

**Fact Sheet**

U.S. Department of State
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U.S.-India Disaster Relief Initiative

The United States and India committed themselves to aiding those affected by the December 2004 tsunami's devastation and, through the creation of the Tsunami Core Group, demonstrated their willingness and desire to be full-fledged partners in the relief operations. Recognizing that the combined efforts of the U.S. and India significantly enhanced the world's response to the tsunami disaster of December 26, 2004, the President and the Prime Minister announced today the launch of the U.S.-India Disaster Relief Initiative (DRI) to contribute to disaster preparedness and future relief operations.

The Disaster Relief Initiative will build upon the existent, strong civilian relationship between the two governments in disaster relief, involving the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs. Through the Initiative, the U.S. and India seek to increase their ability to respond to disasters in an integrated fashion, partnering with other U.S., Indian and UN agencies, as well as international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other governments as appropriate. The U.S. and India will continue to work together with the regional community on the development and implementation of early warning system programs.

As mandated by the New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship, the U.S. and India will strengthen their military capabilities to respond effectively to future disasters by conducting joint and combined military exercises. U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) and the Indian Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) will be the respective military leads in each country to establish a dialogue and identify additional military training needs, skills-development requirements, and other challenges to a speedy and effective disaster response.

As part of the Disaster Relief Initiative, the U.S. and India agree to cooperate to help build disaster response capabilities in other countries. They would also share best practices and experiences with a view to strengthening a regional response to natural disasters.



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