

CITIZENS' ACTION GROUP

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White Paper

On

Crises Management in Mumbai

Prepared in association with



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Crisis Management in Mumbai

(White Paper)

Executive Summary

Events of November 26, 2008 created considerable anger and anguish amongst the citizens. There have been number of discussions on what exactly happened, why did it happen and what should be done to prevent such happenings.

Although there may be a number of answers to these questions, there appears to be a general impression, probably well founded, that we fell short on the following:

- Emergency Preparedness
- State of the Art weaponry
- Coordination of different disaster management agencies
- Proper and Effective Communication
- Coordination, Command & Control

Although 26/11 was a case of external aggression above inadequacies will come in the way of handling effectively all forms of crisis or emergencies. The CAG, therefore, felt that we should make appropriate recommendations to Government in this regard covering each of these five points

In making the recommendations care has been taken to ensure that:

1. Recommendations are constructive
2. Recommendations are within the ambit of current laws
3. Recommendations are within the current Government Organization Structure
4. Recommendations are practical and implementable.
5. Recommendations are applicable not only in cases of external aggression but also in cases of natural calamities like earthquake, floods, tsunamis or pandemic diseases like Bird Flu.
6. Civil Society is involved in managing security of the city.

Although there are several Government organizations responsible in one way or the other for ensuring security of the citizens, it was felt that most of the responsibility was with the Police and MCGM with former for prevention and security and latter for relief and rehabilitation. In addition public support to both these organizations is essential. The recommendations are therefore submitted separately for each of these three groups.

General Recommendations

1. Public attitude needs a change. Although State has the final responsibility for security, citizens can help a great deal.
2. Communication between Authorities and Public needs substantial improvement. Communicators should be professionals and they should be properly briefed.
3. Government should issue a Statement of 'DOs & DON'Ts' for citizens, give it wide publicity and citizens should take it seriously.
4. Message that 'Security is Everyone's Business' should be widely spread in factories, business establishments, public entertainment places, schools, colleges, housing societies etc.

Recommendations for Police Organization

1. Form a special cell to handle crisis on 24x7 basis. Suggested name Directorate of Crisis Management (DCM)
2. Review & Upgrade all existing resources
3. Equip with latest arms and equipment
4. Pay special attention to Training
5. Form voluntary service corps

Recommendations for MCGM

1. Form a cell to handle crisis on 24x7 basis. Suggested name Directorate of Civil Defense (DCD)
2. Review & Upgrade all existing resources. More particularly Fire Brigade, Ambulances, Hospitals etc.
3. Acquire in adequate quantity and maintain in good order modern rescue, relief and rehabilitation equipment.
4. Organize groups of skilled volunteers from the Society.

Communication

Good & Effective Communication is essential. Just as no or little communication is harmful so can too much communication be. Communication in crisis should, therefore, be the responsibility of a trained Communication Professional. S(h)e should be always a part of the team of DCM and DCD to be familiar with issues and in crisis be properly briefed. Media handling should be left exclusively to such a professional.

Coordination, Command & Control

Chain of Command should be well established. Form a Crisis Management Committee under Additional Chief Secretary (Home) of Secretary (R&R), Municipal Commissioner, Police Commissioner, Head of the DCM and Head of the DCD (by whatever name called). This group should meet at least once a month and review our preparedness to handle crises of any nature. It should establish and maintain effective communication links with neighbouring States and also Central Government Agencies, whose help may be, required in case of major problems.

Crises Management in Mumbai (White Paper)

What happened in Mumbai on 26/11/2008 has been subject matter of a lot of discussion and public outcry. Many eminent personalities have expressed their opinion through print and electronic media. Although 'blame game' is usually undesirable, at least an agreement about what should be done to prevent occurrences like this in future is certainly desirable.

Towards the above end, Bombay First in collaboration with London First, recently organized a visit to Mumbai of some of the people who were actually involved in official capacity with handling the aftermath of 9/11 in US and 7/7 in UK. Our internal discussions and those with the overseas visitors brought out inadequacies in the following areas that merit immediate consideration.

1. Emergency preparedness.
2. State of the Art weaponry
3. Coordination of different disaster management agencies
4. Chain of Command and Control.

This paper attempts to make some constructive suggestions within the ambit of relevant current laws and regulations regarding each of the above, without in any way putting blame for the shortcomings on anyone.

Any recommendation regarding Mumbai must take into consideration the current social, physical and administrative milieu.

- (a) Mumbai is a small island (about 437 sq. km.) with a population of more than 15 million. Thus the population density is one of the highest in the world.

Many places are, therefore, ideal targets for physical assaults or difficult to evacuate/manage in case of natural catastrophes e.g., Railway Stations, Airport, Malls, Schools, Colleges, Stock Exchange, Retail Markets etc.

- (b) Road infrastructure is inadequate even in normal times.
- (c) There are very few helipads making intra city air transportation almost irrelevant.
- (d) Although it is a peninsula, water transport is virtually non existent making that escape route non available. However, the entry of intruders into land mass from the coast is easy.
- (e) Mumbai is administered by several 'service providers' reporting to different chains of command. The two most important ones (in this context) are MCGM Commissioner and Police Commissioner. MCGM Commissioner has dual responsibility; to an elected corporation and to the State Government while the Police Commissioner is answerable to the State Government. In addition, there is Central Railway and Western Railway which together transport millions of passengers a day, and the Airport Authority, all reporting to the Central Government. Absence of a single point authority is not ideal for crisis management but is a ground reality.
- (f) Public attitude towards security is at best cynical and at worst indifferent. Attitude of the authorities does not give much comfort either.
- (g) Disaster Management is legally the responsibility of the State Government {GRs of R&FD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Disaster Management) dated May 24, 2006 and April 5, 2007} but whatever we can see being done in Mumbai

is done by Police and MCGM whose powers, resources and training to handle the task have a large scope for improvement. Fortunately, GR of April 15, 2007 accepts the concept of a special administrative set up for disaster management for Mumbai and this paper leans heavily on it for Government accepting its recommendations.

Given the above situation, there can be several recommendations as indeed there are several causes for concern. Regrettably, we are not even at the starting point at the moment. To start with we need to urgently take steps to change our attitude towards security. We need to understand that what happened on 26/11/08 can happen again, what happened on 26/7/05 can also happen again and what has never happened earlier can happen for the first time. The last is the most important e.g., an earthquake, a tsunami, or a pandemic disease etc. can strike unannounced. We need to be prepared to face a crisis. That is the crux of this paper.

The recommendations herein contained are supplemental to the provisions of the two GRs mentioned above and in no way substitute any of its provisions. If approved, the recommendations will draw their legal sanction from these two GRs by appropriate Government fiat.

Recommendations.

Our objective should be two fold i.e., public attitude should change, and the authorities should be better prepared. One depends upon the other.

1. Public Attitude. This inadequacy has several causes, including our governance, where rule of law often gets subjugated to political expediency. It is, therefore essential that the Government and the citizens should take following actions.

- (a) Every Government Authority, and more particularly the police should give utmost importance both in words and action to security. Nobody should belittle security. We should follow the example of aircraft crew towards hijacking.
- (b) Every 'establishment' (defined later) should have a designated Communicator by whatever name called. In cases of emergency (s)he alone should communicate with the media.
- (c) Government must have a well drafted programme to convey to people through different media what are their responsibilities. This should be an ongoing effort and not one shot blitz.
- (d) Government should periodically issue a statement of 'Do's and Don'ts' for citizens in all local languages. This should be given wide publicity through print, electronic and outdoor media.
- (e) Importance of security and citizens' responsibilities should be stressed at every possible opportunity for oral, print or electronic communication by both the authorities and leading citizens.
- (f) Consideration should be given to appropriately emphasize the above point in schools and colleges. We can enlist the support of Interactors, Rotaractors, Scouts, Guides, Teaching Staff etc.

- (g) Housing Societies should be encouraged to hold meetings where knowledgeable trainers, trained by the Communicator should elaborate safety and security measures to be followed at all times.

Changing Public Attitude is a slow process and depends not only on the steps like those described above but most importantly how the 'people who matter' talk and behave when it comes to security. Government has the responsibility but people have a definite and important supportive role to play.

2. Government Preparedness. This is by far the most important part of the exercise. At the moment we do not appear to have the right structure to handle crisis. Only if we accept that, we can, and will be able to do something about it. If we add the external aggressions and natural calamities together, we have a mini war going on at all times. Our response should therefore, be tailored accordingly.

We have law and order police, we have a Disaster Management Department in the Mantralaya as well as in MCGM, and we have appropriate chains of command. Still no one believes that we can handle effectively another emergency. We need to do something about this AND do it fast.

Given the current official structure and the GRs referred to above, it is recommended that the ground responsibility for Crisis Management be shared between Police and MCGM, both arms reporting to the Additional Chief Secretary (Home) /Chief Secretary as detailed hereunder.

2a. We recommend that **Police Administration** establishes a Directorate of Crisis Management (DCM), by whatever name called, under the Commissioner of Police. It

should be headed by a very senior officer commensurate with the task and responsibilities hereafter detailed.

This Directorate should be responsible for:

- i. Be ready on 24x7 basis to handle any kind of emergency and reaching the scene of crisis within the shortest possible time after being notified.
- ii. Build a contingent of armed policemen thoroughly trained in use of latest weapons of all relevant types. They should be completely familiar with modern methods of communication and GPS. They should have the potential to absorb future technological developments in these and related fields. In other words, they should be much more than 'policemen' as commonly understood.
- iii. Build a Training School for the above group with good trainers. In manpower planning, adequate spare capacity should be provided for time required for continuous training.
- iv. Build adequate stock of arms and ammunition based upon their perception of threat. This includes fast cars, speed boats and helicopters. The aim is that we should never run out of resources.
- v. Organize a second tier of Home Guards (by whatever name called) who would assist where manpower is more important than weaponry. This contingent should also be well trained, well equipped and staffed. There should be a Training School for them as well. Everyone must undergo rigorous training on a continuous basis and take daily exercise to keep fit.

- vi. Upgrade all existing facilities relating to the above tasks and institute a mechanism for their constant review and upgradation.
- vii. Organize Voluntary Service Corps from the Society. There are many young people in any society who want to do something for the country. The key is to approach them. The task is to do that. College Principals would be a very good route. NGOs would also help. Youth Power is a thing we should harness quickly. This group can also help in gathering intelligence. NCC may be rejuvenated.
- viii. Take such steps as necessary and possible to prevent overcrowding.
Citizens should be made aware that overcrowding is a potential risk.
- ix. Provide trained and well equipped security personnel to large private installations on exceptional basis.
- x. Work as consultant to the State Government on all security matters including approval of sites for installations of strategic importance.

2b. We recommend that the **MCGM** establishes a Directorate of Civil Defence (DCD), by whatever name called, reporting to the Municipal Commissioner. It should be headed by a very senior officer of a rank commensurate with the responsibilities hereinafter detailed. (GR of April 5, 2007 stipulates Additional Municipal Commissioner as Member Secretary of a Committee formed under it).

This Directorate would be responsible for:

- i. Be ready on a 24x7 basis and reach the scene of crisis in the shortest possible time after being notified accompanied by ambulance(s), para-medics and fire brigade (as required)
- ii. Upgrade all existing facilities relating to rescue operations and institute a mechanism for their constant review and upgradation.
- iii. Organizing Expert Groups, whose members have volunteered and agreed to come at a short notice to help emergency rescue operations. These should cover areas such as first aid, medical, light engineering, physical help, communication etc. These Expert Groups should be well trained and kept well motivated.
- iv. Modernize Fire Brigade. Fire-fighting and rescue operation (which the fire brigade currently does) are always emergency operations. The Department must therefore be very well equipped with the latest state of the art equipment, well trained, sufficiently manned and effectively motivated.
- v. Build good Ambulance Service. What is available at the moment is woefully short – both in quantity and quality. We have to start from the very beginning.
- vi. Upgrade and tune all hospitals (Municipal, Government and Private) to cater to emergencies.
- vii. Equip itself with essential rescue material like rafts, dinghies, tents in adequate quantities. Arrangements should also be made for supplies of perishable materials like drinking water, food etc. at short notice from reliable, and public spirited suppliers.

3. There are certain points common to both DCM and DCD. They are:

3.1 All that has been said above is in addition to responsibilities cast by the GR of April 5, 2007. Most of those relate to post crisis situation. These (broadly translated from Marathi) are:

- (a) Regulate the number of vehicles to the scene of disaster
- (b) Prevent any person from visiting the scene of disaster
- (c) Provide help and security, as well as move debris
- (d) Provide shelter, food, drinking water, other essentials and medical aid to those affected.
- (e) Direct other organizations/institutions to take appropriate steps to help and provide security to those affected and move them elsewhere as required.
- (f) Seek and use manpower and equipment from other parts of the State to help those affected.
- (g) Seek expert help on disaster management.
- (h) Give preference to those affected in distribution of relief material.
- (i) Make sure that NGOs are impartial in their approach
- (j) Communicate properly with the affected community.
- (k) Comply with all directions of the State Government.

3.2 There are certain items in the above list which fall within the jurisdiction of the Police and others in the jurisdiction of the MCGM. As both will be involved in the rescue operation, it is essential that both DCM & DCD should go through the list and agree who will do what and reduce that to writing to establish the principle of accountability.

3.3 The above list refers to restrictions on visitors to scenes of disaster. These restrictions should also apply to the site-visits of VIPs till the relief work at such site is over. There should be general appreciation of the fact that such visits tend to distract the rescue teams from their assigned work.

3.4 The above list also has a reference to communication. This is a key function. As we will have two Directorates handling a crisis, both should build teams of professional communicators. Both must agree at the beginning of a rescue operation as to who will be responsible for communication, who will be the target audience and who will feed the data to the communicator. All this is critical.

4. One of the major responsibilities of the DCM & DCD would be to be known in the locality where they are situated. This would serve several purposes. It would assure citizens that the Government has taken the subject of crisis/disaster management seriously. It would assure citizens that there is help available immediately when disaster strikes. Finally, it would improve the image of police and MCGM in the minds of the citizens. Everyone knows that it is required.

5. **Private Sector** has a very important role to play in the success of DCM. There are several private security agencies and many large business houses have their own Security Organization. Whilst the former would be a customer for DCM's knowledge, the latter can be the supplier of knowledge to DCM. They are conversant with the latest security practices in the world and regularly interact with their counterparts both within and outside India. Their collective knowledge is a large store of information, which has to be harnessed for the benefit of the nation. DCM should work closely with both these categories of security professionals and exchange information on a routine basis. Heads

of large Security Organizations should have direct access at all times to the Head of DCM, and where appropriate, to Commissioner of Police.

6. Similarly, large NGOs have a definite role to play. Everyone knows, or has heard of NGOs help during war. If we accept that we have a virtual war like situation, we should organize help channels from NGOs to DCD on the same basis.

7. Although geographically Mumbai is a small city, it is quite complex and not easy for commuting. It is therefore essential for DCM and DCD to have **branches or establishments**. The number would depend upon the projected challenges and other considerations such as traffic, population density, crime rate etc. If a DCM contingent cannot immediately reach a scene of emergency then no amount of sophistication will be of any use. Same goes for DCD.

As DCM and DCD would be expensive propositions, there might be a need to restrict the number of their establishments. However, the location of the establishment is important. Since both have to work in close cooperation with each other, it might be appropriate to align their offices with either the MCGM Ward office or the Zonal Police office in the area. A beginning could perhaps be made by establishing one set of offices as a 'Test Market'.

8. A few points of detail need attention.

- DCM is meant to handle EMERGENCIES and not day to day problems. It should be on call from the normal police. Exceptions can, and should be made to ensure direct access in case of large calamities where no time can be wasted in formalities.

- DCM should at all times be provided with the latest equipment – related to fighting, IT or communication - in adequate quantities.
- DCM or DCD should install CCTVs wherever required and monitor them on a continuous basis.
- DCD should install sirens all over the city but capable of operation in a given geographical area as per the need. These sirens should be of sufficiently high decibel so that they can be heard clearly inside an air-conditioned office or residence.
- DCM & DCD (as appropriate) should institute a system or systems of warning the citizens according to the nature of calamity.
- DCM and DCD should check all its equipment on a regular basis and a log maintained.
- DCM and DCD should be provided with adequate number of reliable fast cars and all their vehicles should have sharp and distinctive sirens.

9. The next point is the **Chain of Command**. Fortunately, help in this regard has been provided by the GR dated April 5, 2007. It stipulates that for Mumbai City, the final authority for Disaster Management is Additional Chief Secretary (Home). We can take a cue from that and envisage the Crisis Management Team consisting of six officials, e.g.

- I. Chief Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary (Home)
- II. Secretary (R&R)
- III. Municipal Commissioner

IV. Police Commissioner

V. Head of DCM

VI. Head of DCD

In case of crisis, the Chief Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary (Home) will automatically assume the role of *Leader*, but can have the power to delegate that authority to another member of the Crisis Management Team such that there is no doubt as to who is the *Leader* on the spot.

10. There can be occasions when the magnitude of the crisis is such that the State's resources and capabilities require to be supplemented with those of the Central Government Agencies such as Army, Navy, Air Force, NSG, Coast Guards, Railways, etc. The Committee should be empowered to approach any of these agencies for assistance during such crisis. The representatives of such agencies should also be invited to participate in the periodic meetings of the Committee to share information and make necessary preparations for any likely crisis situation.

11. Importance of good communication within the Crisis Management Team cannot be overstressed. Fortunately, this team is small enough, so it must:

1. Meet at least once a month on a scheduled day or date and exchange all relevant information including where appropriate, Intelligence.
2. Be connected to each other 24x7 with modern communication device.
3. Establish its own rules of working including links with others, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph, and also specify when a routine matter becomes a crisis necessitating its intervention or taking over the responsibility.

4. Appoint a Communications Professional, who alone should be responsible to handle media. He/She should be familiar with the issues and be properly briefed.

Finally, and most importantly, the **government** should empower DCM and DCD with requisite **autonomy and authority** to enable them to do a good job of handling crisis of any nature and providing adequate security to citizens.