Memories of Emergency Communications via Ham Radio for Uttarakhand Floods in June/July 2013 (exactly 8 years back).

In June 2013, a cloudburst in Uttarakhand State caused devastating floods and landslides killing lot of people and it became one of the worst natural disasters that India has seen.

Members from National Institute of Amateur Radio - Hyderabad; Indian Institute of Hams – Bengaluru; Indian Wave of Amateur Radio - Kolkata and local Hams from Bharat Scouts & Guides – Uttarakhand provided emergency communications from the affected areas where normal communications was cut due to severe flash floods / landslides.

HAMS lend helping hand to flood victims

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 26

A group of amateur radio operators (HAM) from the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) have set up emergency communication centres at Dehradun and Uttarkashi in Uttarakhand to help stranded passengers get help from government and keep them connected with their family back home.

A group of four HAM operators, including Mr Jose Jacob of NIAR from Hyderabad, have set up an emergency communication centre at Bharat scouts and guides headquarters at Dehradun and another group is stationed at Barkot in Uttarkashi district.

“In the past two days, about 75 people have got in touch with us over high frequency (HF) radio. People ask us for information about their near and dear ones who are either stranded or missing,” Mr Jose Jacob said. Pointing out that they operate their radios with batteries under extreme climatic conditions, the veteran amateur radio operator says that as the calamity struck hard, people are left with no power and proper road connectivity. “The situation is worst at Barkot where they don’t have electricity, water or food. Our fellow HAMS stationed there have managed to set up their station by erecting the antenna on a tall tree top,” he said.

Mr S. Narayanan, an amateur radio operator from Madurai, noted that HAMS are known for their service, which they had showcased during the 2004 tsunami. “Wherever any natural calamity strikes, it will be the amateur radio operator who comes to the spot after the police.”

(Deccan Chronicle)
National Institute of Amateur Radio

Uttarakhand Flood Relief operations

**Frequencies:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North India</td>
<td>7.073 MHz LSB</td>
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<tr>
<td>All India (Except North India)</td>
<td>14.160 MHz USB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>145.000 MHz FM</td>
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**Stations:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dehradoon Control Room:</th>
<th>Jose Jacob, VU2JOS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State HQ,</td>
<td>Mukesh Bharti, VU3CFN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bharat Scouts &amp; Guides</td>
<td>Bhagwati Prasad Semwal, VU3BPZ</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barkot, Uttar Kashi</th>
<th>Mukesh Kumar Gola, VU2MCW</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Onkar Bahuguna, VU3NUG</td>
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<td>Vishwas Krishna Murthy, VU3HVD</td>
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<tr>
<th>Chamoli</th>
<th>Girish Doss, VU3GDS</th>
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<td>Rahul Ravi Shankar, VU3HBT</td>
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<tr>
<th>Pithoragarh</th>
<th>Tanumay Chakraborty, VU3SQY</th>
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<td>Chandan Ghosh, VU3CGT</td>
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**Relay Stations:**

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<tr>
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<th>NIAR HQ, VU2NRO</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ram Mohan, VU2MYH</td>
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<td>Lissy, VU3LMS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mujeeb, VU3MHI</td>
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<td></td>
<td>P.Kumar Chaitanya, VU3GLU</td>
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<td>Tom, VU3TMO</td>
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<tr>
<th>Thrissur, Kerala</th>
<th>Sarachandran, VU2SCV</th>
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<tr>
<th>Kolkata</th>
<th>Ambarish Nag Biswas, VU2JFA</th>
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<td>Sankar Mallik, VU2LNA</td>
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| Vadodara         | Anand Piraji Patil, VU2WWX  |

**Special thanks to WPC Wing, Ministry of Communications, Government of India for issuing permission for the same.**
Scouts & Hams work for relief operation

By OUR STAFF REPORTER

DEHRAJUN, 5 Jul: There are a large number of people missing after the massive flash flood, landside and heavy rain in Uttarakhand. It has become difficult for people to get information about their kin. Despite state government efforts, Ham Radio operators have engaged themselves with the Bharat Scouts and Guides in the state’s emergency relief operations.

On 5 July, a meeting was held between the Director of Secondary Education and State Chief Commissioner of BSG, CS Gwal, with Jose Jacob, Assistant Director of National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), Babinda Mohan Kala, State Secretary of Bharat Scouts and Guides. During the meeting, deployment of Ham stations and Bharat Scouts and Guides teams in the remote places was discussed to obtain information about victims of this natural calamity.

Gwal has directed Kala to deploy BSG teams with Ham stations in Pithoragarh and Chamoli to convey messages about victims and about the situation in those places. A team from West Bengal will be deployed in Pithoragarh, and another from Bangalore will be deployed in Chamoli. A BSG team with a Ham station is already working in Uttrakhand.

A control station has been setup in BSG State headquarters and it is being operated by Jose Jacob, Assistant Director of NIAR from 24 June. On that day, another station was established at Barkot in Uttrakhand which is operated by Mukesh Kumar Gola, VU2MCW and Omkar Babuguna. VU2MCW Amateur Stations from 16 different states have contacted with the control station in Dehradun. Some stations have contacted to get information about missing persons.

These Ham radio operators are highly trained to pass messages in all kinds of weather conditions across the country. Now it is expected that after deployment of these communication experts and BSG teams, it will help the administration get information about the missing people faster.
Relief work: Ham Radio, Scouts and Guides join hands

Dehradun, July 5

Against the backdrop of a large number of persons missing in the state, Ham Radio operators have engaged themselves with the Bharat Scouts and Guides in emergency relief operations.

A meeting was held today between the Director of Secondary Education of Uttarakhand and the State Chief Commissioner of the Bharat Scouts and Guides BSG, C S Gwal with Jose Jacob, Assistant Director of National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), Rabindra Mohan Kala, State Secretary of the Bharat Scouts (BSG) and Guides. During the meeting it was discussed regarding deployment of Ham stations along with the Bharat Scouts and Guides team in the remote places where it is unable to access and to get information about the victims. It is getting difficult for the public to get information about their kith and kin.

It was also revealed that a team of Ham operators from West Bengal will shortly be deployed in Pithoragarh, and another team from Banglore will be deployed in Chamoli. A BSG team with a Ham station is already working in Uttarkashi.

A control station has been set up in BSG state headquarters in Dehradun and it is being operated by Jose Jacob, Assistant Director of NIAR since June 24. On that day, another station was established at Barkot in Uttarkashi which is being operated by Mukesh Kumar Gola and Onkar Amateur stations from 16 different states have contacted the control station in Dehradun. Some stations have contacted to get information about the missing persons.

These Ham radio operators are highly trained to pass messages in all weather conditions across the country. Now it is expected that after deployment of these experts and BSG teams will help the administration to get information about the missing persons in a speedy manner.

https://www.tribuneindia.com/2013/20130706/dun.htm#5
Hams from city aiding U’khand rescue efforts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hyderabad: VU2JOS is on the job. And so is VU2MCW. Two hams, amateur radio operators, are volunteering in the rescue operations in Uttarakhand. The National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) in the city has jumped into action to assist the administration in establishing contact at places which are difficult to access.

Jose Jacob, with call sign VU2JOS and Mukesh Kumar Gola, with call sign VU2MCW, reached the disaster-hit Uttarakhand a couple of days ago. They are volunteering along with the Bharat Scouts and Guides in the rescue measures. “Some places cannot be reached with the available communication facilities. That is when a ham’s services are needed the most to convey information,” said S Ram Mohan, director of NIAR.

Operating from the base station at Dehradun, Jose Jacob told TOI over phone that hams from all over the country were in touch with him seeking information about their family, friends or relatives. He said checking from the database that was created by the administration, information was being given out to hams. “We are getting more requests from hams from Kolkata and Rajkot,” he said. Jacob, who has been a ham for over 33 years, rendered help in the tsunami-hit areas and also during the super cyclone in Odisha.

Another base station of the hams has been set up at Barkot town in Uttarkashi district from where VU2MCW Mukesh Kumar Gola is operating. Another 10 hams are also on standby to be rushed to Uttarakhand if needed.

Officials are making use of satellite phones and mobile phones to coordinate the rescue operations but they are said to be falling short of sat phones. Mobile phones are also not reachable at some places because of the hilly terrain. The only way of passing out information could be through the services of ham radio.
Kolkata radio operator turns linkman for victims, relatives

Ravik Bhattacharya
raiv.bhattacharya@hindustantimes.com

KOLKATA: A junior employee of a dairy firm has emerged as the main information gatherer for families of missing persons who had gone to disaster-ravaged Uttarakhand.

Since Sunday, Ambarish Nag Biswas has locked himself up in a room in Sodepur, on the outskirts of Kolkata, taking phone calls and sending messages through his radio set to the Dehradun and Mussoorie control rooms.

Even the district magistrate’s office is referring anxious relatives to him.

“I am relaying the messages with the names of missing persons to our radio operator stationed in Dehradun and Mussoorie. They are forwarding the messages to the army and authorities,” said Biswas, amateur radio operator for the past 18 years and a member of the West Bengal Radio Club (Amateur Club).

“Distress calls are coming from people whose relatives are still missing.”

Amateur radio, often called HAM radio, is a medium in which radio communication equipment to communicate with other radio amateurs through airwaves for public services, recreation and self-training.

Ujjwal Dasgupta, a missing person’s relative, told HT: “I got Biswas’s number from a friend, and came to know that special thanks to our regular contact / Standby / Relay Station in Kolkata OM Ambarish Nag Biswas VU2JFA of West Bengal Radio Club
Special thanks to our regular contact / Standby / Relay Station in Kerala,

OM Sarat VU2SCV, Thrissur
How amateur radio is assisting in Uttarakhand rescue efforts

National Institute of Amateur Radio, Hyderabad, has sent a team with radio equipment to the hill state and is operating in co-ordination with Bharat Scouts and Guides, Dehradun.

June 30, 2013 11:45:14 IST

“Help us”, “Can you find my aged parents” — distress messages like these are flooding ham radio operators assisting in efforts to reunite families in disaster—hit Uttarakhand. Immediately after the mayhem, some ham radio volunteers rushed to the affected areas and were supported by fellow operators across the country. Soon this mode became an important lifeline of communication in the disaster-affected areas where telecommunication networks were extensively damaged during the rains.

Radio amateurs use a variety of voice, text, image and data communication modes and have access to frequency allocations throughout the radio frequency spectrum to enable communication across a city, region, country, continent, the world, or even into space. National Institute of Amateur Radio, Hyderabad, has sent a team with radio equipment to the hill state and is operating in co-ordination with Bharat Scouts and Guides, Dehradun.

Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, is operating from Dehradun as the emergency communication base station. “We are flooded with distress messages of relatives of those who are missing in Uttarakhand. We are daily getting calls from Kolkata, Delhi, Kerala, Rajkot,” Jacob told PTI. “We pass on the missing list received to the state secretariat,” he said.

Another ham station has been set up in Barkot in Uttarkashi where Mukesh Gola, VU2MCW, is being assisted by three more ham operators collecting information about missing persons through local ham radio VHF network.

“Usually, we establish two-three master control rooms linking the entire country and have local network for relief operations like providing assistance for medical camps, movement of food and other requirements. And also getting and passing on information to their relatives, providing communication for district administration to monitor smooth movement of relief operations,” S. Sathyapal, Director, Indian Institute of Hams, told PTI.

PTI (Firstpost)
Special thanks to our regular contact / Standby / Relay Station in Kolkata
OM Mallik VU2LNA of Air India

Special thanks to our regular contact / Standby / Relay Station in Gujarat
OM Anand of Vadodara.
He is Silent Key now. May His Soul Rest in Peace
To
The Director
National Institute of Amateur Radio
Raj Bhavan Road
Hyderabad 500082

Dear Sir,

We thank you for rising to the occasion and deputing Mr. Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, Asst. Director, National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) for providing emergency communications in the aftermath of the recent floods and landslides in Uttarakhand, He has controlled the station set up at State HQ of Uttarakhand Bharat Scouts & Guides at Dehradun. His services were very much useful for communicating with our personnel in the affected areas and others all over India.

He is relieved from his duties at Dehradun on the morning of 7th July 2013.

(Rajeev Sharma)
State H.Q. Commissioner
Uttarakhand Bharat Scouts & Guides
55 Rajpur Road
Dehradun-1
Cities » Bangalore

Three Ham Heroes do State proud

Special Correspondent

HAM HEROES... Rahul Ravishankar (right), Vishwas Krishnamurthy and Girish Doss were felicitated for their efforts in Uttarkhand relief operations, by the Indian Institute of Hams in Mysore on Saturday. Mr.S.Sathiyapal (left), Director, I1H and R.J.Marcus, Director-Training, I1H, are also present. Photo: M.A. Sriram

If you thought Ham radio was about setting up and tuning complicated electronic gadgets and communicating to strangers over radio waves using esoteric codes for private recreation, then think again.

Notwithstanding the advances in technology enabling instant communication and penetration of mobile devices across the globe, Ham radios are still the preferred mode of communication during natural disasters and motorsport rallies.

During the recent Uttarakhand floods, three Hams from the State were instrumental in establishing communication with the local district administration in the Himalayan terrains to enable better coordination for civilian relief. Meet VU3GDS, VU3HVD and VU3HBT. These are the mandatory call signs with which Girish Doss, Vishwas and Rahul identify themselves while signing in. (Each Ham is allocated with a unique call sign for identification and communication on acquiring the Ham licence.)

The three — called Ham Heroes — for their contribution to Uttarakhand relief operations were felicitated by the Indian Institute of Hams at a workshop held here on Saturday.

All three from Bangalore were among the first Hams to reach Uttarakhand and establish a communication link from remote areas. Communicating to the master control centre established at Dehra Dun, they relayed messages to the local district administration which took appropriate measures to reach out to the stranded. “On establishing communication network, we would relay the message to the master controls at Dehra Dun and the message in turn would be passed on to the district administration. The volunteers of Bharat Scouts and Guides would then reach out to the stranded persons in remote places,” according to Mr. Rahul, who is a structural engineer and has his own consultancy firm.

The Army and the Air Force was already operating and airlifting pilgrims in a major relief and rescue operations and nobody had access to these places. But there were other places where the local community needed help and amateur radio was almost the first in line of communication for them.

Girish Doss, a software engineer, obtained his Ham radio licence when he was only 12 years and worked during Gujarat earthquake, December 2004 Tsunami and now the 2013 Uttarakhand floods. Mr. Vishwas too is a software professional. S. Sathiyapal, Director, I1H, said though there were nearly 3,000 Hams in Bangalore alone, it was difficult to get volunteers during disasters. For details on how to become a Ham, call I1H on 080 2664501 or 9448302677 or write to had738@gmail.com
Ham Radio Control Room, State HQ, Bharat Scouts & Guides, Dehradun
Left to right: Ravindran Mohan Kala, Secretary, State HQ, BSG, Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, Narendra Saha. State Organising Commissioner, Mukesh Bharathi, VU3CFN

Ham Members at Dehradun just before dispersing to the affected areas at Chamoli / Uttar Kashi / Pithorgarh stations. Left to right: Girish VU3GDS, Rahul VU3HBT, Vishwas VU3HVD; Jose VU2JOS, Mukesh Bharathi VU3CFN, George VU3SQY (now VU2XFD), Chandan Ghosh VU3CGT.
Team members with Shri. C.S.Gwal, Director of Secondary Education (centre), Govt. of Uttarakhand

Left Mukesh Kumar Gola, VU2MCW at Barkot, Uttar Kashi
(L-R Chandan Ghosh VU3CGT & George VU2XFD (then VU3SQY)

George VU2XFD (then VU3SQY) at the mic at Pithoragarh with Scouts team.
Members from Indian Institute of Hams, Bengaluru
L-R Vishwas VU3HVD; Girish VU3GDS, Rahul VU3HBT.

Omkar Bahuguna, VU3NUG (Local Ham & a Journalist) operating from Barkot, Uttar Kashi
Bhagawati Prasad Semwal, VU3BPZ (of Antarctica operations fame) local resident of Dehradun also joined and helped us at the Control Room often.

R. Rajesh Kannan, VU2ESH, Deputy Tahsildar, Information Center, Tamilnadu House, New Delhi operating from Dehradun Control Room during his official visit to area.
Local Ham YL Abha Sandlas VU3NET, daughter of Ved Prakash Sandlas VU2VP visiting our Control Room. L-R Mukesh Kumar Gola VU2MCW, YL Abha VU3NET, Jose Jacob VU2JOS

L-R Mukesh Bharathi VU3CFN (local Ham of Bharat Scouts & Guides), Jose Jacob VU2JOS, George VU2XFD (then VU3SQY)
Jose Jacob, VU2JOS at: Ham Radio Control Room set up at State HQ, Bharat Scouts & Guides, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

Promoting people’s participation in Communication, Information Technology & Disaster Management

National Institute of Amateur Radio
Raj Bhavan Road, Hyderabad-500082, India
Tel: +91-40-23310287  Email: info@niar.org  url: www.niar.org