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# 'Preparedness vital to tackle disasters'

By Our Staff Reporter

**BANGALORE, AUG. 25.** What does it take to effectively manage an earthquake, a flood, drought and other disasters? This was the theme of a seminar on "Organisation and infrastructure for management of disasters," at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, here on Saturday.

The seminar was organised by the NIAS in association with the Alumni Association of Jadavpur University, Bangalore Chapter.

Speakers included academics, scientists, representatives of NGOs and IAS officers.

Inaugurating the seminar, the Minister for Home, Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge, said: "We are aware that an earthquake of 6.3 magnitude claimed only six lives in California, and more than 10,000 in Latur."

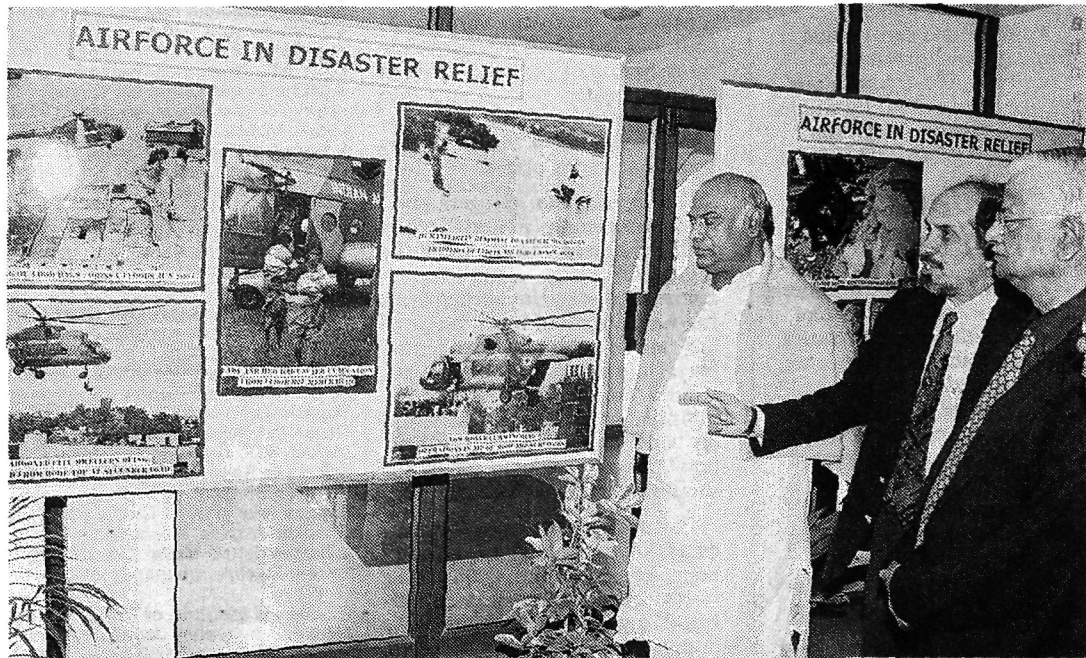
This difference in impact showed the disparity between the levels of preparedness of the developed countries and the developing nations in terms of prediction, early warning, mitigation and management of aid.

"It has become clear from the experiences of recent disasters, that neither financial nor human resources pose a problem; many organisations within and outside the country came forward to help," said Prof. Roddam Narasimha, Director, NIAS.

Dr. S.Parasuraman, Policy Advocacy Director, Action Aid, Bangkok, listed the obstacles to effective management of disasters in his pa-

per "Disaster preparedness and response- Issues in sustainable management mechanisms." They include failure to form appropriate institutional forms at all levels; lack of professional approach and too much ad hocism; pressure to export solutions from one country to another coupled with a desire to import the most modern technology; ignoring demonstrated cheaper alternatives in fa-

avour of the latest innovation; lack of a robust communication network, and inadequate access to information at all stages; corruption - decisions taken represent the interests of those in power; deliberate failure involve the local people, the ones most affected, in finding the best solution; effective public involvement from the beginning is critical, but has not happened so far.



**The Home Minister, Mr. Mallikarjun Kharge, Prof. Roddam Narasimha, Director, NIAS, and Dr. Raja Ramanna, nuclear scientist, taking a look at the photographs showing the help rendered by the IAF during natural calamities before the start of the seminar on 'Organisation and infrastructure for management of disasters', in Bangalore on Saturday. — Photo: K.Bhagya Prakash**