supplying relief and rehabilitation at disaster time. It can also exchange data, news or use satellite etc. with foreign country, Government or any regional or international organization and *vice versa*. Before disaster or at the time of disaster the Government may direct the print or electronic media or satellite station to telecast or broadcast different awareness programme, data or advance alerting or warning news of disasters. All the Medias shall obey such directions according to section 34 of the Act. Disobeying such directions is punishable offence according to the Act. This Act provides penalties from section 36 to 44 for the offenders who involve in offences described in this Act. It makes provisions for penalty to the persons or sometimes organizations and even against companies.

The Act provides procedure for declaration of disaster prone area or state of disaster. According to section 22 the Act President of his own motion or on the requisition of District/ Deputy Commissioner and with the recommendation of National Disaster Response Co-ordination Group, if he satisfied that threatening event of disaster exists or more measure is necessary for disaster management or some special power is essential for preventing more loss, may declare the state of disaster exists for a particular disaster affected area in the official gazette. Law enforcing authority²³ and armed force²⁴ can participate for quick and

speedy response in disaster prone area. Deputy Commissioner can pray help directly to the local law enforcing authority at the time of disaster and to the armed force at the time of severe disaster or after declaration of state of disaster. The law enforcing agency and armed force will give the highest priority of the prayer of Deputy Commissioner and bound to act as accordingly. Government can direct to include any person or organization for performing disaster management activities and take medical care from clinics or hospitals which are governed autonomously or privately by NGOs or any persons. Authorities, doctors, nurses and stuffs are bound to give medical care if so direct.²⁵ Section 52 of The Act also provides award to the persons who actively help in disaster management system. It has inspired and influenced the individual or NGOs in participating disaster response or participating disaster rescue in pre or post disaster time. Again there is provision for paying special allowance for officials who is engaged and performed his duties from the beginning to the end of the disaster.

In Bangladesh there is no research institution on measuring the impacts of natural and man-made disaster. Real knowledge of possible impacts may help to reduce the loss. According to the Act, the Government of Bangladesh may establish an NDMRTI to achieve the above objectives. The main objective of NDMRTI is to conduct research on disaster impacts and climate change and to enhance the effectiveness of disaster management system.²⁶ The Government of Bangladesh shall establish the national disaster management fund and the district disaster management fund for smooth functions relating to disaster management. To ensure a smooth supply of relief at disaster time or after disaster, emergency particulars can be purchased for one or more years.²⁷ This is because of availability of necessary goods and commodities shall be maintained at the time of emergency.

Thus to fulfill these very objectives, the Act has given superiority to all other existing provisions or legislation relating disaster management in Bangladesh.²⁸ To strengthen the disaster management in Bangladesh, it needs to implement the Act as soon as possible. The institutional provisions are adequate and establishment of some institutions in national and local level helps the Government of Bangladesh to take measures timely and effectively. Reliefs, rehabilitation, advance alerting system, declaration of state of disaster will reduce the risk and loss of more lives, property and resources. Relief funds may secure to take prompt actions as well as quick response and rescue the vulnerable people of disaster prone area. Moreover the trial and punishment system will make the institutions more obedient towards the Act and transparent

in discharging their duties. Thus all doors are opened to the Government of Bangladesh to take proactive approach for proper disaster management as well as minimizing the risk, mitigating the damage, over all response quickly to the vulnerable and for their rehabilitation in disaster prone area. Though the Act strengthens the institutional capacity and reduces the disaster loss but it has some weaknesses. Moreover, the effective coordination among the institutions does not found in crisis time and it results more loss of lives and wealth in resent disasters of Bangladesh.

Limitations of the Disaster Management Act

Undoubtedly the Act provides a detailed guidelines relating to disaster management in Bangladesh. This Act reduces most of the deficiencies of SOD and National Plan for Disaster Management. So the Act is a new hope for the people of Bangladesh to minimize the disaster losses by legal means. However, after passing the Act Bangladesh has faced both manmade and natural disasters which have caused loss of lives and huge damage to property. Reasons are lack of co-ordination among the institutions of volunteer groups and lack of speedy and proper response. The Act strongly argues the national disaster response coordination group for effective and smooth response for disaster management. After the recent disasters, it has hardly found any coordination among the institutions for victim's rehabilitation and compensation.²⁹

In most of the disaster prone areas, sufficient relief has not been supplied timely which increases the sufferings of the affected people.³⁰ Sometimes people do not get their all allocated relief for unfair practice among the local authorities. There is no provision for recommending the specific standard for relief or no guidelines for the minimum requirements in the Act to be provided in the relief camps in relation to foods, shelters, cloths, drinking water, medication and sanitation. In India, National Authority can recommend the minimum standard of relief to be provided to the disaster affected people.³¹ Another limitation is that this Act does not contemplate of the poor peasants and day labourers of disaster affected areas. Thus there is no provision for the protection of poor who borrow money from the bank or from *mohajon* with a high interest rate. Disaster damages to huge crops, lands and properties of agricultural country like Bangladesh. Agro-based labourers become unemployed and farmers cannot cultivate for want of adequate help. So this induces them to take loan usually from *mohajon* with a high interest. Last result is that they cannot repay the loan and become more vulnerable as well as loss of their agricultural land or even their

homestead land. Thus there should be a specific provision to give relief to repay the loan³² or grant of fresh loan to person affected by severe disaster on easy and concessional terms.

Cyclones always cause a huge loss of lives and damage to property. However, it is possible to alert advance and to take possible measures for protection of lives and property. On the other hand disaster like earthquake may cause huge loss of lives and properties in Bangladesh because of non-existence of the advance alerting system. Geographically Bangladesh is in the risk of earthquake. Scientists and researchers are suspecting and alerting for huge damage to buildings and constructions and loss of lives in Bangladesh for earthquake. The reason is that the constructions work of building and other infrastructures are not carried out as per the standard set by the Bangladesh National Building Code 1993 (BNBC). Besides, in Bangladesh every year multistoried buildings are collapsed for unfair practice on part of owners and builders as well. Above all manmade disasters fire, accidents of vehicles and capsizing of launches are worth mentionable in Bangladesh. Rivers of Bangladesh are used for easy communication. It is famous for its cheap rate but the journey is not always safe for over loaded passengers, unfit vehicle and above all greediness of the owners. Every year loss of thousands of lives and huge damage to property occur by capsizing launches also. However, the rescue system of Bangladesh is inadequate and not trained properly for rescuing even after collapsing a single multistoried building or capsizing a launch.³³ Thus it is easy to imagine the damage of any earthquake event and the drawbacks in speedy rescuing system through the existing Act.

The Act also remains silent about the rights and status of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) also known as environmentally displaced person. Cyclone, floods, river bank erosion and presently rising of sea level are responsible to dispossess and displace the people internally. However, the country is expecting more than 63 million and 78 million people are displaced by 2015 and 2020 respectively due to disaster.³⁴ Recent Sidre and Aila affected over 13 million³⁵ people directly and thousands of people are displaced. They have faced many problems till now including food, shelter, drinking water and proper sanitary facilities. However, the Act does not deal with this displaced people and ignore their basic human rights of living and status.

Regarding speedy response system the Act provides some specific guidelines which are insufficient and time consuming. Chapter three which contains ten sections³⁶ deals with disaster prone area declared as state of disaster by the Government of Bangladesh and the disaster

management of that area. However, the Government of Bangladesh may in the severest disaster when it is declared as state of disaster direct the armed force to participate in rescue activities. A requisition for this armed force help is necessary from the National Disaster Response Co-ordination Group (NDRCG). Deputy Commissioner can also apply for armed force help through the Department of Disaster Management and Relief. There also a requisition from the District Disaster Response Co-ordination Group is necessary. In the severest disaster or in emergency, Deputy Commissioner can apply for armed force help directly.³⁷ In what level of loss of lives or damage to property by disaster will be declared as emergency or a state of disaster is not clear here. So without emergency situation or declaration of state of emergency no armed force help can be claimed directly or with requisition. Thus the process is itself lengthy and the term emergency when a disaster prone area will be declared as state of disaster is not clear in this Act. For this reason rescue and response is delayed and most time done by ordinary and inexperienced people. Bangladesh needs to establish a special disaster response force like India.³⁸ After a huge loss of lives by manmade and natural disaster, it is essential to establish a disaster response force with personnel from paramilitary forces to make strengthen the emergency response. This force may be trained in collapsed structure search and rescue, medical first response, fire rescue training, landslide in hilly place training and water rescue etc. Moreover to make the force more effective, it shall include engineers, technicians, electricians, dog squads, medical/paramedics and persons from fire service. The force shall be located in different places of country based on vulnerability. At the time of non disaster the force may involve in the community training programme in different regions of Bangladesh. However, the establishment of this very important force is totally absent from the Disaster Management Act, 2012.

As stated above, reliable data relating to impact of disaster and damage is not available in Bangladesh for absent of National Disaster Management Research and Training Institution (NDMRTI). Research relating to impact of disasters is essential for preparing and increasing the disaster management system of Bangladesh. A special research and training institution is essential for conducting research in national level and also coordinating research in regional and international level. Though the Act provides provision for establishment of NDMRTI but till now the Government of Bangladesh is unable to establish this. Bangladesh should adopt improved space based technology for effective disaster management system which can give information promptly and quickly. In fact these activities demand more monetary help and fund. So

for these activities the Government of Bangladesh should establish a special disaster management fund along with the National Disaster Management Fund and District Disaster Management Fund. These funds may use for taking all monetary expenses for disaster management throughout the country. Bangladesh may in this respect establish National Disaster Response Fund and National Disaster Mitigation Fund like India.³⁹

The National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) is the highest institution for disaster management in Bangladesh. There are provisions for composition, meeting, functions and duties of NDMC in the Act but no provisions for a separate capital and fund for discharging their duties and functions. Sometimes in discharging their duties and functions, NDMC which is the main institution for disaster management of Bangladesh needs assistance or advice from experts or professionals on disaster management but there is no provision for formulation of advisory committee in the Act. However, the NDMC may establish an advisory committee with experts in the field of disaster management who have practical experience on the related field. This committee may suggest different aspects of disaster management at the national or district level. Institutional accountability shall be maintained by all the disaster management institutions. They may prepare annual reports once every year consisting of full account of activities with the audit reports of its fund and accounts during the previous year. And NDMC may present all annual reports of other institutions with its own annual report, audit and accounts to the parliament. This very essential provision regarding institutional accountability is not ensured under the Act. The Act should be amended as soon as possible for reducing disaster loss and risk and for speedy responding.

Ways to overcome

Bangladesh as a developing country faces serious problem when it is affected by disaster. One way lives and properties have been damaged and in another way it hampers the continuing development. It has passed an Act for disaster management, many plans and policies but none is effective enough to solve the problem raised at disaster time. However developing countries faces two major problems in managing disaster: the role of government and financial restrictions.⁴⁰ For this reason it is difficult for developing country to develop a comprehensive disaster management framework and programs. Thus the Government of Bangladesh may consider the following suggestions for a better proactive approach on disaster management:

- Disaster demands a large amount of money and a large cooperation of public private agencies. Public-private partnerships have become a popular way for governments to engage private actors in the delivery of government infrastructure and services with the aim of increasing quality and providing better value for money. It is used in many countries as a strategic approach to overcome or minimize the negative impacts of disasters.⁴¹ Bangladesh can encourage private sectors to invest their money for disaster management or funding some local agencies for quick response to disaster.
- Coordination among the institution of national level to local level is essential. Specific guidelines for co-ordination in different authority can make more proactive. Formation and coordination of emergency response group in national level to local level is necessary for Bangladesh. In this respect Bangladesh can learn from neighboring country India's strategy to response and quick management of disaster or UK strategy. India as federal state coordinates among the centre to local level by giving the responsibility of management to the local government which is supervised by state government and facilitate by the government of India.⁴² In another south Asian country Nepal also invest its power to administer disaster management to its local government.⁴³ UK a developed country also vested the power of disaster management to its local authority. The central government fulfills the role of coordinator and providing guidance, while local agencies and governments deal with and respond to disasters most complex emergencies and incidents are handled at local level with no involvement of Central Government.⁴⁴ UK has done all disasters management by the collaborative effort of multi-agency response through the establishment of national framework which determines the roles and responsibilities of multi-agencies.
- Bangladesh's economy is agro-based economy and protection of agro-based labourer means to protect agro-economy. Thus the Act should be made poor and agro labourer friendly by inserting relief in loan repayment in the disaster prone area like India. For corruption of local level sometimes disaster affected people cannot get minimum relief to lead their life. Minimum guidelines for relief should be recommended by the highest authority of disaster management. In providing relief there shall be no discrimination on part of cast, community or religion.
- A good plan can save lives and property from disaster. So National Plan for Disaster Management shall be revised and with the consistency of the Act it shall be updated and reviewed annually. District Disaster Management Plan shall be passed on the relevancy of National plan and the Act because of

differentiation in disaster in different districts in Bangladesh. India took different plans and Act for different states to combat with disaster. Provisions for environmentally displaced person shall be included regarding their status and minimal basic rights of living.

- The situation of declaration of disaster prone area or state of disaster shall be more specified. The claim of help from army forces at the time of state of disaster is very lengthy. Act shall insert a specific provision for establishment, composition and functions of a Special Disaster Response Force to response quickly and easily like India. Or like USA the Department of Defense should invest and considered appropriate authority to response disaster. Before establishing Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in USA Department of Defense is the prime response authority.⁴⁵ USA also established Department of Homeland Security in 2002 but with the failure of FEMA and Department of Homeland Security it established The National Guard which has activated to help maintain law and order in the city as well as to assist with rescue efforts for disaster.⁴⁶ Canadian and Australian disaster system is same with USA.⁴⁷
- Advisory committee with experts and specialists on disaster management shall be formed to assist the NDMC for Bangladesh. Bangladesh need a proper combined planned for disaster management which could not possible without experts help. Pre and post disaster preparedness from all sectors are essential to response disaster quickly. However, awareness programme can be telecasted regularly in Media. Every committee and institution established for disaster management should transparent and accountable in dealing their respective duties. Preparedness of annual reports and audit and account reports are essential for maintaining transparency and accountability of the institutions. All disaster management institutions should follow this mandatorily if not oblige there shall be imposed penalty. Penalties which are stated in chapter five of the Act for different offences are insufficient and should be increased.
- At present the countries of same region should co-operate each other in disaster management. Knowledge sharing and exchange of technologies on disaster risk management on a regional basis is essential. South Asian countries should make a forum or organization for disaster management in the South-Asian region. Broadly the Asian countries should increase cooperation for information sharing and promote transparency on relevant nuclear related issues in the region and to achieve goal of building disaster-resilient societies and towards a safer community.

Concluding Remarks

Bangladesh is one of the disaster prone countries of the world. For its unique geographical location disaster is a common phenomenon and treated as a major problem in Bangladesh. It has a long tradition to take legal measures for all the contemporary environmental problems. People can do nothing against natural disaster but can reduce the loss and mitigate the risk to reach the development goal. Manmade disaster can easily be checked and controlled through legal means and implementing the relating legislations. Moreover sufficient provisions regarding prompt rescuing and institutional accountability may reduce the natural and manmade disaster loss and a transparent disaster management system for Bangladesh. Undoubtedly the Disaster Management Act can play a landmark role in decreasing the disaster damages and reducing the disaster risks. Proper implementation with some amendments in some part of this Act is essential for achieving its objectives. The Act has introduced some important provisions for disaster management which makes the Government of Bangladesh proactive. Till now success of this Act is not found fully for not remaining some important provisions discussed above. The provisions of the Disaster Management Act are insufficient regarding emergency response and rescue, ensuring accountability of the institutions, declaring state of disaster, imposing penalty, maintaining co-ordination transparently and above all the status of environmentally displaced persons. However, without these provisions the Disaster Management Act will remain meaningless and fail to achieve its very objectives. By amending the provisions for environmentally displaced person and the quick response as well as speedy rescue through a special disaster response force, institutional accountability and coordination among the institutions, the Government of Bangladesh can act more proactively in disaster management system.

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