Bacchauli VDC is one of the most flood affected VDCs of Chitwan District. It is surrounded by different streams like Khageri, Budhi Rapti, Dhungre Khola which ultimately joins the Thuli Rapti River (the river which flows from upstream Rajaiya).

Dhukhana Mahato is a member of Bacchauli VDC’s DMC and is incharge of the DMC task force. He is responsible for keeping his team stand by in case of impeding flood for effective response and to alert the community people about the risk with an objective of reducing the risk of the most vulnerable people of the community affected by flood. Altogether 25 people are in this task force.

His team comprises of a person responsible for getting the information from the gauge observer including a team responsible for disseminating information to the community people with the help of hand operated siren, hand mike, and CDMA phone. The other team under task force includes search and rescue team, first aid team and volunteers who are responsible to help the community people in case of emergency. Another major responsibility of the task force is to coordinate and be answerable to the DMC.

“On 24th August 2010, there was continuous rainfall for more than 10 hours. I received a phone call from Badri Bahadur Dhakal, gauge observer, Rajaiya gauge station for Rapti River at 2:30 PM. Badri informed me that the water level at Rajaiya was 3.80m which was below danger level but something to worry about as the rain poured continuously (warning level -3.5 m and danger level is 4.2 m),” asserted Mahato.

Mahato called other DMC members for their suggestion. A quick decision was made to observe the water level in the downstream too. Nakul, DMC member, responsible for the downstream informed that the water level had risen up three times than usual. DMC members then gathered in the VDC building which was earlier identified as the midpoint during any emergency. The most vulnerable wards, ward no.1-Badreni, ward no. 7-Magartal and ward no 2-Sauraha was informed first as these wards would be flooded first. The task force members were then on stand by for response.

After the information on danger water level was disseminated, the task force stood by with life saving equipments such as life jackets, ropes, boats and first aid kits ready for use at any time.

“Everyone and everything was in place to alert the community. We informed the community about the water level through hand mike as the siren could not communicate the water level information. Though people had reacted to the siren more during the mock drill we decided to use the siren only when the water reached to danger level to avoid chaos and confusion. Our community was not flooded but we were successful in informing them about the rising water level without causing any stress, ” explains Mahato.