

Cabinet to decide on jobs to disaster-hit families: CM

The Uttarakhand government will make provisions for providing jobs to the dependents of the families who have lost earning members or head in the natural disaster, Chief Minister Harish Rawat said on Thursday.

Rawat said the decision to provide jobs to at least a member of the affected families in the event of the death of the earning members or head would be considered during the upcoming Cabinet meeting. “We will bring the proposal at the Cabinet meeting. We have also decided to raise the government grant for fully damaged houses from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh. The additional Rs 1 lakh will be provided from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund,” he said while reviewing the preparedness of the Department of Disaster Management.

The Chief Minister announced raising ex gratia amount from Rs 3,800 to Rs 5,000 for the affected persons. “We will also constitute a disaster relief fund so that funds could be raised immediately in times like this,” said Rawat.

He added that temporary arrangements would be made for those living in relief camps. “I have directed the district administration to look into the matter so that persons living in camps could be shifted to rented houses,” said Rawat.

He said incentives would be given to villagers for making compulsory abodes in mountains so that these could be used as shelters during disasters. Of late, villagers had stopped migrating to these abodes (chaniyas) during the summer.

The Chief Minister also stressed on perfecting the response to disasters so that there were minimal casualties. He said two more battalions under the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) would be raised.

On the other hand, Secretary, Disaster Management, Shailesh Baiguli said the work was on to reopen broken roads and repair damaged water schemes. “Out of the 87 water schemes that were damaged in the disaster, around 67 have been repaired and electricity has been restored to 1,127 places,” he said. Uttarakhand Congress president Kishore Upadhyay and in charge of Congress affairs in the state Ambika Soni attended the meeting.