

Training of Aapada Mitra volunteers

NAMCHI, September 13 (IPR): A 12-day training of community volunteers on disaster response under 'Upscaling Aapada Mitra' scheme concluded today at Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-Tourism, at Chemchey.

The training programme was organised by Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) in collaboration with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

The valedictory function had Land Revenue and Disaster Management minister Kunga Nima Lepcha as the chief guest, LR&DM secretary-cum-relief commissioner Anil Raj Rai, NDMA joint secretary (Policy and Planning) Kunal Satyarthi, LR&DM additional secretary Parina Gurung, LR&DM director Prabhakar Rai, Namchi DC Bharani Kumar, Soreng DC Bhim Thalal, ADCs and DPOs of various districts, SSDMA and NDRF staff, police personnel and Aapada Mitra volunteers.

The Aapada Mitra scheme aims to provide community volunteers with the basic skills required for responding to their community's immediate needs during and in the aftermath of a disaster. These trained volunteers will assist in saving lives using the basic techniques



of disaster response, co-ordination and management.

Addressing the gathering, minister Kunga Nima Lepcha congratulated the volunteers on the successful completion of the training and added that 'Aapada Mitra' aids in times of distress. He said the volunteers can act as first responder to any kind of catastrophic occurrence.

Further, the minister asserted on organising such programs in educational institutions involving the panchayats and other stakeholders in order to develop a disaster resilience society. He also spoke about the State Government's efforts to mitigate the risk of occurrence of disasters in

Sikkim. In this regard, he announced that Sikkim will host a national convention to discuss the cascading effects of disaster and other mitigation measures faced by the hilly region which will be participated by the various States of India.

Kunal Satyarthi informed that Sikkim is one of the first States in India to complete the training of the volunteers under this scheme. He said that the training will not only help the volunteers in building life-saving skills, but also get an opportunity to play a crucial role in responding to and assisting in disaster-affected areas. Likely, the volunteers will also be provided with insurance coverage for up to

three years in disaster response, he added. Additionally, he talked about NDMA programmes, schemes and other several initiatives taken up by the Government of India.

Secretary Anil Raj Rai highlighted the programmes and activities under SSDMA in the State. He apprised that a total of 300 volunteers took part in the training with over 30 per cent of participants being female. He said the participants undertook basic relief and rescue tasks in various disaster-simulated scenarios.

The program also saw distribution of the emergency responder kit to the Aapada Mitra volunteers by the chief

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Training on Upscaling of Aapada Mitra Scheme at Chemchey concludes

NAMCHI, 13 SEPT (IPR):

A valedictory program under the Upscaling of Aapada Mitra Scheme, was convened at the Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-Tourism, Chemchey, Namchi, today.

Minister for Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Kunga Nima Lepcha attended the event as the chief guest.

Present amongst others were Relief Commissioner cum Secretary (SSDMA/LR&DM) Anil Raj Rai, Joint Secretary (Policy and Planning-NDMA) Kunal Satyarthi, Additional Secretary (LR&DM) Parina Gurung, Director (LR&DM) Prabhakar Rai, DC (Namchi) Bharani Kumar, DG (Soreng) Bhim Thatal. They were accompanied by ADCs and DFOs from various districts, staff of SSDMA, NDRF Police Personnels and Aapada Mitra volunteers.

This 12 days long training program was organised by Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) in collaboration with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

It may be mentioned here that the 'Aapada Mitra Scheme' aims to pro-

vide community volunteers with the basic skills required for responding to their community's immediate needs during and in the aftermath of a disaster. These trained volunteers will assist in saving lives using the basic techniques of disaster response, co-ordination and management.

Addressing the gathering, Kunga Nima Lepcha congratulated the volunteers on their successful completion of the training and added that 'Aapada Mitra' aids in times of distress. As per times of the knowledge received during the training these volunteers can act as first responder to any kind of catastrophic occurrence. He, therefore, encouraged these volunteers to impart the skills acquired through this training so that one and all can help in an event of a crisis.

Further, the Minister also asserted in organising such programs in educational institutions involving the panchayats

and other stakeholders in order to develop a disaster resilience society. He also spoke about the State Government's efforts to mitigate the risk of occurrence of disasters in Sikkim. In this regard, he announced that Sikkim will host a national convention to discuss the cascading effects of disaster and other mitigation measures faced by the hilly region which will be participated by the various states of India. Speaking during the program Kunal Satyarthi in his address informed that Sikkim is one of the top performing states of India to implement as well as to complete the training of the volunteers under this scheme. He said that the training will not only help the volunteers in building life-saving skills, but also get an opportunity to play a crucial role in responding to and assisting in disaster-affected areas. Likely, the volunteers will also be provided with

insurance coverage for up to 3 years in disaster response, he added. Additionally, he also talked about the NDMA programmes, schemes and other several initiatives taken up by the Government of India.

Secretary (LR&MDD) Anil Raj Rai highlighted the programmes and activities under SSDMA in the state. He apprised that a total of 300 volunteers took part in the training with over 30 per cent of participants being female. Further, he said that the participants undertook various basic relief and rescue tasks in various disaster-simulated scenarios.

During the program, SSDMA also released a News Letter. The program also saw the distribution of the Emergency Responder Kit to the Aapada Mitra Volunteers by the chief guest. Moreover, the volunteers also exhibited their practical demonstration of the life-saving skills.

