

School Shakeout Preparedness Drill 2013

The School Shakeout Preparedness Drill was initiated by GeoHazards Society to commemorate the Kangra Earthquake of 1905 which killed over 19,000 people on April 4th 1905, as it is important to keep the memories of past disasters alive to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. Since 2009, we have been organising the School Shakeout preparedness drills in various States to mark the anniversary of the Kangra earthquake and to get schools in earthquake prone regions started on their path towards preparedness. Starting with a drill across a few north Indian states in which 10,000 people took part, the number of people taking part has grown to 28,410 in April 2012.

With the recent reminders of our exposure to hazards coming in from prepared nations such as New Zealand and Japan, it is imperative that we in India start taking swift steps towards preparedness. The School Shakeout Preparedness Drill is an earthquake drill based on a scenario earthquake happening near enough to affect the school. **At 11:00 am**

on the 4th of April every year, all the students and staff of many schools in hazard prone areas in India practice the Drop, Cover, Hold and then evacuate to a pre-decided safe location, and carry out the necessary post evacuation procedures. This is an initiative of GeoHazards Society, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, and GeoHazards International.

Originally, the drill was organised with Tibetan schools in earthquake zones which soon spread to other schools in earthquake prone States. In 2009, over 10,000 students in Tibetan Schools in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Meghalaya took part in the drill. With the addition of students from Tibetan Schools in Jammu & Kashmir, and West Bengal, the number



1 Some posters put up at the participating schools.



of students participating in the drill rose up to 16000 in 2010 and 17500 in 2011. In 2012 the included non-Tibetan schools from Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh taking the total number of participating students and teachers went up to 28410. School children in about 200 Schools (in J & K, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh), and couple of schools in Thimphu, Bhutan took part in this mass earthquake preparedness activity.

This year the School Shakeout Preparedness Drill going to be held at 11:00 am IST on Thursday the 4th April 2013. This year, the drill is taking a new dimension after the State Governments of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana have selected model schools in the State to be trained to take part in the drill from this year onwards. GeoHazards Society has carried out trainings in Himachal Pradesh (4 districts, 15 schools in each District and 15 from Shimla city) and Haryana (22 Districts, 3 schools in each district) for the selected schools. Thus, it is expected that over 325 schools will take part in this mass preparedness drill on 4th April. It is our earnest effort to spread the important message of safety in schools across the country.