

Fire Service forms earthquake response team

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Online Desk : The Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) has formed a 60-member special force to ensure quick response during major disasters like earthquakes in Dhaka, said its Director General Brigadier General Md Zahid Kamal. Speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of a two-day training workshop organised for the members of the Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (CRAB), he said special teams comprising 20 members are also being formed in each divisional city to strengthen disaster response capabilities.

The DG said the newly formed special force comprising selected firefighters from across the country will be provided with necessary training and equipment at Purbachal in the capital. “This team will be ready to respond quickly during major fires or earthquakes,” he added. Considering the earthquake risks, the Fire Service’s operational division will be relocated to Mirpur, he said. Among others, CRAB President Mirza Mehedi Tamal, General Secretary MM Badsha, Joint Secretary Niaz Ahmed Labu, Finance Secretary Aminul Islam, Organising Secretary Sajjad Mahmud Khan, Office Secretary Wasim Siddiqui, Training Secretary Jasim Uddin, FSCD Director (Training, Planning and Development) Lt Col MA Azad Anwar, and Senior Staff Officer of the media cell Md Shahjahan Shikder were present.

“We may also be affected during earthquakes, but we cannot let the operational rescue team be affected. Therefore, we are separating the commanding force and shifting the training and development directorate to Purbachal,” the DG said. He said the current manpower, equipment, and number of stations in Dhaka and Chattogram are not sufficient compared to the population. “We need to increase these to respond effectively during disasters.” The DG said proposals were sent to relevant ministries to include fire safety awareness in school textbooks though it could not be added this year.

He said 8 to 10 fire stations in Dhaka could be damaged during a major earthquake. “Fire Service is a service-oriented organization that works under risk to save lives and property.” Referring to Fire Service’s participation in rescue efforts in Myanmar alongside the Bangladesh Army, he noted the appreciation and recognition they received for their professionalism. “We regularly post awareness content on our Facebook page and have conducted fire safety campaigns in 35 ares in Dhaka,” he added.