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Chennai, Soon to Have 1,000 Certified Crisis Response Volunteers

By Sonali Shenoy | Published: 26th January 2016 04:08 AM Last Updated: 26th January 2016 08:15 PM

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CHENNAI: Chennai will soon have its very own battalion of Crisis Response Volunteers (CRV). For the uninitiated, a CRV is a layman who has been trained in multiple levels of rescue — ranging from natural disasters to buildings ablaze.

In the aftermath of the flood, a pilot training project initiated by Survival Instincts, the authorised provider of American Red Cross health and safety programmes, will conduct a series of workshops between February and April to train common residents in uncommon skills.



Anoop Madhavan at the orientation session □ P Jawahar

“By the end of April, we hope to have 1,000 CRVs ready,” says Anoop Madhavan, on the sidelines of an orientation session on Sunday ahead of the workshops. “We realised that a lot of regular people were stepping up to volunteer during the floods, but not only were their efforts unorganised, they also put themselves in danger because there were no rescue protocols in place.”

To combat these issues, the

organisation will be training interested participants in various levels of Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs). CERT is a programme organised by the US Government’s Federal Emergency Management Agency to train local quick responders who work in tandem with various state and local professional first responding agencies. These skills will cover everything from map reading and tactical rope rescues to more advanced procedures such as offering life support for cardiac arrest.

In the past, Madhavan has led workshops on the same for

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National Security Guards Black Cats, Indian Army, Indian Navy and Central Paramilitary Forces although the 'certification' that is a part of this programme will be a first so far.

"As per standard CERT training, each skill set is certified at a different level. This is a standard that provides an understanding to the person heading a team, what exactly a CRV's skills are and how he can be useful in a situation, when there is an emergency at hand," he says.

Out of the five levels that are available for certification in the system, Survival Instincts will be conducting courses on three. "As you go up in certification, the skills and equipment get more expensive," explains Madhavan, whose non-profit organisation will be conducting this training free of cost to anybody interested.

To be more effective, his team will be splitting the city into 'grids' which is a geo profile of the city based on its population. Each grid is approximately five square kilometres. And according to the experts, the ideal ratio of CRV to population is 1:100.

"If the CRV is a resident of the area, all the better as he will have better knowledge of resources in the area such as hospitals, electricians, plumbers and so on," another member of the team adds.

How you can be a Crisis Response Volunteer

Level 1, 2 and 3 programmes will be conducted on weekends in February, March and April respectively. All programmes are free of cost

CERTs is a programme organised by the US Government's Federal Emergency Management Agency to train local quick responders to work together with the various federal, state and local professional agencies

As a part of the initiative, the city will be split into grids

Every area or a grid will be approximately five square kilometres

The grids of the city are drawn depending on population



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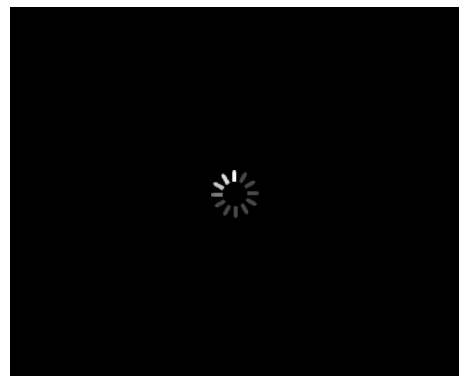
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