

NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Government of India

NDMA Bhawan

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PRESS RELEASE

On the earthquake of 7th September 2011 felt in Delhi region.

A low intensity earthquake was felt in the Delhi National Capital Region as well as in adjoining parts of the States of Haryana & Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu & Kashmir on the night of 7th September 2011 at 23:28 hours IST. Immediately after the tremor was felt, there was wide spread panic due to the incorrect media report telecast in news channels from an unknown source claiming the earthquake had a magnitude of 6.6.

This was brought to the notice of Shri M. Shashidar Reddy, Vice Chairman, NDMA during the phone in interview with several news channels immediately after the tremor were felt. He observed that the news showing earthquake of 6.6 magnitude without naming the epicenter was apparently incorrect, since the IMD had not yet reported by then and asked the media to check the veracity of such information from IMD, which is nodal agency for earthquake related information before airing such information. The IMD subsequently came out with the report of 4.2 magnitude centred one km east of Gubhana (Haryana), India.

On the basis of feedback received from people from different parts of Delhi, Shri Reddy observed that many people came out of their houses and apparently were familiar about the dos and donts. Higher level of awareness was observed among young school going children. However, there is a need for creating greater awareness not only about life saving techniques during earthquake but also about earthquake resistant construction and safe buildings and non-structural measures like securing furniture and hanging articles in the houses, which can cause fatal injuries as falling objects during earthquake.

List of dos and donts for earthquake safety can be accessed from the website of NDMA www.ndma.gov.in.

NDMA is in process of preparing for an Earthquake Preparedness Exercise in the NCR region of Delhi in collaboration with the State Govt. Details of the programme is being finalized.

Historically, the earthquake of 15 July 1720 was probably the highest intensity earthquake in this region. It resulted in many deaths caused widespread damage including knocking down large parts of the Shaharepanah (city wall) in Old Delhi from Kabuli Gate to Lal Darwaza and Fatehpuri MasjidIn. In recent past, Delhi region, being a seismically active region, had felt earthquake of 2.3 magnitude in Delhi-Haryana border on last 3rd March of 2010 at 17.18 hours.

Annexure:

What to Do During an Earthquake

Stay as safe as possible during an earthquake. Be aware that some earthquakes are actually foreshocks and a larger earthquake might occur. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and if you are indoors, stay there until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

If indoors

- **DROP** to the ground; take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture; and **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- Stay in bed if you are there when the earthquake strikes. Hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. In that case, move to the nearest safe place.
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, loadbearing doorway.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.
- **DO NOT** use the elevators.

If outdoors

- Stay there.
- Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls. Many of the 120 fatalities from the 1933 Long Beach earthquake occurred when people ran outside of buildings only to be killed by falling debris from collapsing walls. Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most earthquake-related casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass, and falling objects.

If in a moving vehicle

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires.
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

If trapped under debris

- Do not light a match.
- Do not move about or kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if one is available. Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

What to Do After an Earthquake

- Expect aftershocks.** These secondary shockwaves are usually less violent than the main quake but can be strong enough to do additional damage to weakened structures and can occur in the first hours, days, weeks, or even months after the quake.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio or television.** Listen for the latest emergency information.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.**
- Open cabinets cautiously.** Beware of objects that can fall off shelves.
- Stay away from damaged areas.** Stay away unless your assistance has been specifically requested by police, fire, or relief organizations. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Be aware of possible tsunamis if you live in coastal areas.** These are also known as seismic sea waves (mistakenly called "tidal waves"). When local authorities issue a tsunami warning, assume that a series of dangerous waves is on the way. Stay away from the beach.
- Help injured or trapped persons.** Remember to help your neighbors who may require special assistance such as infants, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Give first aid where appropriate. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.** Leave the area if you smell gas or fumes from other chemicals.

- **Inspect the entire length of chimneys for damage.** Unnoticed damage could lead to a fire.

- **Inspect utilities.**
 - **Check for gas leaks.** If you smell gas or hear blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a neighbor's home. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.

 - **Look for electrical system damage.** If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice.

 - **Check for sewage and water lines damage.** If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber.