

PM addresses International Conference on Disaster resilient Infrastructure

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Notion of "resilient infrastructure" must become a mass movement: PM

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The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the opening ceremony of International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure through video conference. Prime Minister of Fiji, Prime Minister of Italy, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom were present on the occasion. Participants from national governments, experts from international organisations, academic institutions and the private sector also participated in the conference.

Terming the current situation unprecedented, the Prime Minister said, “We are witnessing an event that is being termed a once-in-a-hundred-year disaster. COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that in an interdependent and interconnected world, country-rich or poor, in the east or west, north or south- is immune to the effect of global disasters.”

The Prime Minister noted that the pandemic has shown how the world can come together. “The pandemic has shown us that innovation to address global challenges can come from anywhere” said the Prime Minister. For this, Shri Modi called for fostering a global ecosystem that supports innovation in all parts of the world, and its transfer to places that are most in need. The year 2021 promises to be a year of swift recovery from the pandemic, he hoped.

The Prime Minister cautioned that the lessons from the pandemic must not be forgotten. They apply to not only public health disasters but other disasters as well. He said that It will take sustained and concerted efforts to mitigate climate change.

The Prime Minister stressed that Countries that are making large investments in infrastructure, such as India,

must ensure that this is an investment in resilience, and not in risk. Many infrastructure systems- digital infrastructure, shipping lines, aviation networks- cover the entire world and the effect of disaster in one part of the world can quickly spread across the world. Cooperation is a must for ensuring the resilience of the global system.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the year 2021 is a particularly important year. We are approaching the mid-point of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris agreement, and the Sendai Framework. The expectations from COP-26, to be hosted by the UK and Italy later this year, are high. This partnership on resilient infrastructure must play its important role in helping meet some of those expectations, he said.

The Prime Minister elaborated on key priority areas. First, CDRI must embody the central promise of the Sustainable Development Goals, that is, "leave no one behind". This means that we have to put the concerns of the most vulnerable nations and communities first. Second, we must take stock of the performance of some of the key infrastructure sectors - particularly health infrastructure and the digital infrastructure, that played a central role during the pandemic. What are the lessons from these sectors? And how can we make them more resilient for the future? Third, in our quest for resilience, no technological system should be considered too basic or too advanced. The CDRI must maximize the demonstration effect of the application of technology. And finally, the notion of "resilient infrastructure" must become a mass movement galvanizing the energies of not just the experts, and formal institutions, the Prime Minister concluded.

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