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SACHET — India's Cell Broadcast Alert System Tested Nationwide

5 May 2026 ·

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SACHET — India's Cell Broadcast Alert System Tested Nationwide

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✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

WHY IN NEWS

India's homegrown **Cell Broadcast Alert System, SACHET**, developed by **C-DOT (Centre for Development of Telematics)** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** in partnership with **NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority)** and the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**, completed a nationwide test on **May 2, 2026**. The system broadcasts emergency alerts directly to all active mobile devices within a defined geographic area — operating independently of call or SMS traffic congestion.

WHAT IS SACHET?

SACHET (Integrated Alert System) is India's implementation of the **Cell Broadcast Service (CBS)** — a one-to-many communication technology distinct from point-to-point SMS:

FEATURE	SMS	CELL BROADCAST (SACHET)
Targeting	Individual numbers	All phones in a geographic cell/zone
Delivery time	Seconds to minutes	Near-simultaneous (within seconds)
Network congestion effect	Delayed in emergencies	Unaffected (separate broadcast channel)
Opt-in required	No	No
Works without SIM data	Yes	Yes
Reach	One-to-one	One-to-all in area

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Developer	C-DOT (Centre for Development of Telematics), DoT
Partners	NDMA + Ministry of Home Affairs
Standard	Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) — recommended by ITU
Coverage	Operational across all 36 States and UTs
Languages	Alerts in multiple Indian languages
Handset compatibility	Works on all handsets — no special app required
Geographic targeting	Defined by mobile cell tower coverage zones

ABOUT C-DOT

FEATURE	DETAIL
Full name	Centre for Development of Telematics
Founded	1984
Under	Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications
HQ	New Delhi
Role	India's premier telecom R&D centre; develops indigenous telecom equipment and protocols
Notable work	BharatNet broadband, 4G/5G indigenous stack, SACHET, rural telecom equipment
Ownership	Government of India (fully owned)

COMMON ALERTING PROTOCOL (CAP) AND ITU

FEATURE	DETAIL
CAP full form	Common Alerting Protocol
Standard body	ITU (International Telecommunication Union) — UN specialised agency for telecom
ITU HQ	Geneva, Switzerland
Purpose	Open, standardised format for emergency alerts — ensures interoperability across systems and countries
Used by	USA (WEA — Wireless Emergency Alerts), EU, Japan, South Korea, India (SACHET)

NDMA — STATUTORY BASIS AND ROLE

FEATURE	DETAIL
NDMA full form	National Disaster Management Authority
Established	2005 under Disaster Management Act, 2005
Chair	Prime Minister of India (ex-officio)
Vice Chair	Full-time appointee
Mandate	Lay down policies, plans, and guidelines for disaster management
National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)	Under NDMA; 16 battalions for rescue and relief

SIGNIFICANCE FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

SACHET addresses a critical gap: during major disasters (floods, cyclones, earthquakes, industrial accidents), mobile networks become **severely congested** as millions of people try to call simultaneously. Traditional SMS alerts fail precisely when they are most needed. Cell broadcast bypasses this by using a separate broadcast channel.

International comparisons:

- **USA:** Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) — same technology; used since 2012
- **Japan:** J-Alert system — integrated with TV, radio, and mobile CBS

- **South Korea:** CBS alerts issued for missile threats and natural disasters

India's SACHET brings India on par with global best practices in public emergency alert systems.

UPSC RELEVANCE

PAPER	ANGLE
GS3 — Disaster Management	Emergency alert systems, NDMA, disaster preparedness
GS3 — Science & Technology	Cell broadcast technology, C-DOT, indigenous telecom R&D
GS2 — Governance	NDMA role, Disaster Management Act 2005, MHA coordination

Mains Keywords: SACHET, cell broadcast, C-DOT, NDMA, CAP (Common Alerting Protocol), ITU, disaster management, Disaster Management Act 2005, emergency alert, DoT

Prelims Facts Corner

ITEM	FACT
SACHET	India's integrated cell broadcast alert system
Developer	C-DOT (Centre for Development of Telematics), DoT
Partners	NDMA + Ministry of Home Affairs
Standard	Common Alerting Protocol (CAP); ITU recommended
Coverage	All 36 States and UTs
C-DOT founded	1984; under DoT; HQ New Delhi
NDMA established	2005; Disaster Management Act 2005; chaired by PM
ITU	UN specialised agency for telecom; HQ Geneva
Key advantage	Unaffected by network congestion during emergencies
Test date	May 2, 2026 (nationwide test)

Source: SACHET — India's Cell Broadcast Alert System Tested Nationwide — Ujiyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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