**Introduction to Hazards and Disaster**

**DEFINITION**

**Hazard and disaster**

Hazard is an event that has potential for causing injury/ loss of life or damage to property/environment.  
Disaster is an event that occurs suddenly/unexpectedly in most cases and disrupts the normal course of life in affected area. It results in loss or damage to life, property or environment. This Loss is beyond the coping capacity of local affected population/society. And therefore requires external help.  
For example: Imagine you are in the desert and earthquake occurs. Now earthquake is a hazard. Since in open desert it does not make in damage to you. No threat to your life. So it does not become disaster. It remains as a hazard. Now imagine earthquake in a city. There buildings collapse, people die or are injured, normal life is disrupted. This is a disaster situation.

**DEFINITION**

**Man-made disaster**

Fire, industrial, technological, transportation, nuclear accidents, biological disaster and war are all man-made disasters.

**DEFINITION**

**Natural disaster**

Many incidents occurring in nature are beyond human control. Preventing these and predicting their occurrence at a certain place is beyond science too. Naturally-occurring destructive incidents resulting in loss of human being and property are called natural disasters. Of these natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, droughts, cyclones, landslides, coastal erosion, avalanche are destructive.

**DEFINITION**

**Natural disaster**

The disasters are events caused by natural and man-made forces. These disasters wreck life and property when they strike. There are several types of disasters.

**DEFINITION**

**Disaster management**

Disaster management involves a continuous process of planning, organising, coordinating and implementing measures to avoid loss of life and property. The role of the authority is to frame safe disaster management methods to protect people and property. Disaster management cycle includes four stages namely preparation, response, recovery and mitigation.

**DEFINITION**

**Fire as a man-made disaster**

Fire is a disaster caused due to electrical short circuit, accidents in chemical factory, match and crackers factory, handling fire by the side of inflammable materials and near gas cylinders are also causing fire. Forest wild fires are a major disaster all over the world.

**DEFINITION**

**Man-made disaster**

Man-made disasters are usually the result of things going wrong in our society. They include: blackouts, hazardous material spills, air pollution, house fires, radiation leaks, food or water contamination, and industrial chemical releases. In the best case, they simply rob us of our modern luxuries for a brief time. In the worst case, they impact the entire ecosystem in which we live.

**DEFINITION**

**Natural disaster**

Natural disasters are events caused by natural forces. These disasters wreck life and property when they strike. There are several types of natural disasters. Earthquakes, cyclones, volcanic eruptions, etc., are the examples of natural disasters.

**DEFINITION**

**Disaster Response**

Disaster Response is the second phase of the Disaster Management cycle. It involves providing immediate assistance, assessing damage, continuing assistance and immediate restoration of infrastructure. The aim of emergency response is to provide instant assistance to maintain life and improve health.

**DEFINITION**

**Important terms used in disaster management**

Important terms used in disaster management:

1. **Hazards:**A phenomenon which may cause injury or loss of life, damage to property, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.
2. **Vulnerability:** The potential for loss to an individual, community or place because of a disaster that is affected by geographical as well as social conditions.
3. **Community:** People who live together in a village or urban areas, which can be identified as local group with a common way of life.
4. **First Responders:** Group of people who are immediately affected by a disaster, and are the first to respond and help to cope with it, before government or relief agencies can rush to the area.

**DEFINITION**

**General survival techniques**

1. During flood forecast it is important to stock up on first aid items, non-perishable foods, 3 gallons of water per person for 3 days, battery operated radio for weather reports, extra batteries, personal hygiene necessities.  
2. During drought period arrange fodder and drinking water for cattle in drought regions.  
3. During the earthquake be under the table, chair, kneel to the floor and protect yourself.  
4. In case of fire accident, call the nearby police station (No.100) as soon as the fire breaks.

**DEFINITION**

**Social Effects of Disasters**

Social effects of disaster include-

* Migration of people.
* Social festivals and public celebrations become uninteresting compared to earlier time.
* Social organisation become weaker due to the changes in social network