

Press Release

Swat: () The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with the GLOF-II project sponsored by green climate fund and implemented by UNDP, federal ministry of climate change and Govt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa observed “National Resilience Day” at University of Swat (Charbaigh) in remembrance of the Martyrs of October 8, 2005 Earthquake. The objective of the event was to express solidarity with the bereaved families who lost their family members on 8th October.

Mr. Judat Ayaz, Additional Secretary Ministry of Climate Change, Project Director GLOF-II Was the chief guest on the occasion. Director Disaster Risk Management, PDMA Mrs Zuhra Nigar, UNDP GLOF-II Provincial Coordinator Fahad Bangish, Vice Chancellor, University of Swat, Representative United nation humanitarian organizations , academia, large number of Students along with representatives from INGOs participated in the event.

Chief Guest Mr. Judat Ayaz said on this day we aim to raise awareness on the devastating impacts of climate change induced disasters with a special focus on disaster resilience. Considering the fact that Pakistan is ranked as 8th most vulnerable country to extreme weather events on the Global Risk Index, working towards building a disaster resilient Pakistan is a key priority for us. Currently, 07 million people in Pakistan are vulnerable to GLOFs resulting from climate change. Initiatives such as the GLOF-II Project show our commitment towards building a more disaster resilient Pakistan, aiming to further empower communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthen public services to lower the risk of disasters, and improve community preparedness and disaster response capacities while targeting 08 districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

Speaking on the occasion Director Disaster Risk Management Mrs Zuhra Nigar said that in the 2005 earthquake, northern parts of the province were badly affected. Muzaffarabad was the hardest hit area mainly because the epicenter of earthquake was just 19 kilometers (12 miles) to its northeast. The commemoration of the day is further aimed to create awareness in stakeholders about disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management. The Authority also intends to involve all stakeholders to make Disaster Resilient Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She added that risk and uncertainties are increasing in the region due to climate change, greater frequency of extreme climatic events, extreme minimum and maximum temperature and increased incidence of temperature influenced disasters& pests. The world in general and Pakistan in particular is suffering as a result of climate change. She said, due to uneven distribution of monsoon rains, floods and famine are the fate of this region. In addition to these hazards, GLOF

is another emerging phenomenon, observed especially in Chitral District (having a glacial cover of 4000 sq.km, the second largest glacial inventory in Pakistan after GB). The incidents of GLOF have posed some serious threats and challenges to the mountainous communities in the far-flung areas in recent times.

Director further said, today many people of our province are living in earthquake and disaster prone regions and many communities are at risks from cyclone and other extreme weather events. If we are going to defeat climate change and address its impacts, we need to work together. PDMA is trying their level best to achieve the goal of resilience in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

National Project Manager GLOF 2 Miss Misbah Zafar said Climate change impacts like Glacial Lake Outburst Floods pose a direct threat to our local communities. We support the Government of Pakistan in tackling environmental challenges, natural resource management, environmental protection, and climate change mitigation. Together with the Ministry of Climate Change, we work on integrating government priorities to the climate change agenda

Director General PDMA said that natural disasters phenomenon cannot be stopped but can be reduced by taking DRR measures. As a nation there is a need to take the ownership and readiness for any volunteer work. He further said PDMA in its proactive role, is taking steps to nullify or manage disaster risks before it results in catastrophe. In this regard, actions are taken in the domains of risk assessments, mitigation and preparedness. The observance of National Resilience Day is an occasion to evaluate and reiterate commitment at making greater preparedness to avert or face natural calamities and by showing resolve for disaster risk reduction. He further emphasized that we need to reduce disaster risk through prevention and mitigation along with preparedness.

In order to enhance the capacity to deal with the disasters like earthquake, GLOF and other natural disasters mock drills simulation exercise was also conducted in collaboration with the Rescue 1122 including the community members.

Spokesperson PDMA KP said, the series of activities are planned for the month of October. PDMA conducts multiple activities in October to create public awareness about natural disasters and climate change adaptation.

The Ceremony concluded with prayers for the departed souls of disaster victims and safety of Pakistan.

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