



*Ambassador of Japan
New Delhi*

9 March, 2021

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Mr. Satya Narayan Pradhan, IPS
Director General
National Disaster Response Force

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Dear Mr. Pradhan,

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The forthcoming 11th March 2021, commemorates the 10th Anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent unprecedented tsunami, which claimed close to 20,000 lives. On this solemn occasion, I recall the kindness of the people of India, who offered their heartfelt prayers and support for the people, thousands of kilometers away from their home, and would like to express my deepest gratitude, on behalf of the Government and the people of Japan.

Amid such acts of kindness, the courageous search and rescue mission conducted by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was truly exceptional, and will always be remembered. In this first overseas deployment in its history, 46 members of NDRF entered the Town of Onagawa in Miyagi Prefecture, Tohoku region, where 85% of the buildings were swept away by a 14.8m high tsunami, and more than 800 people lost their precious lives. They engaged in search and rescue work in the town, from 28 March to 8 April 2011, and finally salvaged remains of 7 victims from the mud and debris in the aftermath.

The dedication of 46 NDRF members left a strong and touching impression on the people of Onagawa. Their support was not restricted to search and rescue actions. For instance, Mr. Aoyama Takahiro, then Secretary General of the Onagawa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was able to clear away piles of debris from the Chamber's office with the NDRF's helping hands, when he was struggling to reopen the Chamber to facilitate business recovery. He told us, "It was a lot of work. The members of NDRF were really mighty. We were very grateful for their help in what we could not have done alone".

10 years since then, the efforts for the reconstruction of Tohoku region are steadily moving forward, and I am pleased to inform you that the Town of Onagawa has also shown a notable rebirth, as a "top runner" in reconstruction. The residents of Onagawa decided to retain the charm of the town, living in harmony with the sea by eliminating the need for tall tide walls, while making it sure Onagawa will be reborn resiliently and vibrantly. Just a few months after the tsunami, a sixth grade student in Onagawa at that time, had written in a poem, "Onagawa was not washed away; it was reborn as a new Onagawa". Now, Onagawa has actually achieved this, with the NDRF's timely and courageous assistance.

निदेशक (परिचालन) के निजी सचिव

Dy. Inspector General (OPS)

PS to IG, NDRF

की संख्या.....

Dy. No. 326

की संख्या.....

PS to IG, NDRF
Date: 9/3/21



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New Delhi

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Mr. Satya Narayan Pradhan, IPS
Director General
National Disaster Response Force

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Here is another episode I would like to share with you. Efforts to pass on the lessons learnt from the Great East Japan Earthquake to future generations have been underway across the Tohoku region, by preserving the buildings destroyed and shipping vessels pushed up on the land by the tsunami, and so on. In Onagawa, the old Onagawa Police Box, which was uprooted from its base by the tsunami, is preserved as a Disaster Memorial Facility, and reminds us of the magnitude of the tsunami. There, the search and rescue activities conducted by the NDRF are inscribed on the wall panels of the observation deck, and memorialized for eternity.

The NDRF also left bonds between India and Onagawa. In 2016, Onagawa, for the first time, hosted "Namaste India in Onagawa", a chapter of "Namaste India", one of the biggest Indian cultural events in Japan. Since then, Namaste India in Onagawa has been held every year, though unfortunately it was not possible to hold it in 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19.

What I have mentioned above are just a few prominent examples and legacies that the rescue team of NDRF accomplished.

In appreciation of their dedicated and tireless activities of 10 years ago, and the achievement of the relationship and friendship between Onagawa and India, I would hereby like to express my most profound appreciation and admiration to the entire rescue team of the NDRF, consisting of:

Sh. Alok Avasthy, DIG (Team Leader)

Sh. Pankaj Kumar, Commandant

Dr. Ashish Sharma, SMO

Sh. Gopi Chand, DC/GD

Sh. Parmanand Jha, AC/GD

Insp/GD Sabhajeet Yadav

Insp/GD Chandra Prakash Joshi

Insp/GD Deepak Kumar Singh

Insp/GD Ajay Kumar Dwivedi

Insp/GD Sunil Kumar

HC/GD Bhagwat Singh Karki

HC/GD Pyar Singh Rana

HC/GD Sukhdev Singh Thakur

HC/GD Rahwanand

HC/GD Ganesh Singh

HC/GD Munish Singh

HC/GD Ramesh Minj

HC/Med Sunil Kumar

HC/Med Pawan Singh

HC/RO Balwan Singh

HC/GD (DH) Paramjeet Singh

HC/GD (Dh) Hardeep Singh Bhangu
HC/GD Ganga Singh Rawat
HC/GD Kanwar Singh
HC/GD Rakesh Rawat
HC/GD Jabbar Khan
HC/GD Sukhjinder Singh
CT/GD Pritam Singh
HC/GD Bharat Lal
HC/GD Uttam Saha
HC/GD Amrendra Pandey
HC/GD Baswaraj T.
HC/GD Ganesh Chand Gupta
CT/GD Gyan Prakash Mishra
CT/GD Suresh Singh
CT/GD Chandveer Singh
CT/GD Uday Pratap Singh
CT/GD Soban Singh
HC/GD Amin Singh
CT/GD Dinesh Singh
HC/GD Manohar Singh
CT/GD Akhil Kumar
CT/GD Dharendra Yadav
CT/GD Vakil Yadav
CT/GD Harish Chand
CT/GD Jitendra Singh

I wish that NDRF will continue achieving its highest aspirations for protecting lives of the people in India as well as globally.

Sincerely yours,



SUZUKI Satoshi

Ambassador of Japan to India