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Need for disaster management plan

STED Project is preparing a plan for Kozhikode. BIJU GOVIND says this has attained importance after t

The flooding and other calamities that befell Kozhikode during the heavy rain in July call for a disaster management plan for the district.

Although the Centre had enacted the Disaster Management Act in 2005 and asked the State governments to set up disaster management units, only a few have done so.

The Kerala government entrusted preparation of disaster management plans to the district administrations in January 2009. People believe that casualties and damage to property can be minimised with such a plan.

After having experienced flooding year after year, the district administration is now in the process of formulating a district disaster management plan.

The Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Development (STED) Project has been entrusted with the task.

It has drafted a proposal by making a geo-demographical profile detailing housing patterns, roads, means of transport, hospitals and government and private services available in the district.

In consultation with various departments, including that of geology, the project officials will record the hazards the district had witnessed.

They will do an analysis of the worst cases and find the areas vulnerable to natural calamities.

Such steps will help the district administration take preventive measures, says Mohanan Manalil, project director.

There will be a non-structural disaster mitigation plan focussing on preparedness methodology, awareness campaign, disaster recovery inventory and enforcing existing codes and laws. The structural mitigation measures include retrofitting and earthquake-resistant constructions, he says.

The management plan will concentrate on short- and long-term responses. The short-term plan centres on rescue operations, relief operations and rehabilitation, while the long-term plan emphasises action plans for the departments of Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Revenue, Irrigation, Education, Health Service, Food and Civil Supplies, Transport and Public Works, the Kerala State Electricity Board, the Red Cross, the National Cadet Corps and the Scouts.