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India advocates greater investment in improving disaster resilience for recurrent hazards

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On the third day of the Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) being held at Ulaan Baatar, India advocated for greater investment in disaster resilience, mainstreaming disaster resilience in infrastructure development, and improving Early Warning Systems, particularly for recurrent hazards such as heat waves.

The Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju led a discussion on investing in resilience that brought together high level delegates from Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Mongolia, and multinational private sector companies to explore how governments could enhance their investment in disaster resilience at a time when there are competing demands for resources from other development sectors. Shri Rijiju highlighted that increased investment as well as accountability for results need to go hand in hand. He encouraged the national governments to look at disaster risk reduction as an integral part of the national budgeting process rather than a separate add-on activity. Innovations such as “forecast based financing” piloted in countries like Mongolia can help ensure that disaster risk reduction financing achieves optimal results.

Earlier during the day, Dr P K Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister co-led a discussion on “Strengthening Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and Urban Resilience” along with Mr Kh. Badilkhan, Minister for Construction and Urban Development of Mongolia. He emphasized that without mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction in development it will be nearly impossible to achieve the loss reduction targets –in mortality, number of affected people, economic losses and infrastructure losses -- enshrined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. In this regard, work on resilient infrastructure is very strategic and can spawn positive changes more widely.

Citing the annual meeting of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) that India hosted last week in Mumbai, Dr. Mishra highlighted that Asia’s appetite for investment in infrastructure is growing. It is important that this investment is made in manner that it is safe from disasters. This will require capacity development and international cooperation at an unprecedented scale. Dr Mishra reiterated Government of India’s commitment to advancing the notion of disaster resilient infrastructure. It is noteworthy that at the previous Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Delhi in 2016, Prime Minister had announced that India will work with other countries and stakeholders to form a Coalition on disaster resilient infrastructure. India will host an international event on the topic in 2019 to further deepen this dialogue and prepare ground for specific collaborative initiatives. Speaking at the same session, Shri Kamal Kishore, member of NDMA highlighted the roles and functions of a possible coalition on disaster resilient infrastructure.

In another high level event, Shri R K Jain, member of NDMA highlighted the progress country has made in reducing heat wave related deaths. He showcased the key lessons learned from this effort and how other countries in the Asia-Pacific can benefit from this experience in improving their Early Warning Systems for frequently occurring extreme weather events.

Regards

