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Disaster management plan for Kochi soon

Staff Reporter

A disaster management plan for 49 divisions of the Kochi Corporation will be drawn up shortly.

The programme comes after the completion of the tsunami mock drill, a community-based exercise for enhancing the capacities of communities by modulating the effects of disasters, held in Fort Kochi last week.

A resource inventory that would detail the resources available in the city in case of an emergency would be prepared.

The 25 divisions of West Kochi area that were covered by the Urban Risk Reduction programme would be excluded from this programme, and the rest of the divisions would be focused, said Tinu Rose Francis, the Project Officer of the

disaster management programme that is implemented in the city.

The resource inventory would also include the areas and facilities that can be used for rehabilitating the victims in case of an emergency.

Besides the natural disasters, Kochi city is vulnerable to industrial disasters considering the concentration of industrial units. Impacts of climate change are also being considered as a potential risk for Kochi.

Efforts are being made for releasing of the resource inventory before October 30. The resource details also need to be digitized.

Financial support is one hurdle that the disaster management experts are facing for the project as the UNDP support for the city ended with the mock drill programme, she said.

The service of Postgraduate students of Social Work courses will be obtained for the preparation of the resource mapping.

Funds should come from either the Kochi Corporation or the State Disaster Management Authority for the completion of the programme, she said.

Effectiveness

The tsunami mock drill that was carried out at Fort Kochi was found effective up to a considerable extent though the participants did not feel the heat of the situation, said an evaluation report.

The seriousness of the situation was missing in a large number of participants as they had not been exposed to any serious disasters in life. The Fort Kochi programme was supported by the UNDP, Department of Revenue and Disaster Management of the Kerala government, the City Disaster Management Cell of Kochi Corporation and the Cochin Social Service Society.

Mock drills are conducted periodically to exercise disaster risk reduction skills and enhance the capacities of communities in modulating the effects of disasters.

The service of members of departments including the Fire and Rescue, Police, Public Health, Coast Guard and Indian Navy were available for the mock drill.

However, help need not reach the victims in real situations, she pointed out.

- ***Inventory will include areas that can be used for rehabilitating victims in case of an emergency***
- ***Service of students of Social Work courses will be obtained for resource mapping***