



A TIBETAN SCHOOL SHAKE-OUT DRILL

Many parts of North and North-east India are among the most earthquake-prone regions in the world. On April 4, 1905, an earthquake epicentered near the present-day Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh turned out to be the worst killer earthquake to occur in India so far. This 7.8 Magnitude quake rocked the Kangra region, claiming 19,727 lives and devastating Mcleodganj (now Dharamsala), Kangra, Dehradun and many other towns and villages.

According to the Seismic Hazard Zoning Map of India, the States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are located in Seismic Zones IV (High risk) and Zone V (Maximum risk). Delhi itself is located in Zone IV. Scientists believe that the next major earthquake to strike in the Himalayan region could affect the whole of North India.



Children practicing for the Shake Out to be held on 4th April '09

In many daytime earthquakes, it has been noted that a major percentage of victims are children. This has been mainly due to lack of awareness about the earthquake risk and also due to unprepared schools. School administrators, staff, children and parents/guardians must be aware of what is to be done before, during and after a natural disaster. As an important first step towards raising awareness about earthquake safety among school children, a Tibetan School Shake-Out drill is being organized in all Tibetan schools in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Meghalaya to mark the 104th anniversary of the Kangra earthquake.

On April 4, 2009 at 10 a.m., all students and staff of all these Tibetan Schools will participate in the earthquake preparedness drill. They will

- DROP to the ground,
- Take COVER beneath a sturdy desk or table, and
- HOLD ON to it until the shaking stops.

After this drill, they will safely evacuate from the school building.

It is important to mark anniversaries of such devastating events in our history so that we learn from them and do not repeat the mistakes we made in the past. It is unfortunate to note that the tenth anniversary of the 1999 March 29th Chamoli earthquake was not marked and may soon be forgotten.

The purpose of this Tibetan School Shake-out is to help all Tibetan Schools in the above States to be aware of the earthquake hazard and start them on the path of preparedness. For many of these schools, the preparation for the Shake-out has been their first brush with disaster safety and will culminate in the preparation of a comprehensive and dynamic school disaster risk management plan. This drill is a collaborative effort of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA), GeoHazards International, GeoHazards Society alongwith Tibetan schools under the Central Tibetan School Administration, Sambhota Tibetan School Administration and Tibetan Children's Village.

No task is more important than creating a safe learning environment for our nation's children. Geohazards International (GHI) and GeoHazards Society (GHS) have been striving to complement the efforts of various State Governments in all aspects relating to school safety. GHI and GHS had earlier provided technical support to the Delhi Government to carry out a comprehensive school safety programme including building retrofit at the Ludlow Castle School which is currently being replicated in the State and at the National level.

Participants in the Tibetan Schools Shake-Out Drill

GeoHazards International (GHI)

GeoHazards Society (GHS)

Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA)

Schools under Sambhota Tibetan School Administration (STSA)

Schools under Tibetan Children's Village (TCV)

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