

National tsunami warning centre to come up in city

New Delhi: As part of efforts to set up an early warning system on tsunami and storm surges in the Indian Ocean, a national centre was being established in Hyderabad, a senior home ministry official said on Monday.

The system was expected to be in place by September this year at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services in Hyderabad and would be able to generate and issue timely and reliable warnings, U N Panjiar, secretary (Border Management) in the Union home ministry said.

In his keynote address at the annual conference of state relief commissioners and secretaries in-charge of disaster management, he said the department of ocean development had been identified as the nodal agency to set up tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean.

He told the states to introduce systems to facilitate quick information management during natural calamities and promptly alert authorities concerned during disasters.

The states should also set up their own search and rescue teams by providing specialised training and necessary equipment. These teams could cater to the needs of not only the state concerned but also other states during crisis.

Inaugurating the conference held to review the pre-

paredness for the south-west monsoon, union home secretary Madhukar Gupta said there was a need to put in place Standard Operating Procedures (Sops) to deal with various situations required to be handled during disasters.

Gupta said some simulation exercises should be undertaken to identify gaps in coordination and planning.

Panjiar advised the states to introduce instant messaging and alert system to facilitate quick information management.

He said the India Disaster Resource Network, a web-enabled centralised data base, had been operationalised and

a national disaster response force, consisting eight CRPF battalions, constituted to deal with disaster situations. Panjiar said a proposal to de-

velop a three-tier training infrastructure at national, regional and state or local level was under consideration.

Sharing the observations of the Public Accounts Committee on diversion of tsunami relief and reconstruction fund for other purposes, excess expenditure and non-achievement of targets, he said an inter-ministerial committee had been set up to suggest improvement in monitoring implementation of schemes.

He pointed out that on account of its geo-climatic conditions, India was vulnerable to natural disasters. ■



