

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON URBAN FLOOD MITIGATION OF SILCHAR TOWN
HELD IN THE CONFERENCE HALL, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE, CACHAR ON
04-12-2021 AT 11.00 AM**

Members present as per Annexure-A:

The meeting was presided over by Smti. Keerthi Jalli, IAS, Deputy Commissioner cum Chairperson, District Disaster Management Authority, Cachar.

At the outset Smti. J. R Lalsim, ACS, Chief Executive Officer, District Disaster Management Authority, Cachar welcomed all the members and the meeting was initiated by giving a brief description about Silchar Town, its flood history and its related problems. She explained in details that every year the Town suffers badly due to Urban Flood. The unplanned growth of the town, mismanaged drainage channels & lack of consciousness among the local public has cumulatively lead to this problem. Moreover, a holistic approach is required for solving this problem.

Considering all these factors, a proposal was sent to Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Dispur, Guwahati, Assam regarding "Urban Flood Mitigation of Silchar Town" in which all problems, issues & effects anticipated in the near future was mentioned in details. After a thorough discussion at all levels, this proposal was accepted by Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Dispur, Guwahati, Assam. Sri. M.R Deka, Project Manager, Disaster Risk Reduction, Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Govt. of Assam was deputed to look into this matter at the district level. Further, directions were issued to conduct a public meeting with stakeholders/representatives from various segments of the society and jointly come up with some recommendations/suggestions for taking further steps towards mitigation of urban flood in Silchar town.

A presentation on Urban Flood Mitigation & Way Forward in the name "Envisioning Disaster and Climate Resilience for Silchar" was made by Sri. M.R Deka, Project Manager, Disaster Risk Reduction, Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Govt. of Assam. In his presentation various aspects leading to flood, climate vulnerability, risks, etc were explained in details. He also recommended that the Natural drainage systems should be cleared to facilitate water passages to major drainages, Municipality should flush the choked drains on regular basis, Comprehensive Plan to mitigate the issue to be prepared, Formation of an Apex Body/Committee to be constituted with Deputy Commissioner as Chairperson and this should include stakeholders from all sectors of the society, Preparation of Comprehensive DPR to be undertaken & others. Mukta Ram Deka, Project Manager, State Disaster Management Authority, also provided ways and means for the solution of the problem. He said 13 per cent of the city was prone to excessive flooding, 48 per cent to high risk flood, 29 per cent to moderate flood and 11 per cent to low risk flood. The presentation upheld that unplanned growth and encroachment city's wetlands and the filling up of silt in the wetlands resulted in artificial flooding without access to proper drainage. Poor drainage system, overcrowding and lack of coordination between different government departments during the construction of houses have also contributed to the problem of stagnant water.

In the deliberation led by Sri. M.R Deka two important actions to be undertaken was explained and based on which an open house discussion took place, are as following-

- (a) Formation of Apex Body/Committee to be constituted with Deputy Commissioner as Chairperson
- (b) Preparation of Comprehensive DRR.

13/12/21

The esteemed members then underwent an open house discussion on Urban Flood & Water Logging issues of Silchar. Here views, suggestions and recommendations on mitigation & way forward were noted from all.

1. Dipayan Chakraborty, Hon'ble MLA, Silchar asked the Water Resources Department to submit the status report of the sluice gate, availability of water pumps to drain our accumulated water as early as possible. Hon'ble MLA Silchar recommended the following points-

- (a) Illegal encroachment needs to be cleared from drains/wet-lands/others.
- (b) An apex Committee to monitor the entire procedure should be developed.
- (c) Unplanned Growth should not be allowed in the town and the town needs to be planned for future development.
- (d) Drying drains/wetlands/others needs to be rejuvenated.

2. Mihir Kanti Shome, Hon'ble MLA Udharbond recommended the following points-

- (a) Drains needs to be cleared regularly and this should be done using machines, rather than manual process.
- (b) Connectivity of the drains with major channels should be developed.
- (c) Size and depth of the drain should be increased.
- (d) Foot-path over drains should be made free from encroachment.
- (e) Encroachment over wetlands like Rangirkhal & Mohisha Beel should be removed for allowing free flow of water and evicting the illegal settlements over the drains.

3. Nominee of MP Silchar, Pulak Das opined that both local experts and professionals from the valley needs to be consulted to alleviate the problem of stagnant water.

4. While proprietor cum Editor of Bengali Daily newspaper, Taimur Raja Chowdhury stressed on the importance of cleaning of sewerage channels and drains in Silchar and repairing of pump sets in order to mitigate the problem of flash floods.

5. Besides, the members were also informed that the reason for the artificial flood was due to the reduced navigability of Rangirkhal, Singerkhal and Langaikhal, the natural drains of the city, and the accumulation of canal land.

6. Prof. Ashim Kanti Dey, Department of Civil Engineering, NIT Silchar said that if there is flood in Bangladesh downstream of Barak, the water level in Silchar increases and also because river Barak bends at too many places, the banks get broken at various places. He recommended that the comprehensive study on Urban Flood Mitigation of Silchar Town should include the detail study of gradient level & siltation of Barak River, as Barak River & its water level has a significant role to play.

Moreover, he also added that if flood occurs in Bangladesh, then there high chances that this might effect our district as well.(Lakhipur to Katigorah Revenue Circle). Hence, the study needs to consider this as well. Other points put forward by him are as follows-

- (a) Disposal of Urban Flooding Water should be planned.
- (b) Initial study should be detailed.
- (c) The entire project should be divided into small segments and thereafter phase wise project implementation should be undertaken.

7. Prof. Parthankar Choudhury, Department of Ecology, Assam University, Silchar recommended the following points-

- (a) Proper drain mapping should be developed.
- (b) Restriction on solid waste thrown in the drains should be imposed.

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(c) Hazard Vulnerability map should be updated.

(d) The DPR to be prepared should not be limited to areas that are under Silchar Municipal Board only, it should include areas that are proposed to be under Silchar Municipal Corporation areas.

8. Prof. Arup Barman, School of Management Sciences ,Assam University, Silchar recommended the following points-

(a) There should be continuous drainage & channel management.

(b) Plan should be made broadly consisting of micro plans keeping in mind the scenario of coming 20 years.

(c)Regulating of real estate in Silchar & peripheral areas.

(d) Plastic bank to be developed in multiple areas of Silchar Town for recycling.

9. Dr. Sourindra Kumar Bhattacharjee, Retd. Professor, Cachar College recommended that proper mapping of drainage system and its streamlining should be undertaken by developing a Drainage System Mechanism.

10. Prof Atri Deshamukhya, School, of Physical Science Department of Physics, Assam University, Silchar recommended that ban on plastic needs to be implemented phase wise in Silchar as plastic is one of the prime reason of drain/channel clogging).

11. Dr. Debamalya Ghosh, Department of Business Administration, Assam University, Silchar recommended that Pre-DPR should be developed and phase wise study should be undertaken for that as well. He emphasized on both long-term planning and short-term planning to have a proper understanding of this phenomenon.

12. Shri. Mridul Mazumder, President, All Pvt. Hospital Associations, Cachar recommended that the status of Sluice Gates to be checked and any sort of repairing needed(if any) to be done on a loop basis.

Based on all the recommendations placed forward, the following actions to be taken were chalked out-

a) In order to relieve the city dwellers from the misery of stagnant water, it was proposed to form an apex body or committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar. The Apex Committee should be constituted with clear Terms of References and it should include members from all stakeholders.

(Action: DDMA, Cachar)

b) Conducting Pre-DPR Study in details.

(Action: DDMA, Cachar/Knowledge Institutions)

c) Forwarding a proposal to the Govt. for sanctioning of fund with regard to the Pre-DPR Study related costs.

(Action: DDMA, Cachar)

d) An expert panel to be constituted for monitoring & dealing aspects with regard to Pre-DPR Study.

(Action: DDMA, Cachar)

e) Sluice gates need to be repaired and maintained properly. A report regarding the current status should be submitted immediately to DDMA, Cachar.

(Action: Water Resource, Mechanical Division, Silchar, Cachar)

f) Preparation of DPR

(Action: DDMA, Cachar)

13. Smti. Keerthi Jalli, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Cachar concluded the discussion with the emphasis on the fact that the entire project should be undertaken with "Change in

Change

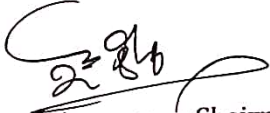
Behaviour" approach, where effort and involvement should be there from each & every corner. She urged upon the members to provide realistic suggestions so that the problem of water logging could be solved once and for all. She also indicated the issue of encroachment of big drains by the people at various parts of the town needs to be mitigated. At the same time, she also appealed to the citizens of the city to bring behavioral change so as not to throw plastic, polythene and other garbage directly in the drains.

14. Miscellaneous- Some other points that were discussed are as follows

- (a) A proper Dept. Co-ordination should be developed to implement the project.
- (b) Plastic being the main reason of water channels/drain blockages, so phase wise plastic ban in Silchar to be incorporated.
- (c) Status of Sluice Gates & pumps should be regularly checked by Water Resource, Mechanical Division.
- (d) Proposal for Trolley Mounted Pump under SDRF should be sent to the State for immediate sanctioning.
- (e) A detail DPR should be sent to the Govt for further processing.

The meeting ended with Vote of Thanks from the Chair.





Deputy Commissioner cum Chairperson
District Disaster Management Authority
Cachar, Silchar.

Dated: ¹⁸04/12/2021
18.12.2021

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1. The Chief Executive Officer, Assam State Disaster Management Authority, Assam Secretariat, Dispur, Assam, Guwahati.
2. All Members Present.


Deputy Commissioner cum Chairperson
District Disaster Management Authority
Cachar, Silchar.