

PRESS NOTE

Monsoon Ready: PMRDA Deploys Fortified Security Blanket with PDRF & Fire Brigade

Teams respond to over 300 fire incidents, pull off 189 successful rescue operations across Pune metro region.

PUNE: Taking into account the rapid urbanization, hilly terrains, ghat sections, dam zones, and complex network of rivers and streams across the region, the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA) has announced that its Pune Metropolitan Disaster Response Force (PDRF) and fire brigade are fully geared up to tackle any monsoon-related emergencies.

Under the direct supervision of the Chief Fire Officer, a 24/7 security blanket has been thrown over the entire metropolitan area to effectively mitigate natural disasters like floods, landslides, uprooted trees, and cave-ins triggered by heavy torrential spells.

Despite being a relatively young force, the PMRDA fire brigade and PDRF team have swiftly proved their mettle in flood control and rescue operations. To date, the teams have responded to over 300 fire calls and successfully executed 189 rescue missions.

During the previous heavy downpours in Pune, these personnel used rubber boats to evacuate stranded residents to safety in flood-hit pockets of Wagholi, Vishrantwadi, Sus, and Bavdhan, including a high-stakes rescue operation at a residential building in Shantinagar.

The team also exercised crucial preventive measures during heavy water discharge from the Khadakwasla dam by shutting down the Sinhagad Road and Nande-Shivne connecting bridges to avert casualties. From clearing traffic bottlenecks by removing fallen trees in Kirkatwadi to saving a woman attempting suicide in the Indrayani river at Dehu with the help of locals and police, the personnel have consistently displayed exemplary commitment.

Drawing vital lessons from past tragedies like the catastrophic Malin landslide and heavy rainfall disruptions in Lavasa and the Western Ghats, PMRDA is shifting its focus heavily toward preventive strategies rather than just post-disaster rescue.

To achieve this, the authority is constantly updating data on landslide-prone hill slopes, ghat roads, and vulnerable villages in coordination with local administrations. Pre-monsoon mock drills and live rescue exercises have already been conducted in tandem with local Gram Panchayats, revenue departments, police, and healthcare units.

The disaster management machinery has been reinforced with skilled manpower and cutting-edge equipment. Currently, PMRDA operates three fire stations staffed by 60 contractual personnel. Bolstering this force is a specialized 30-member PDRF team, comprising 20 highly skilled jawans and 10 dedicated drivers. The force is equipped with advanced emergency response vehicles, life-saving gear, rubber boats, rope rescue kits, and heavy-duty cutting tools to ensure rapid deployment.

"Pre-disaster awareness, alertness, and preventive measures are far more critical than carrying out rescue operations after a disaster strikes. Active public participation and timely coordination with the administration can prevent major mishaps and save precious lives."

— Devendra Potfode, Chief Fire Officer, PMRDA

Advisory Issued for Citizens

Chief Fire Officer Devendra Potfode has urged citizens to strictly adhere to safety guidelines during the monsoon:

- Avoid stopping near hill slopes, landslide-prone areas, cliffs, or visiting hazardous tourist spots during heavy downpours.
- Watch out for early signs of landslides, such as deep cracks in the soil, tilting trees or electric poles, rolling stones, cracks in building walls, or unusual ground displacement. If spotted, evacuate to safety immediately and inform the authorities.
- Do not attempt to cross rapidly flowing streams, drains, or flooded roads under any circumstances.

📞 EMERGENCY HELPLINE NUMBER: In case of any emergency or disaster situation, citizens are requested to immediately contact the PDRF Control Room at **9545282930**.

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