



Himachal Pradesh Seeks National Disaster Tag

For Prelims: National Disaster Tag, [Monsoon](#), [National Disaster Management Authority \(NDMA\)](#), Disaster Management Act 2005, National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), Severe Calamity.

For Mains: Himachal Pradesh Seeks National Disaster Tag.

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, Himachal Pradesh has requested the Indian Prime Minister to declare the destruction caused by heavy rains in the state a National Disaster.

- Himachal Pradesh suffered losses of **Rs 10,000 crore and around 418 people have died due to rain-related incidents** this [Monsoon 2023](#).
- In the event of a calamity of a severe nature, additional Central assistance is provided from the National Disaster Response Fund.

How are States Assisted During Natural Disasters?

- There is no official or defined category of “National Disasters”.
- Disasters of this nature come under the Disaster Management Act 2005, which defines a **“disaster” as “a catastrophe, mishap, calamity** or grave occurrence in any area, arising from natural or man made causes, or by accident or negligence which results in substantial loss of life or human suffering or damage to, and destruction of, property, or damage to, or degradation of, environment, and is of such a nature or magnitude as to be beyond the coping capacity of the community of the affected area”.
- The Act saw the creation of the [National Disaster Management Authority \(NDMA\)](#), to be headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers.
 - The Act also led to the **National Disaster Response Force**. It has several battalions or teams, which are responsible for on-ground relief and rescue work in several states.

What is the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)?

- **NDRF:**
 - The NDRF is mentioned in the 2005 Disaster Management Act.
 - The NDRF supplements SDRF of a State, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate **funds are not available in SDRF**.
- **SDRF:**
 - The SDRF is constituted under Disaster Management Act, 2005.
 - SDRFs exist for the states and are the primary funds available to state governments for

- responses to notified disasters.
- The Central Government contributes **75% to the SDRF in general states and 90% in northeastern and Himalayan states.**
- The SDRF is to be used only for meeting the expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims of notified calamities like [Cyclones](#), [Droughts](#), [Earthquakes](#), Fires, [Floods](#), [Tsunamis](#), hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloud bursts, pest attacks and frost/cold waves.
 - According to a publication of the **National Disaster Management Authority** from November 2019, “The state government is primarily responsible for undertaking rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures in the event of a disaster.” But these can be supplemented with Central assistance.

What is a Severe Calamity?

▪ About:

- A severe calamity refers to a **catastrophic event or disaster** of significant magnitude and intensity that **causes widespread damage, loss of life, and disruption** to normal life.
- When a calamity is declared to be of severe nature, it triggers a **specific procedure for disaster relief and financial assistance.**

▪ Procedure for Disaster Relief in India:

- **Declaration:** The state government submits a memorandum detailing the extent of damage caused by the **disaster and its fund requirements for relief operations.**
- **Assessment:** An inter-ministerial central team conducts an **on-the-spot assessment of the damage** and fund requirements for relief efforts.
- **Committee Evaluation:** Committees examine the assessment reports, and a High-Level Committee must **approve the amount of immediate relief** to be released from the NDRF.
 - The Disaster Management Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs will then provide support and monitor the utilisation of funds.
- **Financial Support:** SDRF is the primary fund available with State Governments for responses to notified disasters.
- **Additional Assistance:** If the resources in the SDRF are insufficient, additional assistance **may be considered** from NDRF which is fully funded by the Centre.
 - Funds for the NDRF and SDRFs are allocated by the government as part of budgetary allocations.
- **Loan Relief:** Relief measures may include **relief in repayment of loans** or the provision of fresh loans to affected individuals on concessional terms.
- **Finance Commission:** Funds for immediate relief are recommended by the Finance Commission. The **15th Finance Commission** (for 2021-22 to 2025-26) adopted a new methodology for state-wise allocations, based on factors like past expenditure, risk exposure (area and population) hazard and vulnerability of states.
- **Release of Funds:** Central contributions for disaster relief are released in two equal installments, subject to utilization certificates and reports on activities undertaken by the state governments.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Mains

Q. With reference to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) guidelines, discuss the measures to be adopted to mitigate the impact of recent incidents of cloudbursts in many places of Uttarakhand. **(2016)**

