



ADRC Highlights

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Asian Disaster Reduction Center

Higashikan 5F, 1-5-2
Wakinohamakaigan-dori,
Chuo-ku, Kobe
651-0073 Japan

Tel: 078-262-5540
Fax: 078-262-5546
editor@adrc.asia
http://www.adrc.asia

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● Participation in International Conferences

6th UN-SPIDER Regional Support Offices (RSO) Meeting

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) participated in the 6th UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) Regional Support Offices (RSO) Meeting, which was held in conjunction with the 52nd Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN-COPUOS). Held from 5 to 6 February, the meeting was attended by more than 30 RSOs from around the world. During the meeting, the following topics were eagerly discussed:

- 1) Activities conducted in 2014
- 2) Proposed activities for 2015
- 3) A booklet and portal site developed by UN-SPIDER
- 4) Issues related to strategies for providing technical guidance to developing countries and best uses of satellites
- 5) Best practices in providing technical guidance to developing countries
- 6) Activity reports from working groups on tsunamis, droughts, and floods

At this meeting, ADRC gave a presentation on its 2014 activities and accomplishments as well as its plans for 2015, and discussed many ideas with the secretariat and other RSOs.



Japan-Sponsored Seminar and Reception at the 52nd Meeting of UN-COPUOS

ADRC participated in a Japan-sponsored seminar and reception held at the 52nd Meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the Peaceful Users of Outer Space (UN-COPUOS), which was held at the United Nations (UN) Office in Vienna, Austria. The seminar was held after the COPUOS session on the morning of 9 February. Presentations focused on the theme of "The Role of Space-based Applications in Disaster Risk Reduction" were given by ADRC and several other organizations (including the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)). These were followed by question and answer sessions. ADRC gave a presentation on the performance of and problems with Sentinel Asia, which uses space-based applications to reduce and prevent natural disaster damage. Presentations were also given on sample hazard maps created for floods and volcanos using satellite images, and proposals for the use of satellite images at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) to be held this March.

● ADRC Visiting Researcher Report Mr. Safaraliyev Rustam (Azerbaijan)

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My name is Rustam Safaraliyev, and I am the Deputy Head of the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) in the Azerbaijan Republic. Established in 2005 by presidential decree, the MES has succeeded in developing sufficient capabilities covering every single area. The CMC is a functional body of the MES. As the central operating body of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, it is responsible for the centralized management and coordination of the resources and capacities of the ministry when it comes to disaster prevention and emergency response. Furthermore, the CMC gathers and analyzes disaster data and statistics, and operates an emergency hotline services call center. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the CMC acts in close cooperation with other organizations and departments of the MES. The CMC's activities include:



- Centralized control and coordination of search and rescue efforts
- Coordination of ministry operations
- Disaster-related information exchange with local and central executive bodies as well as self-governing authorities
- Distribution of necessary information related to hazards and emergencies to the authorized heads of the ministry, including the heads of structural units and appropriate agencies, as well as the heads of the central executive bodies of the Azerbaijan Republic.
- Compilation, generalization, processing, and analysis of disaster-related information, including data on emergencies occurring within and beyond the country's borders; relate decision making and policy proposals.
- Development and application of the Automated Information Management System (AIMS), including relevant information networks and software.
- Development and application of the Geographical Information System for Emergency Management.
- Administration of the 112 Call Center.

About the 112 Call Center

The 112 Call Center is an integrated and functional part of the CMC. The 112 hotline service should be used in the following situations:

- In the event of a natural or manmade disaster
- In case of fire or when conditions that could lead to a fire are detected
- When a child, elderly person, or sick person finds themselves in need of assistance
- Severe traffic accidents
- In the that an industrial or construction accident has occurred or is likely to occur
- When water rescue is needed
- In case of the detection or loss of CBRN or other hazardous materials, as well as containers designed for their storage and transportation; and in cases where explosive materials, weapons, or ammunition are detected
- In other cases where assistance is urgently needed (e.g., when a person is lost in the forest, or experiences an emergency out at sea)
- In case of a failure to directly connect with relevant services (101, 102, 103, 104)

As the Deputy Head of the Crisis Management Centre (CMC), my daily duties consist of coordinating and supervising the operations and functions of all departments and units. Azerbaijan's geographical location, as well as its prevailing geographical features, makes it one of the most disaster-prone countries in the region. On the other hand, our booming construction and industrial sectors, particularly the well-developed oil and gas sector, increase the risk of technical disasters. Azerbaijan is a highly seismic region and is also subject to other kind of natural disasters such as floods and landslides. Azerbaijan is committed to taking a comprehensive approach to disaster management by continuously improving emergency management systems (including prevention, mitigation, and response), prioritizing disaster risk reduction activities, and promoting international cooperation in this field.

Given this, and considering the various disasters taking place in Azerbaijan and around the world, the Ministry in general, and the Crises Management Centre in particular, place a high value on sharing

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international experiences, notably with those countries that face many different kinds of devastating disasters. Japan is located in highly disaster prone area, and has to be ready to withstand various natural disasters and to develop and improve its disaster management systems. Japan has extensive experience in this area. I am interested in gaining a better understanding of the disaster management system in one of the most vulnerable places of Japan in terms of disasters -Hyogo prefecture. The ADRC Visiting Researcher program has provided me an opportunity to closely familiarize myself with the Japanese system of disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response at the local level and to learn about the interconnections between state agencies and local communities. I am confident this program will enrich and deepen my knowledge of the disaster management field. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all of the ADRC staff for their cooperation and assistance, and to wish them great success in all their future efforts.

Mr. Lotay Yeshey (Bhutan)

My name is Yeshey Lotay and I am from Bhutan, a small landlocked country bordered by India to the south and China to the north, with a population of around 700,000. I have been working as a Deputy Executive Engineer for the Department of Disaster Management under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs in Bhutan since October 2010. I am happy to be back in the place I consider my second home and am eager to enjoy the blooming of the cherry blossoms (sakura), to taste many Japanese foods, and to experience Kansai culture.

I started my professional career as a structural engineer in the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement (January 2006 to October 2010), which offered valuable experience related to the detailed design of different structures in high seismic zones. I have nine years of professional experience in various government organizations involved in planning, design, construction, and disaster management.

I spent two years in Japan studying at Yokohama National University, during which time I learned a great deal about Japanese culture as well as Japanese disaster management systems. This inspired me to continue studying Japan and pursuing Japanese cultural experiences. I received an opportunity to participate in the Visiting Researcher Program organized by ADRC for the FY2014 term. During my stay as an ADRC Visiting Researcher from 13 January to 25 April 2015, I would like to conduct a Comparative Study on Windstorm Damage on Rural Homes in Bhutan and Japan.

Bhutan is vulnerable to many natural hazards due to its fragile geological features, which include steep terrains, a wide range of elevation differences, and a location in a high seismic zone. One of the most recent disasters was caused by strong seasonal winds that caused massive damage to rural home roofs. In 2011 and 2013, massive windstorms severely damaged rural home roof structures and caused huge economy losses. Thus, the purpose of my research is to help ordinary people in Bhutan reduce the damage sustained by rural home roofs, to mitigate economic losses, and to preserve traditional Bhutanese architectural structures.

**● Announcement (FLASH)****Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2015 Draws to Successful Conclusion**

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction (ACDR) 2015 was conducted as part of the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan on 25 March 2015. ACDR 2015 was organized jointly by the government of Japan, the United Nations Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), and ADRC. Detailed conference coverage will be presented in the next issue of this newsletter.

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