

AIR Spotlight: Operation Dost

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio News on air. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation.

This article is about the discussion on: **Operation Dost & NDRF's Commendable Rescue Efforts.**

Participants

1. Atul Karwal: Director General, NDRF
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Context - On February 6 2023, a massive earthquake of magnitude 7.8 on the Richter scale struck southern Turkey and northwest Syria. The earthquake resulted in the loss of over 40,000 lives and left more than 1 million people homeless. In response, India launched "[Operation Dost](#)" for assistance to the quake-hit countries.

Operation Dost

Under "Operation Dost" India sent search and rescue teams, especially three self-sustaining teams of NDRF consisting of over 150 specially trained personnel, a field hospital, materials, medicines and equipment to Turkey. Also, four-wheeled vehicles and trucks along with dog squads were sent along with the three teams that were airlifted by Indian Air Force (IAF) C17 Globemaster transport aircraft from the Hildon Air Base, Ghaziabad to the Adana Airport in Turkey.

- The specialised equipment allowed for the detection, location, access and rescue of people trapped under collapsed structures. The [National Disaster Response Force \(NDRF\)](#) teams worked to extricate live victims from under the rubble.
- The teams used deep radars to pick up feeble sounds like the heartbeat or the sound of a person. Also, teams deployed antenna and satellite phones for communication.
- India provided Garuda Aerospace's Droni drones to the most affected areas to identify those trapped under rubble, along with modified Kisan drones carrying medications, food, and supplies.
- The Indian team was among the first teams which reported there and the fourth largest contingent in Turkey which had got support and assistance from over 80 countries.

Challenges faced by the Rescue Teams -

The extreme weather conditions (sub-zero temperatures) and language barrier were among the other challenges faced by the rescue teams. An interpreter was needed for communication with the locals.

- NDRF teams braved all odds and brought emotive people-to-people connections between the two nations. A strong relationship was built between rescuers and locals. The teams saved lives and won hearts.

Previous assistance by NDRF to natural disaster-hit countries-

There is a protocol and checklist based on which the teams are prepared very quickly by the NDRF. India has the reach and capacity to provide assistance in any disaster, like the unprecedented pandemic.

- In 2011, a [Tsunami](#) wreaked havoc in Japan. Apart from providing relief materials, India sent 46 members of the NDRF for search and rescue to the town of Onagawa. It was its first overseas rescue operation.
- In the 2015 Nepal earthquake, NDRF deployed over 700 rescuers for search and rescue operations.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - The World is One Family

Operation Dost is an example of India's dedication to humanity and its commitment to stand by nations in distress. India has taken the initiative of helping out other countries as it believes in the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. This philosophy imparts a sense of oneness to our common humanity, our common developmental goals and our common quest for rule-based global order and international peace. It conveys succinctly that we prevail or perish together as one family.

- India has provided assistance to other nations regardless of its relations with them otherwise.
- India has earlier also sent relief materials and search operations of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to countries in South-East Asia, South Asia, Eastern Africa and South Africa.