

WEST BENGAL IN INDIA IMPLEMENTS DIGITAL CRISIS TOOLS TO COMBAT DISASTERS

In what could be termed as a pioneering move in India, the Disaster Management Department of West Bengal has initiated the implementation of an Online Incident Response and Planning System. Previsstar's Continual Preparedness System was the chosen solution to address the requirements.



 **Previsstar**
CASE STUDY

BACKGROUND

The Indian state of West Bengal is home to the world's largest river delta, covering more than 100,000 sq. km. in the north-eastern arm of the country. Two of the biggest rivers in Asia – Ganga and Brahmaputra meet in this region to create a uniquely diverse geography that receives tremendous amounts of freshwater and fertile soil deposits. Owing to these factors, the region is heavily inhabited, with over 90 million people on the Indian side of the delta and an additional 30-40 million people in the neighbouring Bangladesh.

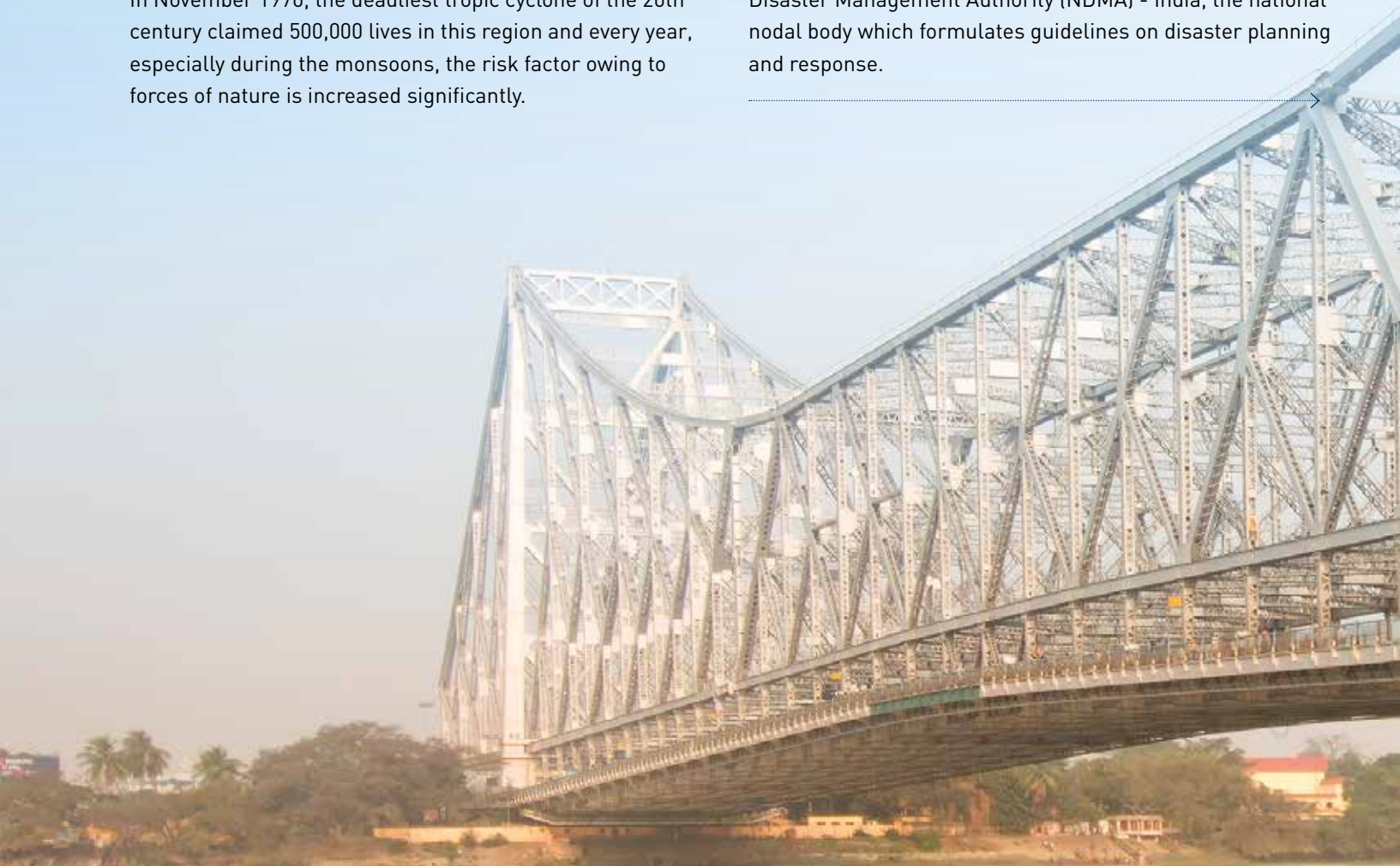
The river delta system has an effective draining area 1.7 million square kilometres – the third largest in the world and is the hub for perennial floods and mudslides. A large number of cyclones are also formed in the Bay of Bengal risking tens of thousands of lives annually during the monsoons (rainy season).

In November 1970, the deadliest tropic cyclone of the 20th century claimed 500,000 lives in this region and every year, especially during the monsoons, the risk factor owing to forces of nature is increased significantly.

As an endeavour to tackle these threats, Bengal Disaster Management Department (DMD) has set up a fully functional, 24x7 operational state Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) at the state government's headquarters, Nabanna. It has also set up district level EOCs in all the 23 districts.

Recently, the DMD has undertaken an initiative to implement an Incident Response and Planning System that can take their paper plans and operationalize them. The system is intended to be online and dynamic, bringing all stakeholders and line agencies like police, public works department, fire department, hospitals etc., under one platform to prepare for and respond instantaneously to any disaster in a cohesive manner.

This was also part of the capacity building exercise to comply with the Incident Response System guidelines of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) - India, the national nodal body which formulates guidelines on disaster planning and response.



SOLUTION

In order to meet the complex requirements, the Disaster Management Department (DMD) chose to partner with Previstar and leverage the Continual Preparedness System, a proven solution for incident management, trusted by disaster management agencies across the world.

Continual Preparedness System (CPS), is a comprehensive incident management solution which has helped the DMD in incorporating disaster management plans which were previously on paper. The solution has offered modules for creating disaster management plans, statements of purpose, resource inventory & tracking and incident management based on IRS principles.

CPS comprises of multiple modules like Plan Manager (CEMPlanner), Resource Manager and Incident Manager which can function individually or cohesively across the

incident life cycle. The solution is built on the standards established by bodies like Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) USA, and incorporates various global standards for building and maintaining incident response plans and other documents. Further, the system also offers options to customise the plans and documents to tailor them for the needs of the land.

CPS also helps to track inventory items and provides cost visibility throughout all phases of incidents and daily operations through its Resource Manager module.

Apart from planning, inventory tracking and management, the solution offers a comprehensive dashboard to monitor the incident lifecycle from central control environments like the state and district Emergency Operation Centres.

RESULTS

The department now has visibility to all their plans, resources, and critical facilities and they have one common operating picture through the Integrated Geographic Information System (GIS) module. During an incident, they can activate these plans to get resource needs, track evacuation, mass care, search and rescue etc.

The department will also have the ability to deploy the resources based on closest location and track total cost for the incident. CPS provides the customer with a solution which guides them through the process that is best and proven to manage any disaster from beginning to end.

West Bengal Disaster Management Department is better equipped today to handle disasters. The records of previous disasters are archived in the system, so that probable consequences can be investigated thoroughly and there is better preparation for the next cycle.

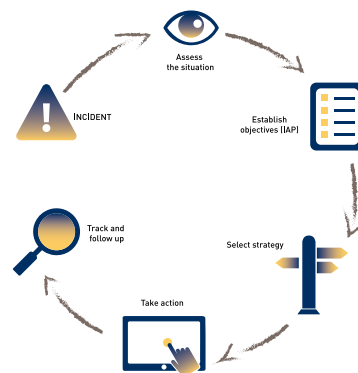
By quickly knowing what resources will be needed and where, the agencies are now able to dispatch resources in a matter of minutes, which enables faster evacuation, search and rescue, resulting in lesser impact on life and property.

Previstar's Continual Preparedness System has enabled the Disaster Management Department of West Bengal to realise their vision of creating a comprehensive incident management platform that puts their plans into action, tracks activities and brings multiple agencies on one collaborative platform. This in turn yields results in terms of effective disaster management and higher safety for the millions of people living in this region.

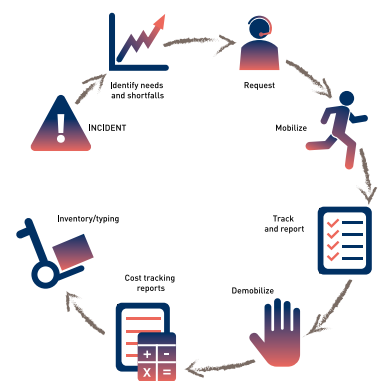
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