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MANILA, Philippines — Awareness, preparation and actions can prevent tragedies in disaster-vulnerable countries, the Microdis-Asia and Citizens' Disaster Response Center (CDRC) said.

Dr. Pooran Chand Joshi, a social anthropology professor of the University of Delhi in India and Microdis coordinator, said that disasters should be given utmost concern by everyone, considering the number of deaths, injuries and extent of damages that it had made through the years in Asia and elsewhere.

In a keynote speech at a workshop-conference organized by the CDRC in Tagaytay City, Joshi identified Asia as the most catastrophe-prone region in the world, considering its land size and population.

Asia, which occupies 30 percent of the earth's land area, has nearly four billion people or 60 percent of the world's population, it was learned.

In a PowerPoint presentation, Joshi identified India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and some other Asian countries as calamity-prone areas or those that have been stricken either by storms or typhoons and earthquakes often.

Joshi tagged India as the country with the highest number of catastrophe losses in Asia and Indonesia as the most prone country to quakes and tsunamis.

He said that in the last two decades, more than 200 million people were affected by extreme disasters that were caused by global warming or climate change and “unsound environmental practices that go with the fast-increasing population, urbanization, social injustice, and poverty, among others.”

The Indian professor cited that utmost concern, innovative approach and the implementation of programs, plans and actions can help prevent disaster tragedies.

“The tragedies caused by disasters can be avoided if awareness, preparation and proper disaster mitigation actions are in place,” he said.

The official called on everyone to unite and work on the anti-disaster programs and actions.

The Microdis-Asia is a group composed of foreign and local experts which has been conducting disaster surveys and studies in the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, India and other Asian countries. It is supported by the European Community and the Associated Countries.

CRDC is a non-governmental organization which promotes community-based disaster management in the Philippines.

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