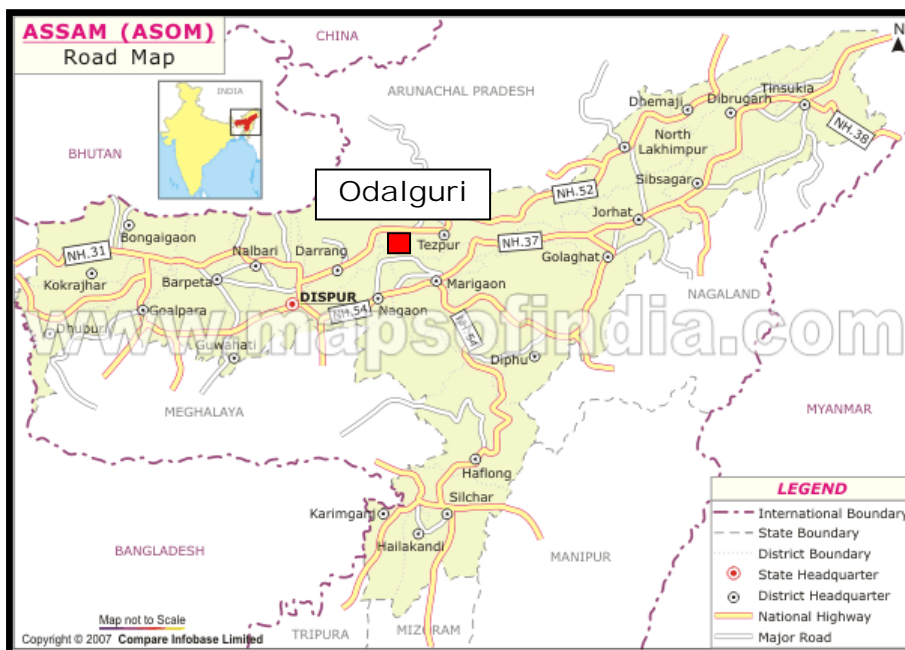


**A brief report on**  
**3-day training programme: Disaster Awareness, First Aid & School Safety**  
 jointly organized by  
**Disaster Management & Mitigation Unit (DMMU), New Delhi**  
 and  
**ADWR Project, Baptist Christian Hospital, Tezpur, Assam**  
 at  
**Odalguri, Assam.**  
**12-14 March 2009.**



The 3-day training & orientation program was inaugurated by the District Collector (DC) of Odalguri District. The Chief Medical Officer of the district hospital was also present during the program. 65 people in addition to participants from local community leaders, faith-based organizations, NGOs, teachers, youth leaders, community volunteers as well as students were present.

In the inaugural address the DC stressed on the need of collaborative efforts of this kind, to create mass awareness on disaster and provide training to local community and institutional leaders. He acknowledged that this is the first such initiative taken in the district to provide first aid and school safety training by an NGO.

In the key note address, Mr. Peniel Malakar of (Disaster Management & Mitigation Unit) Emmanuel Hospital Association (EHA), Delhi highlighted the need of training local community volunteers as First Responders for any primary disasters, being equipped to handle first aid; and stressed the importance of conducting district wide school safety training programmes. He also briefly highlighted EHA's involvement in major national disasters since 1991 and the range of training programmes it provides. He assured of EHA's cooperation and support for future training programmes in the district.

## The 3-day training program was conducted in three parts with different focused groups

### Part I: General Disaster Awareness program

Though Assam is one of the most high disaster risk states in the northeastern region, joint initiative with an integrated approach (to disaster awareness & sensitization, first aid training and school safety program) involving local community was first of its kind in the district headquarter by an NGO.

**Odalguri** was a small town as sub-divisional headquarters in Assam under Darrang District. But after signing of Bodo Accord to end the demand for a Separate Bodoland State, an Autonomous District called Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD) was created and Odalguri district became one of the four Districts under BTAD when the new district was formally inaugurated on June 14, 2004. As of 2001 India census, Odalguri town had a population of 14,893. Odalguri has an average literacy rate of 74%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 80%, and female literacy is 67%. In Odalguri, 12% of the population is under 6 years of age.

In addition to natural disasters the area also has substantially higher number of incidents of injuries due to road & rail accidents, bomb blasts, gun shots etc. The presentation, '*Importance of Disaster Preparedness*' helped participants know and understand various hazards locally, nationally as well as from global perspective. The presentation was basically focused on addressing local needs and 40 (average) participants from the local community, NGOs, teachers, students and local leaders from faith-based organizations benefited from it.



### The presentation outline as follows-

1. Disasters – meaning, types of disasters: major/minor natural, major/minor man made etc.
2. Disaster trends with statistics and graphs – globally, Asia and India – Assam – locally
3. Multi hazard maps of India – increasing trends of disasters in India – loss of lives and properties – damages.
4. Disaster impacts – socio-economically, culturally – displacements due to major floods and earthquakes in ASSAM and NE India.
5. Need of disaster preparedness and how to plan
6. Disaster preparedness- a state subject: national level preparedness, state level, district and local level - role of state (Assam) - various relevant departments
7. Role of non-state players: INGOs/NGOs
8. Role of EHA as NGO in disaster risk reductions – EHA's disaster management strategies.
9. Role of local communities in disaster preparedness alongside district level administration.
10. Some tips for disaster preparedness plans.

### Teaching materials-

1. Power point presentation.



2. Pamphlets and brochures on Fire Safety, Earthquake Safety, Disaster Preparedness etc. (govt of India, govt of Delhi etc.)
3. CDs with major disaster intervention programmes of EHA.

### Expectations from the presentation-

At the end of the presentation the participants -

1. should be aware of the hazards, dangers of disasters in the world, India and the region (Assam) affecting their lives and livelihoods.
2. should realize that disasters can affect them directly and or indirectly.
3. should realize that it is important to know the impacts of disasters and to begin to take mitigative and preventive measures locally.

### Part II: First Aid training program

The first aid training program was on participatory and interactive basis, getting to know the scenarios needing help from the participants and the local practices involved in handling the casualty.

Video clippings, drawings, real life experiences, first aid kits, manikins, practical approach, subject related games, ice breakers, hands on practice and experiences of the trainers were the components of the training program. The participants counted to about 50 (average) for the first aid training program.

At the end of this short time first training program, the participants would have acquired the knowledge of the effectiveness and complications of carefully and quickly handling the casualty during emergencies. The participants will be able to identify, prioritize and handle the situation effectively. The participants will be able to provide Basic first aid for wounds, bleeding, fractures, snake bites, poisoning, electric shock, burns, drowning and unconsciousness and carry out the methods taught to transfer the casualty to the hospital. The participants will be effective in making splints and stretchers with the help of locally available materials.



The participants were benefited by this first aid orientation and training program sensitizing them as to the important role that one can play in reducing injuries and saving lives. For effective knowledge transfer, a training program on first aid with practical demonstration and practice for a smaller group of 30 with expanded duration will be very ideal.

### Part III: Orientation workshop on School Safety:

Odalguri district of Assam has history of ethnic violence in addition to number of natural disasters like flood and earthquake. The purpose of the one-day workshop on **school safety** is to create awareness and sensitize teachers and school authorities. The program was held in the campus of a high school in Odalguri district headquarter. Approximately 50 participants including senior students attended the program and discussed the following topics.



1. Understanding disaster situation in the school
2. Importance of disaster preparedness and response in schools
3. Preparedness plan for schools in each hazard situation.

The group was divided into five teams and given a disaster term to each group. It was observed that senior students were more responsive than the teacher in preparing the plan for their schools. Documents like

Anjar school tragedy, Kumbhakonam school fire were used to engage the participants in a thinking process to come out with a plan for the school safety. Handouts on school crisis response team functions, and what to do before, during and after an earthquake have enabled the participants to contribute on school preparedness plan. Each group has come up with a school safety plan on their respective hazards like floods, earthquake, terrorist attack, accidents and fire.

It is very important to ensure that the disaster preparedness plans for school safety, hospital safety and disaster risk reduction programmes must be pro actively placed in the district along with the local district administration and the state as India being part of the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** of United Nations Development Program.

**Conclusion:**

Odalguri has basic potentials of hazards like malaria, road and rail accidents, hostage crisis, earthquake and other natural or man made disasters. The local community is keen to volunteer and take up training programmes for disaster preparedness and response. ADWR project has a great presence in the district among the largest mainline faith based organizations as well as public and private institutions. They also have a very good rapport with the local administration for all potential supports and cooperation for future disaster risk reduction programmes and joint implementation of government community and health development programmes.

The district administration has before it a mountainous tasks to develop the new born district facing multiple challenges of balancing various ethnic groups and developmental programmes.

EHA's Disaster Management & Mitigation Unit is willing to provide all possible help and support in the area of disaster risk reductions.

Coordinated, collated by

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