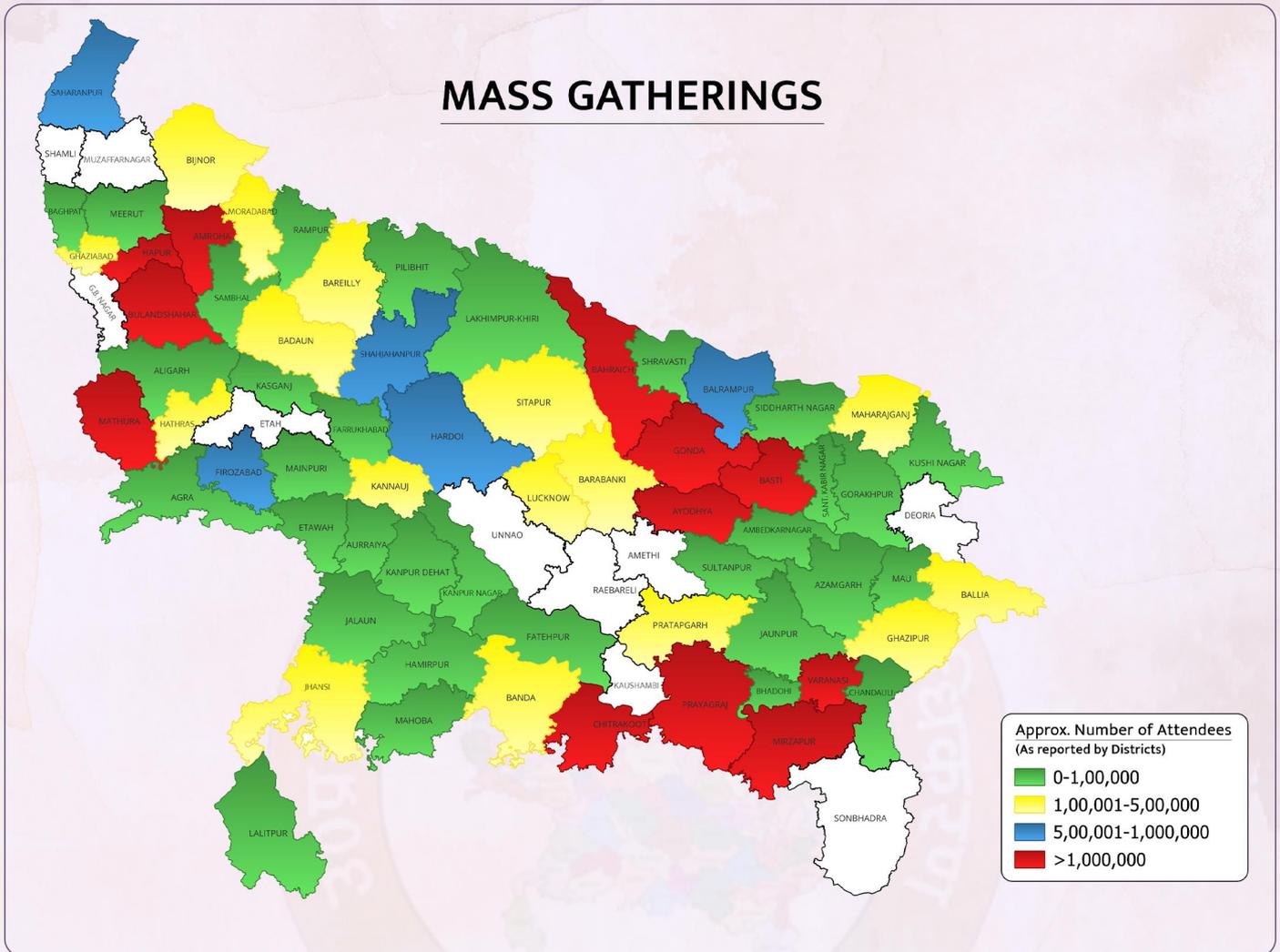**DEC 2025**

AFTER ACTION REPORT

STATE LEVEL SYMPOSIUM–CUM–TABLE TOP EXERCISE ON

CROWD MANAGEMENT, DROWNING, COLD WAVE & FIRE INCIDENTS

22–23 DECEMBER 2025

1. Introduction

All 75 Districts of Uttar Pradesh have events of mass gathering of different magnitude, a small trigger may lead to situations which may be difficult to control. Crowd Management of such events is a complex process which require integration and coordination of all stakeholder i.e., Administration, police, F&ES, Health Services, Central & State response forces etc. Cold wave, drowning and fire accidents are also important hazards which effect rural and urban population.

2. Hazards

a. Mass gatherings in the State

(i) The state is a confluence of religion, culture, the events of mass gatherings are celebrated either on bank of prominent rivers or venues in a district. Even small events in a district i.e. new year eve, long weekend, religious holidays or competitive exams lead to gathering of crowd at specific places which requires effective monitoring and control.

(ii) Data analysis of cultural mass gatherings of all the districts of Uttar Pradesh was carried out, name of the religious congregation, event, frequency and the average footfall in over 380 events was mapped at district and tehsil-level, that illustrates the sheer scale and diversity of cultural congregation across the state. "Mass Gatherings in Uttar Pradesh" map is as under.

MASS GATHERINGS

Approx. Number of Attendees
(As reported by Districts)

- 0-1,00,000
- 1,00,001-5,00,000
- 5,00,001-1,000,000
- >1,000,000

b. Cold Wave is a rapid fall in temperature within 24 hours to a level requiring substantially increased protection to agriculture, industry, commerce, and social activities.

Conditions	Description	Locations & Context
Foggy condition leads to Transport disruption	Dense fog, low daytime temperature due to lack of sunlight. Leads to massive road, rail, and air traffic disruptions.	The majority of National and state highways, Railways etc
Purvaiya Wind	Dry north-easterly winds are causing a sharp drop in temperature. High risk of hypothermia.	75 Districts
Livestock Mortality & Dairy Impact	Exposure and lack of protective shelter leading to illness and death among cattle, especially stray and small-herd animals. Drastic fall in milk yield.	Economic impact in dairy-intensive belts of Agra, Aligarh, Saharanpur.

c. Drowning Highly populated riverine areas of Ganga, Yamuna, Sarayu, Ghaghara, and other water resources, along with the religious practice of Assembly Points at river ghats, make the drowning hazard a serious challenge to deal with in the state.

Situations	Description	Common Locations
Religious bathing at ghats	Mass bathing during festival/mela	Ghats at Prayagraj (Kumbh/Magh Mela), Varanasi (Savan/Dev Diwali), Ayodhya, Garh Mukteshwar etc.
Boat incidents	Overcrowding, absence of life jackets	River ghats during tourist/pilgrimage seasons
Monsoon and Flood Related	Flash floods, strong water currents	Flood prone districts Bahraich, Balrampur, Barabanki etc.
Urban Water Bodies	Accidental falls into canals, uncovered wells especially involving children	Urban and peri urban areas of Lucknow, Kanpur and Ghaziabad etc.

d. Fire Incidents Fire is also a prominent hazard in the state. Rapid urbanization, overcrowding and unregulated commercial activities unplanned structures and improper electrical installations are frequently responsible for urban fires. In rural areas, use of fossil fuel for cooking and throwing of cigarette / bidis in the fields lead to such incidents. Electrical short circuits during summers also to fire in harvested crops.
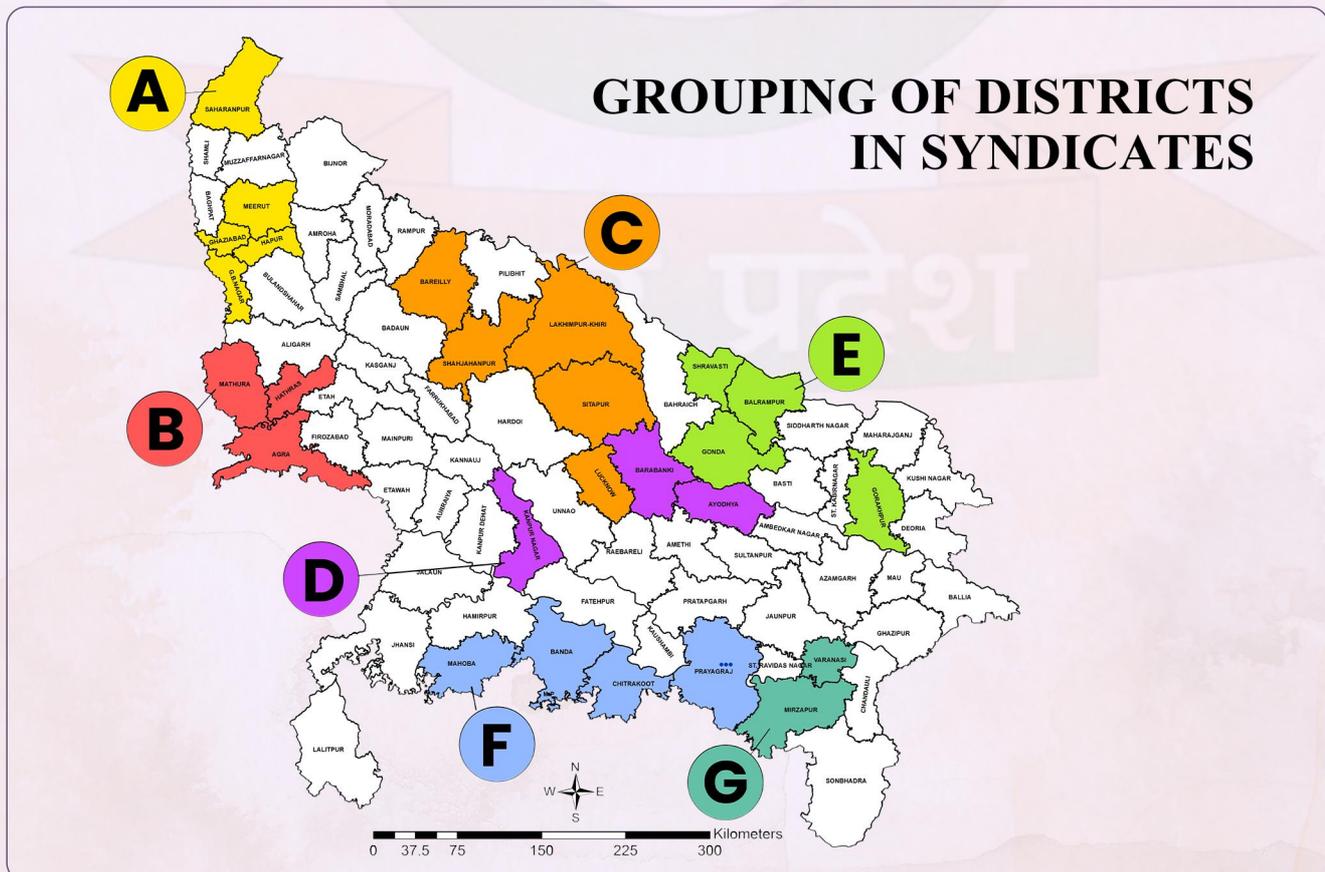
Locations	Description	Trigger Locations
Mela/Temporary settlements	Fires in pandals, huts, shops	Prayagraj (Kumbh/Magh Mela), Varanasi (Savan/Dev Diwali), Ayodhya, Hapur (Garh Mukteshwar) etc.
Religious and Heritage structures	Fires in temple, religious settlements often due to electric failures	Temples in Varanasi,Mirzapur,Mathura etc.
Urban residential	Fire incidents in densely packed urban areas such as markets	Parade Market Kanpur, Nakkhas Market Lucknow etc.
Industrial Fires	Fires in fire crackers industry, chemical warehouses	Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Gorakhpur etc.
Vehicle Fires	Fire in buses, Trains or at Transport hubs	Bus Stands, Railway stations and Highways

3. Symposium and Table Top Exercise

Program	Date	Venue
Orientation and Coordination Conference	2nd December 2025	UPSDMA Office Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Symposium cum Table Top Exercise (TTEx)	22nd – 23rd December 2025	Cobra Auditorium, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

4. Participation
26 districts out of 75 were identified as sensitive for crowd management, drowning, cold wave and fire incidents. They were divided into following syndicates.

Syndicate	Mandal	District
A	Saharanpur	Saharanpur
	Meerut	Meerut, Ghaziabad, Hapur, Gautambuddh Nagar
B	Agra	Agra, Mathura
	Aligarh	Hathras
C	Bareilly	Bareilly, Shahajahanpur
	Lucknow	Lucknow, Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur
D	Ayodhya	Ayodhya, Barabanki
	Kanpur	Kanpur Nagar
E	Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur
	Devipatan	Shravasti, Balrampur, Gonda
F	Prayagraj	Prayagraj
	Chitrakoot	Chitrakoot, Banda, Mahoba
G	Varanasi	Varanasi
	Mirzapur	Mirzapur

GROUPING OF DISTRICTS IN SYNDICATES

SYMPOSIUM: DAY 1 - 22 DEC 2025

5. Inaugural Session

a. The Symposium cum Table Top Exercise was chaired by the Lt. Gen Yogendra Dimri, Hon'ble Vice Chairperson, Uttar Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (UPSDMA). Lt. Gen PS Shekhawat, General Officer Commanding (GOC) MB Area with dignitaries from U.P. Administration, Army and Police were present.

b. The platform engaged over 200 officials with active participation of critical line departments from districts to include Revenue, F&ES, and Medical & Health Services. Officials from Telecom, Mela Authority, Railways, Municipal Bodies, and UPSRTC. This brought out essential ground-level perspectives from their respective jurisdictions to the discussions.

Lt. Gen Yogendra Dimri, Hon'ble Vice Chairperson of UPSDMA focused on critical necessity of the symposium as a push towards significantly better and safer crowd management across Uttar Pradesh's. **Shri Rajeev Krishna, Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh** addressed through VC reflected on the monumental scale of organizing the Maha Kumbh and emphasized that this symposium cum Table Top Exercise will provide a platform to learn from experiences and apply those hard-earned lessons to assure the safety of the upcoming Magh Mela.

Dr. Ajay Pal IPS, DIG Law & Order, Prayagraj, coined that "Prayagraj as a living laboratory for crowd management," The same was affirmed by the D. C. of Prayagraj, who elaborated on this by integrating emerging technologies into proven practices in order to manage future congregations by embracing the full city as essential living laboratory. Lt Gen P. S. Shekhawat, GOC Madhya Bharat Area, shared the Indian Army's invaluable experience in supporting the Maha Kumbh, that such civil-military collaboration not only aids in public safety but also serves to the Army's own operational concepts for large-scale logistics and crowd control. These addresses, put together, a call for action with high-level strategy, on-the-ground pragmatism, and a shared commitment to learning from the past to secure the future.

6. Technical Session 1

(a) Understanding Crowd Dynamics & Risk Factors

(i) The lecture helped participants to understand how people behave in dense crowds and how small issues, if unnoticed, can quickly turn into major risks.
(ii) The examples related to ghats, temples, melas, and festival made the session easy to connect with on-ground experience.
(iii) The challenges shared reflected the actual difficulties faced by field officers, such as sudden crowd surges, limited space, and the need for quick coordination.
(iv) The lecture reinforced the importance of a humane, calm, and people-friendly approach to crowd management, focusing on safety, dignity, and timely assistance to pilgrims and visitors.

(b) Incident Response System (IRS) for Crowd Management

(i) The presentation explained the **role of district administration** in managing crowds at melas and ghats, especially during peak bathing and festival timings.
(ii) It highlighted the **district's responsibility for coordination** between police, health, municipal and other departments to ensure smooth movement and public safety.
(iii) The lecture helped in understanding the importance of **district-level communication and ground supervision** to build public confidence and prevent panic situations.

(c) Fire incidents - Prevention, Preparedness & Response

(i)   The presentation explained how **UP Fire Services plans in advance for melas,** keeping in mind large crowds, temporary structures, and fire risks.

(ii)   The lecture highlighted the role of **fire personnel in guiding crowds**, preventing panic, and ensuring safe evacuation during any fire-related incident.

(iii)   The lecture showed how **round-the-clock monitoring and quick response** help control situations before they affect large gatherings.

(iv)   The lecture highlighted timely response often saves lives and prevents chaos.

(d) NDRF - Drowning Risk Management & Rescue Operation

(i)   The presentation explained how **NDRF prepares in advance for large melas in Uttar Pradesh,** keeping in mind heavy crowds at ghats and pontoon bridges. The focus on early planning helps reduce fear and keeps devotees safe near water.

(ii) It highlighted how **NDRF teams stay continuously present at ghats,** guiding people, watching crowd movement and responding quickly.

(iii) This lecture showed the importance of **preventive actions,** such as marking safe bathing areas and spreading awareness, it also explained how **trained rescuers, boats and medical support** are kept ready round the clock, quick rescue and immediate medical help can save lives and prevent panic in crowded

(e) Cold Wave Preparedness - Forecasting, Shelter & Health Response

(i)   The presentation explained preparing Uttar Pradesh for extreme cold waves. It identified **Vulnerable Population** groups such as the elderly, infants, and the homeless.

(ii)   It effectively showed how different Health departments and the Meteorological Department work together to handle the cold weather.

(iii) Specific data from December 2025 to show the real impact of the cold, including the number of emergency cases and hypothermia instances. This made the information evidence-based.

7. Technical Session 2

(a) Crowd Management Plan for Magh Mela - DDMA, Prayagraj

(i) Mela Authority, Police, Radio Police, Fire Services, Jal Police, Railway presented their plan along with DDMA.

(ii) Crowd control arrangements such as zoning, entry–exit planning, and monitoring mechanisms are presented in an organised manner coordination among railways, roadways, etc.

(iii) It Focused on the integrated control room at the district level, which is connected to every line department's control room.

(iv) The presentation reflects detailed planning and a clear traffic management strategy for the Magh Mela period.

(v) Roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders are well defined, which will help in smooth coordination during peak days.

(vi) Inclusion of simple public safety messages further improve awareness and coordination.

(vii) The presentation provided a clear outline of water safety arrangements and operational planning.

(viii) Deployment and resource planning appear systematic and well organized.

(b) Crowd Management Plan for Garh Ganga Mela - DDMA, HAPUR

(i) Crowd control arrangements such as zoning, entry–exit planning, and monitoring mechanisms are presented in an organized manner.

(ii) Coordination among police, traffic, fire, medical, and civic agencies has been properly addressed.

(iii) Inclusion of key focus areas for peak days would further strengthen operational readiness.

(c) Crowd Management Plan of a city - DDMA, Gautam Budh Nagar

(i) The presentation gives a realistic picture of crowd pressure points across markets, malls, transport hubs, and event locations.

(ii) Identification of peak hours and likely causes of congestion shows good understanding of public movement patterns.

(iii) Preventive measures such as regulation, deployment, and quick response planning are clearly highlighted.

(iv) A brief people-oriented message on public guidance and cooperation would enhance overall effectiveness.

(d) Crowd Management Plan for Khichdi Mela - DDMA, Gorakhpur

(i) The presentation reflects extensive preparations for a religious event involving very large public participation.

(ii) Safety arrangements covering crowd flow, medical support, fire services, sanitation, and basic facilities are well detailed.

(iii) The plan shows sensitivity towards pilgrim needs, especially in terms of health care, shelter, and cleanliness.

(iv) A concise summary of roles and emergency actions would help ensure smooth execution during critical periods.

(e) Crowd Management Plan for Dev Deepawali - DDMA, Varanasi

(i) Use of CCTV cameras and various types of drones to monitor crowd density and traffic flow in real-time.

(ii) Authorities created two dedicated lanes in the river using floating dividers and divided the entire river area into 14 sectors to manage boat movement and prevent accidents.

(iii) Barricades are placed at five major locations (including Dashashwamedh and Assi), supplemented by additional barriers and watch towers equipped with public-address systems.

(iv) Specialized Security forces include ATS Commandos, Quick Response Teams (QRT), and police, alongside tourist police using e-scooters for better maneuverability in dense areas.

(v) Rescue boats from the NDRF, Jal Police, and PAC are deployed, and water ambulances are stationed

TABLE TOP EXERCISE (TTEx) DAY 2: 23 DEC 2025

8. Session 1

a. Day started with a quick recap of the previous day's discussions, followed by the presentation by Shri Amit Kumar, IPS, Commandant, SDRF. He emphasized the role of the ICCC and modern technological interventions at the forefront in managing mega-events, while giving a of the successful management of Maha Kumbh.

b. A Presentation by the Director General (Telecom) elaborated on the critical communication during mega events. A dedicated spectrum allotment for the Maha Kumbh was discussed including cellular technology deployment to ensure network resilience under extreme load. The protocol of the priority call for emergency responders ensured continuous coordination during crises without interruptions.

9. Table Top Exercise

a. The Table Top Exercise was conducted by Col Sandeep Mehrotra, Senior Consultant (Disaster Management) UPSDMA, on four scenarios, each having three situations: -

(i) Management of Crowd at Religious Places

(ii) Management of Crowd at Ghats & River Line

(iii) Management of pedestrian traffic at Railway Station & Bus Stand

(iv) Management of Congregation at Cultural/Sports/Recreational Events

b. The representative from 26 District Administration, as well as all important Stakeholders like UPSRTC, Telecom, Health, Railways, Mela Authority etc. participated in the discussions and gave their practical on-ground experiences.

c. District representatives provided updates on their preparedness and response to different situations painted in above four scenarios.

d. Participants from DDMA's, UP Police, UP F&ES, SDRF, NDRF presented their views and suggestions on the above situations.

e. During Pedestrian Traffic related scenario, Railways officials emphasized the critical need for dedicated staging areas to manage pilgrim inflow, while UPSRTC representatives advocated for the creation of new temporary bus stations to decongest terminals. A key safety suggestion emerged for regulating passenger flow via a 'one entry, one exit' system for railway stations and platforms to prevent overcrowding and stampedes.

f. In situations of Ghats & River line scenario, participants strongly highlighted the necessity for standardized boat management plans, including designated boarding points, enforcement of boat handling capacity and imposing strict mandate on life-jackets.

g. The contributions from the syndicates and participants provided a vital reality-check, bridging planning with executable on-field actions, detailing their preparedness and confirming the activation protocols for their Incident Response Teams.

10. Closing Remarks

a. GOC PUP&MP Sub Area, Maj Gen Amit Sohal, spoke that he was impressed at the similarity of the exercise to the comprehensive planning process, full-spectrum exercise synonymous to military planning. Maj Gen Sunil Sheoran, GOC, 4 Infantry Div spoke about the active engagement of his formation in Maha Kumbh. Drawing parallels between military strategy and crowd control. He mentioned "UAV technology could be harnessed in a regulated fashion for crowd control applications for real-time surveillance purposes."

b. Lt. Gen Yogendra Dimri, Hon'ble Vice Chairperson of UPSDMA expressed his thanks for the teamwork and appreciated the dedication of all the UPSDMA and DDMA teams for successful execution of this event. He further said, **"I am so happy to see different experiences come together at this collaborative platform".**
The formal closing program ended with these addresses, thus emphasizing collective efforts toward making Uttar Pradesh a safe and resilient state.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

11. Areas of Strength

a. Relevance of Core Scenarios The presentations on Crowd Management at Religious Places and Drowning Risk Management have been rated 'Excellent' by most. This is a clear indication that the scenarios have a high relevance with regard to prevailing conditions.

b. Presentations from Key Agencies The presentation from the UP Police and Fire & Emergency Services about response strategies got a rating of "Excellent" in terms of being informative and relevant.

c. Strong Logistical Execution Respondents on event location, facilities, and support material (packet handouts and agendas) were very positive ("Excellent," "Good"), supporting that the event was well-executed.

d. Engaging and Realistic Exercise Design The majority of the respondents were in agreement regarding the engaging nature of the TTEx and that the TTEx helped them to identify with the scenarios being realistic in nature, the responses depicting real-life situations and pressures.

12. Areas of Improvement

a. Clarity of Command Structure The feedback about the IRS presentation in reference to command structure and coordination was variable in tone but did contain a few "average" remarks and "poor" comments. This reflects that IRS command structure requires a better understanding by the

b. Weaker Coverage on Cold Wave The presentation related to cold wave preparedness reported a high number of "Average" ratings, with regard to coverage on specific hazards, implying that the measures taken to safeguard the vulnerable against cold wave events have not been effectively

LEARNINGS

13. The Symposium cum TTEx brought out a member of important organisational and training issues

a. A methodical planning was carried out to make this symposium and TTEx a grand success but **only Prayagraj was able to prepare and present a comprehensive crowd management plan (CMP)** involving all stake holders.

b. The exercise of coaxing district administration for CMP started in year 2024 and **till date very few districts were able to put up a CMP** and that too a police plan for planned events.

c. The exercise brought out the reality that the **though departments are well equipped, but improvised and ad-hoc arrangements cannot provide seamless inter-agency coordination.** The TTEx brought out that mechanisms developed and have to be conducted at the district level as well as at the tehsil/block levels to enable the command structure to be effectively utilized.

d. The level of interest and value yielded by the TTEx indicates that **single-instance training events, are not adequate**. One key takeaway from this exercise has been the need to hold such multi-agency events and exercises at district level on a regular basis to update the procedures to translate 'lessons learned' into 'institutional memory'.

e. The takeaway from this exercise is that the state-mandated and specific Standard Operating Procedures **(SOPs) along** with the dynamically updated **DDMPs are the need of the hour.** They have to be officially authorized and well-known within the entire system.

f. All Districts should participate is such Symposium and Table Top Exercises to upgrade their knowledge and the present their perspectives to add value to the effort. The key officials of all districts should participate in such exercise.

g. There is an **immediate requirement for all district to make specific crowd management plan** for all documented / planned events in their districts.

h. Districts may be advised to prepare CMPs for planned events (such as annual festival, chhat puja, mela, kawad yatra etc.) SoPs for unplanned / spontaneous events (such as music concerts, religious congregations, festivals, etc.) separately and ensure their effective implementation.

i. A Government Order (G.O.) clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of various State Government departments, district authorities, event organizers, and other concerned agencies associated with crowd management may be issued.
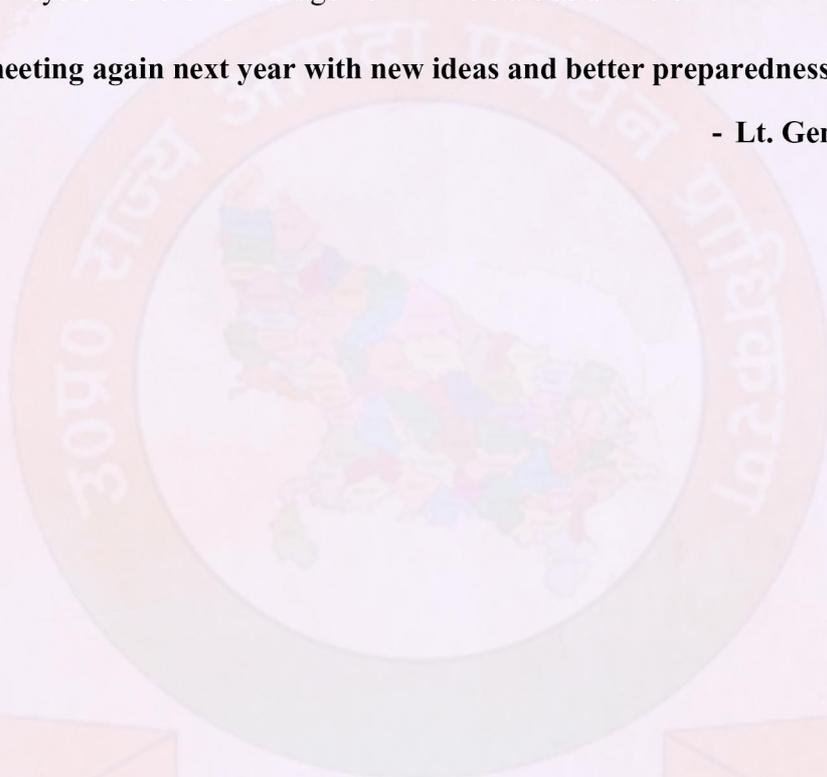
14. Conclusion

a. The Symposium and TTEx on crowd management has turned out to be a crucial stepping-stone in path to preparedness. The overwhelmingly positive reaction to realism TTEx scenarios and presentation quality by stakeholders, as evident from the feedback, marks this event as successful in establishing a platform of learning together. It helped in the affirmation of its operational strength's crucial agencies as state, national response forces, police and Fire & Emergency Services. It placed the participants in the intricate and pressurized situation of scenarios emergency situation.

b. The Government of Uttar Pradesh and the State Disaster Management Authority (UPSDMA) are ready to champion that ensure the embedding of these learnings in a way that mandates that TTEx and symposium happen regularly and that these CMP SOPs become a routine part of all districts in a way that promotes a unified responsive and resilient system of crowd management in the state as a whole.

"I look forward to meeting again next year with new ideas and better preparedness."

- Lt. General Yogendra Dimri

Orientation & Coordination Conference
02 Dec. 2025

Shri Rajeev Krishna,
Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh

DR. AJAY PAL DIG Addl.CP L/O Prayagraj

NEERAJ KUMAR PANDEY
SP DCP TRAFFIC / LINES / UP 112 Prayagraj

Shri Animesh Singh, CFO, Magh Mela, Prayagraj

Mr. Dhananjay Singh Sr. Mechanical Engineering
O.&F. Prayagraj

Shri Rahul, ARO, Magh Mela, Prayagraj

Shri Amit Kumar, IPS
Commandant-SDRF/ 35 Bn PAC

Shri Arun Kumar Verma
Addl DGT, DoT, UP(East) LSA, Lucknow

Shri Santosh Kumar,
2IC, 11 BN NDRF, Varanasi

Shri Dinesh Yadav, DSP, Jal Police, Prayagraj

Shri Praveen Kishor
Project Coordinator (Training), UP SDMA

Shri Ratneshwar Singh DSP Gorakhpur

Technical Session - 2 & TTEx

22-23 Dec. 2025

Smt Arti Sahu SDM Gorakhpur

Dr. Sadanand Gupta ADM (F/R) Varanasi

Mr. Kunwar Pankaj ADM (F/R) Mahoba | Mrs. Vineeta singh ADM (F/R) Prayagraj

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