



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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