

CHAPTER VI

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Rescue operation by Armed Forces



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According to Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act), disaster management involves continuous and integrated process of planning, organising, coordinating and implementing measures which are necessary for (i) prevention of threat of any disaster, (ii) mitigation of risk of disaster, (iii) capacity building, (iv) preparedness to deal with disaster, (v) rescue, relief and rehabilitation and reconstruction, etc. After the floods of 2015, GoTN launched rescue and relief operations with the help of various agencies. Deficiencies noticed in long term planning and institutional mechanism and issues in handling the rescue and relief activities are discussed in this chapter.

We have already discussed in previous chapters about various factors which severely handicapped the Government to face the 2015 disaster such as (i) failures in prevention of disaster due to non-adherence to Master Plans, (ii) failures in taking timely action to effect removal of encroachments at various places in the Chennai City including in water bodies, (iii) faulty design and insufficient coverage of SWDs, (iv) failures in mitigation of risk of disaster such as non-construction of several planned channels to divert flood water and (v) non-removal of identified and planned to be removed obstructions, blocking free flow of flood water in river, etc. This chapter deals with deficiencies in capacity building, preparedness to deal with disaster and rescue, relief and reconstruction activities.

6.1 Deficiencies in the institutional framework

6.1.1 Deficiencies in the functioning of State Disaster Management Authority

The Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Authority (Authority) formed under Section 14(1) of DM Act, 2005, is responsible for disaster preparedness and coordinating rescue and relief measures in the event of a disaster. The following deficiencies on the part of the Authority added to the vulnerability of Chennai city and its suburban areas during the floods in 2015.

The State at its own level, had constituted a Disaster Management Authority under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary in 2003. However, under Section 14 (2) of DM Act, 2005, the Authority was to be constituted with the Chief Minister (CM) as the Chairperson. Though the Act came into force in 2005, the Authority, which was functioning under the Chief Secretary, was re-constituted in November 2013, with the CM as the chairperson, after a delay of eight years indicating lack of seriousness on the part of the State Government to take care of disasters. The Authority's responsibilities included laying down the State Disaster Management Policy and approving Disaster Management Plan (DMP). We observed that the Authority did not hold its meeting even once after its constitution in November 2013, again

showing lack of seriousness on the part of the State Government at the highest level.

We further noticed that three years after reconstitution of the Authority and after the floods of December 2015, the Executive Council (EC) of the Authority passed (August 2016) a resolution for seeking convenient date from the CM for holding its first meeting, but no such meeting was held till date (April 2017). The delay in constitution of the Authority under the chairmanship of the CM and non-convening of meetings indicated lack of seriousness attached to disaster preparedness on the part of the State Government. GoTN stated (May 2017) that non-convening the meeting of Authority did not dilute the functions, and the response to the natural disaster was carried out effectively under the direction of the CM. The reply was misleading and did not address the issue that GoTN lacked an organised structure and approach for disaster preparedness as mandated under DM Act, 2005 even after facing disastrous floods of 2015.

TN State Disaster Management Agency (TNSDMA), constituted in November 2013, functioning under the Authority was to provide institutional framework for disaster management. As per its bye-laws, it is mandatory for TNSDMA to hold its Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) once a year to discuss the (i) report of the EC, (ii) assets and liabilities, (iii) income and expenditure statement (iv) report of the Auditor and (v) other issues connected with disaster preparedness etc. We, however, observed that the TNSDMA did not hold its AGM since its constitution in November 2013 indicating lack of seriousness for adequate preparedness for facing disaster during 2015 as discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

TNSDMA had been envisaged as a body with financial and administrative resources, to manage disasters. As per existing NDM guidelines, the Central and State funds were to be released to the bank account of TNSDMA. But, we noticed that the bank account was not opened to ensure the envisaged financial autonomy. On the contrary, we noticed that GoTN provided funds through budget which were to be drawn through separate financial sanction, thereby making TNSDMA an entity without the required financial autonomy to swiftly respond to disasters. As a result, the TNSDMA remained dependent on orders from GoTN for release of funds for meeting expenditure for relief measures, such as payment of cash doles, procurement of sarees and dhotis and rice for free distribution to beneficiaries. Thus, the dependence on GoTN had taken avoidable time, which could have been avoided had there been financial autonomy with TNSDMA.

As per Section 17 of the DM Act, 2005, an Advisory Committee had to be constituted consisting of experts in Disaster Management and those having practical experience on Disaster Management. Detailed proposals submitted (September 2014) by TNSDMA on constitution of the Advisory Committee was approved by Government only in October 2016. As a result, the State was deprived of expert advice on disaster preparedness. It was, therefore, evident that GoTN was not serious in adhering to NDM guidelines to protect the lives and properties of the people.

Sections 48(1) (b) and (d) of the DM Act, 2005, envisaged constitution of District Disaster Response Fund and District Disaster Mitigation Fund. Further, GoI advised (September 2010) the State to constitute the above funds. These funds, which were essential to ensure swift response to disasters, were not constituted in all the three audited districts, viz., Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur.

Thus, from (i) the delay in constitution of the Authority, (ii) non-convening of Authority's meetings and the AGM of TNSDMA, (iii) the lack of the envisaged financial autonomy to TNSDMA, (iv) the delay in constitution of Advisory Committee and (v) non-establishment of Disaster Response Fund and Disaster Mitigation Fund at District level, we observed that the State lacked an organised system for disaster preparedness and response.

Recommendation No. 21: We recommend that Government should put in place the institutional framework envisaged in the Act and the guidelines issued by GoI. Regular convening of meetings and grant of financial autonomy to TNSDMA should be ensured.

6.1.2 Abnormal delay in preparation of Disaster Management Plan

Section 23(1) of the DM Act, 2005, envisaged preparation of a State DMP. The DMP was to *inter alia* include the roles and responsibilities of the different departments of the Government in responding to the disaster. The DMP was to assess hazard vulnerability and plan preventive measure and disaster response. The DMP was to be updated annually and approved by the Authority.

We observed that in the absence of DMP at the time of floods, preventive measures and disaster response were not organised in a planned manner. We further observed that Anna Institute of Management, Chennai, was engaged (November 2013) to update the draft DMP prepared in 2010. The draft submitted (August 2014) by Anna Institute of Management was not approved (March 2015) by TNSDMA as the plan was not drafted as per the template suggested by National Disaster Management Authority. Though the plan revised in 2016 by the TNSDMA was agreed to by GoTN (October 2016) but it was not approved by the Authority due to non-convening of its meetings (April 2017).

6.2 Shortfalls in capacity building for disaster management

The 13th Finance Commission emphasised the need to train manpower and equip District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC) to handle complex disaster situations.

The 13th Finance Commission's capacity building grant entitled to GoTN and actually received are given in **Table 6.1** below:

Table 6.1: 13th Finance Commission's capacity building grant

(₹ in crore)

Year	Grant entitled	Grant actually received	Remarks
2010-11	5.00	0.00	Grant for the first year was received in 2011-12. Grants for 2011-12 and 2012-13 were received only in 2013-14 due to delayed submission of utilisation certificates (UCs). Grant for 2013-14 and 2014-15 were not received due to delayed submission of UCs.
2011-12	5.00	5.00	
2012-13	5.00	0.00	
2013-14	5.00	10.00	
2014-15	5.00	0.00	
Total	25.00	15.00	

(Source: TNSDMA)

The capacity building grant was to be utilised for training manpower, strengthening of DEOC, preparation of educational materials for creating awareness, etc. District authorities procured inventories such as TV, desktop computers, laser printer, fax, furniture, scanner and digital camera etc., using 13th Finance Commission grant for strengthening of DEOCs. We observed that the funds released to districts were inadequate as the sampled Kancheepuram DEOC lacked even basic inventories such as TV, fax machine, scanner and CCTV, which were essential to keep the communication channel open during floods. None of the DEOCs had satellite phones suggested by GoI, which were crucial in situations where the communication network broke down. Further, the DEOCs had not put in place the online Decision Support System envisaged by NDMA to ensure effective communication and swift decision making. The Director, Disaster Management stated (March 2017) that Government was considering procurement of advanced communication equipment. But, the fact remains that due to non-availing of 13th Finance Commission grant in full due to administrative delays on the part of Commissioner of Revenue Administration (CRA), the State could not strengthen its DEOCs to effectively handle the disaster in 2015. Thus, GoTN may review the infrastructural requirements of DEOCs to equip them adequately.

6.3 Deficiencies in functioning of Emergency Operation Centre

As per NDM guidelines of 2008, EOCs were to be established as an offsite facility, functioning from the State/District headquarters. EOC was to be an augmented control room having communication facilities. It coordinates all line departments in rescue and relief work after disasters. Shortage of manpower in the EOC at TNSDMA's office at Chennai was pointed out in C&AG's Audit Report on GoTN (G&SSA) for the year ended March 2012. As per NDM guidelines, one Senior Administrative Officer with required number of Assistants and representatives of various line Departments were to be posted in the EOC. Despite this being pointed out by Audit in 2012, no dedicated staff were posted. Twelve desk personnel (contract staff) outsourced from Electronics Corporation of TN (ELCOT) were manning the EOC. As the period from January to June was considered non-calamitous season, every year, the number of desk staff stood reduced to six. Scrutiny of

TNSDMA's records revealed that even during the monsoon months of 2015, there were only six desk personnel who were not adequate to handle the EOC.

In Chennai and Tiruvallur DEOCs, desk personnel were not engaged from ELCOT during November and December 2015. In Kancheepuram DEOC, only one out of two Desk personnel were available during 01 November 2015 to 31 January 2016. It was replied that in the absence of regular desk personnel, officials of Revenue Department were placed in charge of the DEOCs. The reply was not acceptable as the officials deputed to work in the DEOC did not report there for work as per the record verified during audit.

We further observed that the non-posting of desk personnel in EOCs hampered their efficiency as discussed below:

- In order to facilitate easy accessibility during disasters, EOCs have been equipped with toll free contact numbers (1070 and 1077). These numbers are accessible from all landline and mobile networks. EOCs were to coordinate with line departments to take action on the complaints received through these toll free numbers. EOCs maintained the contact details of field level functionaries of line departments to coordinate rescue, relief and restoration works. We observed that during November and December 2015 i.e., during the months when flood took place, the Chennai District EOC received 1,586 calls from flood affected people. All the calls were recorded in registers and the messages were forwarded to GCC (1,371 messages), TN Electricity Board (TNEB)(78) and Taluk offices (18).

We further observed that apart from forwarding the messages, no further action was taken to coordinate with the line departments to find solution for the complaints received. On this being pointed out by Audit, District Collector, Chennai replied that there was no response from the Call Centres run by the GCC and TNEB. The reply was untenable as the EOC itself could have approached the field officers of line departments rather than just passing on the message to the call centres of GCC and TNEB.

- The DEOCs of Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts received 970 calls and 1,330 calls respectively, during November and December 2015. These DEOCs were also not in a position to monitor action taken reports from line departments. Thus, DEOCs did not follow up on the complaints received over phone, but functioned with a limited scope of just forwarding the complaints to other agencies.

On being asked, CRA stated (May 2017) that shortage of Desk Personnel did not impact the functioning of DEOCs as regular staff were deployed. CRA further stated that in addition to EOCs, control rooms of Police, GCC, etc., also functioned in a decentralised manner. The reply was not acceptable as posting of staff in an *ad hoc* manner rather than through regular engagement in

deviation from the NDM guideline for centralised coordination of disaster response through EOCs indicated lack of planned and structured approach.

6.4 Rescue operations

In terms of the DM Act, 2005, GoI had created National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to respond to natural disasters. One of the battalions of NDRF is stationed at Arakkonam, located close to Chennai. NDRF battalions have teams with high skill training and latest equipment for water rescue. Further, in case of emergencies, civil authorities can request the army for help. Scrutiny of records relating to response to floods disclosed the followings:

6.4.1 Deployment of National Disaster Response Force for rescue

As per the information furnished to the Parliamentary Committee, 1,200 Army men, 600 personnel from Navy, Coast Guard and Air Force and 1,920 NDRF personnel were involved in the rescue and relief operations. However, we could not ascertain the date and time from which the NDRF were deployed in rescue operations.

According to NDRF Guidelines, three days before the approaching calamity, alert to nearest NDRF battalion and armed forces had to be made for relief and rescue operations. We observed that instead of approaching the NDRF at least three days in advance as per NDRF guidelines, the GoTN actually contacted the Director General (DG), NDRF only on 01 December 2015, after the flooding had taken place. Due to delayed intimation made to NDRF by GoTN, the NDRF could deploy its forces between 01 December and 04 December 2015 only, which resulted in delay in rescue operations. Had the timely action been taken in this regard, the extent of loss of human lives could have been reduced.

6.4.2 Lack of communication equipment for rescue operations

Keeping communication channels working is crucial for rescue and relief operations during disasters. As power supply and telecommunication networks broke down due to floods, mobile and telephone services got disturbed in Chennai and suburban areas during floods. Very High Frequency (VHF) sets were the only reliable communication system for rescue and relief works. The details of availability of VHF sets in Collectors' offices, Revenue Divisional offices and Taluk offices in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts as of June 2016 are given in **Table 6.2**.

Table 6.2: Availability of VHF sets

Chennai			Kancheepuram			Tiruvallur		
No. of offices	No. of VHF sets available		No. of offices	No. of VHFsets available		No. of offices	No. of VHF sets available	
	Base Station	Mobile Station		Base Station	Mobile Station		Base Station	Mobile Station
15	8	7	20	16*	16 **	22	18	17

* Three of them were not installed and five of them were not in working condition

** Eight of them were not in working condition

(Source: Revenue and Disaster Management Department)

Guindy, one of the affected taluks in Chennai District where 1,472 huts were fully damaged and 1,415 huts were partly damaged did not have any VHF sets. The Revenue Divisional Officers in Egmore, and Tondiarpet and four other taluk offices did not have VHF sets. In Tiruvallur District, the worst affected Taluks of Maduravoyal, Thiruvottiyur and Avadi did not have any VHF sets. We observed that non-availability of these critical communication equipment revealed inadequacies in disaster preparedness.

6.5 Relief work

6.5.1 Relief extended by Government

Besides food and shelter provided as immediate relief, GoTN approved the following relief to the affected population:

- A cash dole of ₹ 5,000 for each of the families of inundated house/hut
- A cash dole of ₹ 5,000 and ₹ 5,200 for each of the families of partly damaged huts and tiled houses respectively
- A cash dole of ₹ 10,000 for fully damaged huts
- One set of saree and dhoti to each of the affected households
- 10 kg of rice to each of the affected households
- Special drive to issue certificates, ration cards and other official documents to families who lost them in floods

Deficiencies noticed in relief and rehabilitation activities are discussed in Paragraphs 6.5.2 to 6.5.6.

6.5.2 Deficiencies in beneficiary identification

We noticed discrepancy in the estimation of number of families affected by floods. While the number of families affected by floods for the purpose of cash doles was 25.13 lakh, the number of families affected for the purpose of

issue of rice and sarees and dhotis was depicted as 24.71 lakh, as shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Beneficiary data

District	Number of families affected according to		
	Cash dole list	Rice allotment list	Sarees and dhotis distribution list
Chennai	13,15,000	12,36,253	12,36,253
Tiruvallur	5,97,826	6,34,000	6,34,000
Kancheepuram	5,99,843	6,00,713	6,00,675
Total	25,12,669	24,70,966	24,70,928

(Source: Data furnished by CRA)

Adoption of different number of families affected for each category shows the inaccuracy of the data presented by CRA. While the estimation of number of affected households for the purpose of cash dole was done by door to door enumeration conducted by officials drawn from other districts, estimation for supply of rice and sarees and dhotis were not based on the same.

We observed the following:

- In Chennai District, there was a short payment of ₹ 50.45 crore towards payment of cash dole to beneficiaries, which was remitted back to Government account. Similarly, in Tiruvallur district, ₹ 4.76 crore was surrendered and in Kancheepuram district, ₹ 15.20 crore was surrendered/remitted back. The relief amount were surrendered/remitted back to Government account, due to defective preparation of enumeration i.e., incorrect account number/names of beneficiaries etc. We observed that the defective enumeration had resulted in short payment of relief totaling ₹ 70.41 crore to eligible beneficiaries enumerated after floods.
- In Chennai, the District Collector issued 16,70,000 serially numbered enumeration forms to enumerators and 12,87,735 beneficiaries were given relief. However, Audit scrutiny of the data revealed that Tahsildars paid ₹ 33.65 lakh to 662 persons enumerated through forms which were not issued by the Collector's office. The District Collector attributed (December 2016) typographical errors in respect of 424 of the 662 applications, but did not produce copies of the said applications. By analysing the electronic data furnished by the District Collector, we noticed that 146 of the 662 persons who were paid assistance based on unnumbered enumeration forms had received assistance based on enumeration forms supplied by the Collectorate as well. CRA stated (May 2017) that 424 of the 662 cases of payments based on unnumbered enumeration forms were identified as genuine cases, and the remaining 238 constituted a very small percentage of the total of 13.17 lakh cash dole applications. We could not verify the genuineness of the 424 cases cited in the reply and observed that even

a small percentage of cases of irregular payments pointed towards deficiencies in the system of enumeration, supervision and authorising payments.

- In Thenneri Village of Wallajabad Taluk (Kancheepuram District), the Tahsildar paid ₹ 4,100 each to 155 families as compensation for partly damaged huts based on certificate in Form-20¹ by the Revenue Inspector. However, Form-20 for obtaining details of the family and copy of ration card was not available on record in respect of 128 families. Neither the Tahsildar, Wallajabad nor the District Collector, Kancheepuram furnished the Form 20 in respect of the 128 families. We could not confirm the genuineness of the payment of ₹ 5.25 lakh to them. We observed that the payment was made in these cases in violation of the prescribed procedure as per Government order for giving benefit for flood affected persons for which door to door enumeration was required.
- Cash dole was to be paid based on enumeration by teams of officials constituted by District Collectors. Enumeration involved certification to the effect that the house hold was affected by flooding. The Tahsildar of Sholinganallur Taluk, Kancheepuram District, however, paid (February 2016) ₹ 4.17 crore as cash dole to 8,354 persons without any enumeration. On this being pointed out by Audit, the District Collector, Kancheepuram admitted (August 2016) making payments without enumeration, but stated that these people were left out during the enumeration. CRA was not sure about the circumstances under which the payments were made when he replied (May 2017) to Audit that “some of the beneficiaries who did not receive the cash dole in the first phase might have submitted their applications to Collector’s office and Chief Minister’s Special Cell”. The reply was not acceptable, being presumptive and not based on records, as payment was to be made on the basis of enumeration only. We observed that the Tahsildar, Sholinganallur and Collector, Kancheepuram had failed to exercise due diligence in making cash dole payment of ₹ 4.17 crore to 8,354 persons.

6.5.3 Multiple payment of relief to same beneficiaries

Government decided (December 2015) to provide cash assistance to all families living in houses/huts inundated, with water stagnation for more than two days. Cash dole payments were made based on enumeration done by Government officials drawn from various districts. Enumeration forms included the name of the head of family, address, Ration card number (identity proof) and carried the signature of the head of family. All eligible beneficiaries enumerated were paid (January and February 2016) the entitled cash dole through ECS by the Tahsildars concerned.

We analysed the electronic data on cash dole payment, which were maintained by the three District Collectors, and noticed instances of payments of cash doles more than once to the same household/beneficiaries. Details of

¹ A existing certificate prescribed for assistance to victims of natural disaster

households/beneficiaries who received multiple payments, based on single identification document (Ration card, Adhaar card etc.) are given in **Table 6.4**.

Table 6.4: Multiple payments of relief to same beneficiary/household

District	Nature of payment	Details of multiple payments	Excess payment (₹ in lakh)
Chennai	Cash dole (₹ 5,000 for partly damaged huts/inundation)	28,934 beneficiaries received multiple payments (two to eight times to same beneficiary/household)	1,514.60
Kancheepuram		38,712 beneficiaries received multiple payments (2 to 35 times to same beneficiary/household)	2,149.60
Tiruvallur		26,507 beneficiaries received assistance twice	574.36
Total excess payment (94,153 cases)			4,238.56

(Source: Electronic data furnished by District Collectors)

In addition to the scrutiny of electronic data on payment of relief, as mentioned in **Table 6.4** above, we conducted manual scrutiny of all the 1,856 applications, which the electronic data had indicated multiple payments in Guindy Taluk of Chennai District. The results of the manual scrutiny are given in **Table 6.5**.

Table 6.5: Analysis of multiple payments of relief to same beneficiary/household

i	Number of cases of multiple payment detected through scrutiny of electronic data at Guindy Taluk	1,856
ii	Number of cases manually scrutinised	1,856
iii	Number of cases wrongly seen as multiple payment due to data entry error at Collectorate	601
iv	Different persons getting payment at different addresses based on one Ration card	453
v	Actual number of cases of multiple payment (ii-iii-iv)	802
vi	Cases of same person/household getting more than one payment based on one Ration card at the same address	187 cases
vii	Cases of same person/household getting more than one payment at different address, based on one Ration card	183 cases
viii	Cases of different persons/households getting payment at the same address based on one Ration card	432 cases

(Source: Analysis of data and enumeration forms of Guindy Taluk)

In respect of multiple payments pointed out, CRA stated (May 2017) that multiple payment on the strength of one ration card number happened in the case of married son/daughter of the head of the family, who were living

separately without separate ration card and tenants who migrated recently giving the ration card number of house owner for claiming cash dole.

The reply was incorrect as manual checking of all the 1,856 cases of multiple payment for single ration card or identity document at Guindy Taluk had indicated same person receiving more than one payment in 187 cases based on one ration card at the same address, which worked out to 10 *per cent* of the number of cases of multiple payment as observed through analysis of electronic data.

Further, we provided a list of 321 cases of multiple payment on the strength of single ration card or other identity document to the Collectors of Chennai, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur, to verify the genuineness of the payments. Based on verifications, the Collectors found that double payments were made to 23 of the 321 cases, which worked out to seven *per cent* of the cases of multiple payment as observed through analysis of electronic data.

The detailed manual scrutiny of records in addition to analysis of electronic data and verifications done by District Collectors clearly established multiple payment of cash dole to same beneficiary, which indicated serious lapses in payment of cash dole, despite putting in place an elaborate system which included direct payment of cash dole to the bank account of the beneficiaries.

6.5.4 Inequitable distribution of relief to beneficiaries

According to GoTN Order (January 2016), the relief amount payable was ₹ 10,000 for fully damaged huts and ₹ 5,000 for partly damaged huts. The following short payments were noticed:

We noticed that only ₹ 5,000 was paid to the 3,447 fully damaged huts against ₹ 10,000 allowed in Tiruvallur District and 9,290 out of 28,097 fully damaged huts in Kancheepuram district. The total short payment of relief to 12,737 families whose houses were enumerated as ‘fully damaged’ was ₹ 6.37 crore. We observed that this serious lapse on the part of Revenue officials had led to deprivation of eligible assistance to 12,737 families amounting to ₹ 6.37 crore.

In Kancheepuram District, families of 10,649 of the 17,755 partly damaged huts were paid only ₹ 4,100, leading to short payment of ₹ 95.84 lakh (₹ 900 to 10,649 huts). Similarly, families of 884 out of 986 partly damaged huts in Tambaram Taluk in the same district were paid only ₹ 3,800. The total amount of short payment in the two districts to 11,533 families whose houses were enumerated as be ‘partly damaged’ was ₹ 1.06 crore².

We observed that in both the above cases, the Revenue Officials wrongly adopted the pre-revised rates of assistance without giving effect to the Government order (December 2015) raising the rates of assistance to ₹ 5,000 per family for house inundation and another ₹ 5,000 for partly damaged houses and ₹ 10,000 for fully damaged houses.

² (10,649 x ₹ 900) + (884 x ₹ 1,200)

6.5.5 Excess procurement of sarees and dhotis

CRA estimated (February 2016) a requirement of 24.71 lakh sets of sarees and dhotis for supply to the people affected by floods in Chennai, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts. Government decided (February 2016) to source the sarees and dhotis from Weavers Cooperative Societies and released (February 2016) ₹ 64.78 crore at ₹ 262.15 per set, to the Director of Handloom and Textiles (DHT).

DHT organised supply of sarees and dhotis from Weavers Cooperative Societies to Taluk offices in the three districts, for distribution to beneficiaries through ration shops. Sarees and dhotis were received by Tahsildars between December 2015 and March 2016 and the same were distributed to ration shops for issue to beneficiaries. The details of sarees and dhotis supplied to Tahsildars and distributed to ration shops are given in **Table 6.6**.

Table 6.6: Issue of sarees and dhotis

(Number in lakh)

District	Item	Received by Taluk Offices	supplied to ration shops	Balance available at Taluk offices
Chennai	Sarees	11.29	6.86	4.43
	Dhotis	11.32	6.86	4.46
Kancheepuram	Sarees	4.43	1.35	3.08
	Dhotis	4.45	1.44	3.01
Tiruvallur	Sarees	2.51	2.38	0.13
	Dhotis	2.54	2.41	0.13
Total	Sarees	18.23	10.59	7.64
	Dhotis	18.31	10.71	7.60

(Source: Data furnished by respective District Collectors)

Thus, against the receipt of 18.23 lakh sarees and 18.31 lakh dhotis by Taluk officers, only 10.59 lakh sarees and 10.71 lakh dhotis were distributed to ration shops for issue to affected people. The Tahsildars did not obtain details of actual distribution by ration shops.

Based on excess stock lying in taluk offices, we noticed that 7.64 lakh sarees and 7.60 lakh dhotis valued at ₹ 19.99 crore (7.64 lakh x ₹ 169.45 (+) 7.60 lakh x ₹ 92.70) were procured in excess. The CRA replied to Audit (May 2017) that the quantity procured in excess were distributed for Pongal festival 2017. The reply confirmed inadmissible use of sanction under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for supply of sarees and dhotis for Pongal 2017, which was in violation of SDRF norms as SDRF funds was not allowed to be utilised for supply of free sarees and dhotis for Pongal festival.

We further observed that the very idea of providing immediate relief to affected people was not fulfilled as the sarees and dhotis reached taluk offices between December 2015 and March 2016. The District Collectors did not

have any data on the actual distribution of sarees and dhotis by ration shops to beneficiaries.

GoTN stated (May 2017) that the sarees and dhoties procured for supply to flood affected people could not be distributed due to lack of interest shown by many of them. Thus, incorrect estimation of requirement without any survey or basis, resulted in excess procurement and the delayed procurement rendered the relief not reaching the beneficiaries on time.

Recommendation No. 22: *We recommend that the cost of sarees and dhotis, procured under SDRF, but distributed for Pongal 2017, may be worked out and adjusted, as SDRF assistance cannot be utilised for free supply of sarees and dhotis for Pongal.*

6.5.6 Procurement of rice in excess of requirement

CRA estimated (February 2016) a requirement of 24,709.66 Metric Tonnes (MT) of rice for supply to 24.71 lakh families at 10 kg per family and paid ₹ 52.69 crore to Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC). The details of rice procured by TNCSC from Food Corporation of India (FCI), supplied by TNCSC to ration shops and balance held by TNCSC are given in **Table 6.7**.

Table 6.7: Issue of rice to affected families

Name of District	Requirement assessed by CRA	Procurement made by TNCSC	Issued by TNCSC to ration shops	Balance stock with TNCSC	Value of Balance stock
					(₹ in crore)
In MT					
Chennai	12,362.53	12,362.53	4,748.12	7,614.41	16.24
Kancheepuram	6,007.13	6,007.13	433.30	5,573.83	11.88
Tiruvallur	6,340.00	6,340.00	810.85	5,529.15	11.79
Total	24,709.66	24,709.66	5,992.27	18,717.39	39.91

(Source: Data furnished by respective District Collectors)

Out of 24,709.66 MT of rice procured by TNCSC for free distribution to affected families in the three districts, only 5,992.27 MT (24.25 per cent) was actually issued to ration shops for distribution. The cost of the quantity of rice procured in excess was ₹ 39.91 crore. On being pointed out (June 2016), TNCSC refunded (November 2016) the cost of rice procured in excess after deducting administrative charges. The rice procured in excess was utilised for regular civil supplies by TNCSC.

The wrong estimation of beneficiaries without any survey and release of funds by CRA on the basis of estimation had resulted in blocking of Government funds in the form of idle stock/funds to the tune of ₹ 39.91 crore with TNCSC for about nine months, which could have been spent elsewhere.

6.6 Inadmissible expenditure from SDRF on restoration works in flood affected areas

Instances of ineligible expenditure from SDRF, were as discussed below:

- As per the norms for assistance under SDRF, GCC was entitled for an assistance of ₹ 1 lakh per km of roads damaged by floods to carry out immediate restoration work. GCC repaired 41 km stretch of affected roads at a cost of ₹ 75.44 crore³. As per the norms, GCC was entitled to an assistance of ₹ 0.41 crore only. Non-adherence to SDRF guidelines resulted in an unauthorised expenditure of ₹ 75.03 crore. As the funds were sanctioned under SDRF, it was to be utilised based on the scale prescribed.
- As per guidelines, SDRF funds could be utilised only to restore traffic on public roads. However, road work within the campus of GCC's headquarters (Ripon Buildings) was executed under SDRF at a cost of ₹ 65.50 lakh. Utilisation of SDRF funds for relaying of roads within the office complex of GCC was in violation of SDRF norms.
- District Collector, Kancheepuram utilised SDRF assistance for procuring a 40 KVA generator and petty repair works in his office at a cost of ₹ 10.27 lakh. This expenditure was in violation SDRF norms, which did not allow SDRF funds for equipping Government offices.
- As per SDRF guidelines, capital expenditure was not permissible. Two Zonal Officers⁴ of GCC created assets by purchase of motors, at a cost of ₹ 15.97 lakh using SDRF, which was not permissible. GCC replied that due to high cost involved in renting motors for pumping water, procurement was made rather than renting the motors. However, no details substantiating this decision were made available to us.

CRA justified the above expenditure under SDRF citing the role of the agencies/offices in disaster management. The reply was not acceptable as the norms were very specific and did not allow these expenditure.

Recommendation No. 23: We recommend that excess/ineligible assistance extended to GCC and District collector, Kancheepuram be recouped to SDRF.

6.7 Non-receipt of Utilisation Certificate

In the aftermath of 2015 floods, GoTN sanctioned a sum of ₹ 3,039.24 crore, including GoI funds, for relief and restoration works in all Districts of the State, as tabulated in **Table 6.8**.

³ Cost of work as per agreement. Actual expenditure is awaited as bills are still to be settled (March 2017).

⁴ Zone 6 and Zone 7

Table 6.8: Funds sanctioned for 2015 floods

Date of sanction of funds	Amount (₹ in crore)
17/11/2015	500.00
15/12/2015	300.00
15/12/2015	1,000.00
07/01/2016	500.00
11/01/2016	340.79
15/02/2016	398.45
Total	3,039.24

(Source: Government orders)

Out of the sum of ₹ 3,039.24 crore sanctioned for relief and restoration works of 2015 floods, ₹ 1,587.66 crore was released to the District Collectors of Chennai, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur and GCC towards cash doles and relief and restoration works. The Collectors in turn released the funds to various agencies executing the rescue, relief and restoration works.

We noticed that UCs were received (February 2016) only for ₹ 1,477.33 crore from District Collectors and GCC. Despite specific direction by the Chairman of the EC of TNSDMA in August 2016 in this regard, UC for the balance ₹ 110.33 crore was still awaited from GCC (March 2017).

6.8 Analysis

The State of Tamil Nadu, being prone to frequent cyclonic effects, failed to put in place a functional institutional mechanism to face disaster situations. The TN State Disaster Management Authority did not play its envisaged role, as it neither had the contemplated financial autonomy nor had dedicated staff. The apex body for disaster management under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister never met to evolve policies. Disaster Management Plan was not prepared to institutionalise and coordinate rescue and relief operations during the floods of 2015. Relief activities were marred by delayed extension of relief, excess/short payment of cash doles and blocking up of funds due to wrong estimation of requirement of relief materials. SDRF funds were utilised on ineligible works and spending excess over the norms.