



Disaster Relief Funds From the Centre

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Why in News?

Recently, the Tamil Nadu Government has filed a suit at the [Supreme Court](#) claiming that the Centre is withholding [National Disaster Relief Funds \(NDRF\)](#), after [Cyclone Michaung](#) and consequent Floods hit the state in December 2023.

- Earlier the Karnataka government had also filed a plea with the apex court, claiming that the **Centre is denying disaster relief funds** that are necessary to aid drought-affected areas in the state.

How are States Assisted During a Natural Disaster?

- States receive assistance **during natural disasters through various mechanisms** established under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005**.
 - This legislation defines a disaster as any significant event, whether natural or **man-made, causing substantial loss of life**, human suffering, property damage, or environmental degradation beyond the community's coping capacity.
- The Act established the **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**, along with **State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)**.
 - These entities work in conjunction with **district-level authorities to form an integrated disaster management** system in India.
- Funds for disaster relief are available **to states from two sources — the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) and the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF)**.
 - These funds were created with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DMA), following the **devastating tsunami of December 2004**.

How are Funds Released to States from the NDRF?

- **National Disaster Relief Fund:**
 - **National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF)** was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the [Disaster Management Act, 2005](#).
 - It is defined in **Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act)**.
 - It is managed by the **Central Government to meet the expenses for emergency response**, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster.
 - It supplements the **SDRF** in case of a disaster of a severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in the SDRF.
- **Fund Released to States:**
 - **NDRF Guidelines:** As per the **January 2022 Operational Guidelines** for Constitution and Administration of the NDRF, funding has been allocated for the NDRF from the **fiscal year 2021-22 until 2025-26**.
 - **Assistance Request from the NDRF:** In instances where a state lacks adequate funds in the SDRF and has experienced a national calamity beyond its coping capacity, **it can request assistance from the NDRF**.
 - **Evaluation of the Situation:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) or the Ministry of

- Agriculture will evaluate the situation and **decide on the need for additional assistance** from the NDRF, following a specified process outlined in the guidelines.
- **Formation of Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT):** This process entails the immediate formation of an IMCT by the MHA to assess the **affected areas and recommend whether additional funds** are necessary.
 - Subsequently, a sub-committee of the National Executive Committee, composed of relevant central ministry secretaries, will **determine the amount of funding available**.
 - **High-Level Committee:** Ultimately, a high-level committee chaired by the Home Minister, along with the Ministers for Agriculture and Finance, and the vice-chairman of [NITI Aayog](#), will authorise the release of **NDRF funds based on the recommendations provided**.

What is the State Disaster Relief Fund?

▪ About:

- SDRF has been constituted under **Section 48 (1) (a) of the [Disaster Management Act, 2005](#)**.
 - It was constituted based on the recommendations of the 13th [Finance Commission](#).
- It is the primary fund available with the State governments for responses to notified disasters to meet expenditure for providing immediate relief.
- It is audited by the [Comptroller and Auditor General of India \(CAG\)](#) every year.

▪ Contribution:

- The **Centre contributes 75% of the SDRF** allocation for general category States and Union Territories and **90% for special category States** and Union Territories (northeastern States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir).

▪ Disaster (s) Covered under SDRF:

- [Cyclones](#), drought, [earthquakes](#), fire, [flood](#), [tsunami](#), hailstorms, [landslides](#), avalanches, cloudbursts, pest attacks, frost and [cold waves](#).

▪ Local Disasters:

- A State Government **may use up to 10% of the funds available under the SDRF** for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural disasters that they consider to be **'disasters' within the local context in the State** and which are not included in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q1. Which one of the following is not a feature of Indian federalism? (2017)

- (a) There is an independent judiciary in India.
- (b) Powers have been clearly divided between the Centre and the States.
- (c) The federating units have been given unequal representation in the Rajya Sabha.
- (d) It is the result of an agreement among the federating units.

Ans: (d)

Mains:

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

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