Flood Management - SOP

Why in news?

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- The urban development ministry has listed out standard operating procedures (SOP) for concerned departments at various stages of preparedness.
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- The stages involve: early warning, response and relief restoration rehabilitation.
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What is the importance of SOP's?

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- Standard Operating Procedure lays guidelines to be followed by various public agencies and government departments.
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- The functionaries include district collectors, urban local bodies (ULBs), development authorities, the health department, Public Works Department (PWD) and the IMD.
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- It outlines the roles to be played by various agencies at both preparation stage and rescue and relief and rehabilitation stage.
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- While some of the common reasons cited are unplanned development and encroachments of sprawling habitations alongside rivers and watercourses, a major reason is the **new and rapid pace of urbanisation.**
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- It is imperative that each city has its flood mitigation plan strongly embedded within the overall land use policy and master planning of a city.
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- As SOPs and policies can be effective catalysts to drive performance improvement, improving organisational results and to mitigate the disaster.
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What should the ULB’s do?

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- Some of the key tasks to be undertaken by the ULB include setting up **emergency operations centres (EOCs) and crisis-control room** in the corporation room and municipal wards.
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- Not only it is supposed to drain flood waters from all roads under its control, it has to repair, restore and maintain all roads, storm water drains, etc, along with other infrastructure.
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- At the response stage, the ULBs have to **transport/shift/evacuate** affected persons and transport injured persons to hospitals or health camps and also dispose of corpse.
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- It has to **organise temporary shelters** with food and water supply and coordinate rescue plan with departments such as fire brigade, police and the health department.
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- It also needs to **set up information centre** for sharing details with the media and the public.
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- The municipal corporation has to additionally look into mobilisation of manpower and other resources for emergency support functions.
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- It also has to identify low-lying areas and vulnerable areas for water-logging.
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- The paper also said that the authority has to also do route planning for relief and rescue work and identify land and areas for storage of relief material along with preparation of temporary and permanent rehabilitation plans.
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What are the roles of health departments?

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- At the preparatory stage, the department has to prepare an emergency **health crisis management plan** for prevention of epidemic.
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- It has to establish an **Epidemic Control Unit (ECU),** analyse data received

from hospitals and also maintain emergency stock of medicine, equipment and blood.
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- It is also supposed to maintain adequate number of ambulances and mobile dispensaries in good working condition and also undertake vaccination and disinfection drives.
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- At the response stage, the department has to work in co-ordination with EOC for identification of affected zones for response.
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- It has to establish health facility and treatment centres at disaster/relocation sites.
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- Later, at the relief and restoration phase, the department is supposed to ensure adequate supply of medicines, and also prepare and maintain crisis management report and submit it to the EOC.
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What is the role of PWD and Irrigation department?

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- At the preparation stage, PWD is supposed to **maintain the drains periodically** and update the Drainage Master Plan.
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- It must redesign existing storm water and drainage systems in flood-prone areas for adequate flow of volume of drainage.
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- PWD is required to prepare a disaster response map identifying safe routes.
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- At the response and relief stage, the irrigation department has to coordinate with EOC for quick identification of affected drains and then repair and maintain damaged drainage.
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- PWD should undertake emergency structural rehabilitation/retrofitting measures of critical infrastructure.
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- PWD is also supposed to maintain an inventory list of all dilapidated buildings and undertake repairs of buildings and related infrastructure at the relief stage.
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What is the role of Power supply and Telecommunication department?

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- Power supply department needs to **identify sensitive locations** around high-risk power installations and raise the level of transformers and substations above flood level.
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- It has to ensure that at the response and relief phase, there is availability of emergency supply lines to the temporary relief shelters.
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- At the response and relief stage, the department should **deploy portable communicable system in the vulnerable flood site** and establish a temporary communication facility for use by various authorities/agencies involved in emergency response tasks.
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What is the role of Police and Fire department?

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- The police have to be prepared with **emergency plan on deployment of force;** the fire department should repair and maintain rescue boats and ancillary equipment among other actions of training their personnel.
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- While the police should ensure **crowd management,** it must have a detailed report on evacuation and other rescue.
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- Along with providing safety for property, people and public peace, it must also provide safety in distribution of relief materials.
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Source: Indian Express

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