

15.10 hrs.

**SITUATION ARISING FROM CYCLONE IN
ANDHRA PRADESH - CONTD.**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : Sir, I would like to make this supplementary statement on heavy rains and flood in Andhra Pradesh from the 17th to 21st October, 1996.

A low pressure area formed over South-West and adjoining West-Central Bay of Bengal on 15th October, 1996. The low pressure area became well marked on 16th October, 1996 and it persisted over the sea up to 18th October, 1996. On 19th October, 1996 it moved inland and lay over Rayalaseema and adjoining areas, moving in a westerly direction. The low pressure gradually weakened on 21st October, 1996. During the period from 17th October, 1996 to 21st October, 1996 the State received widespread and heavy to very heavy rainfall all over South coastal and Rayalaseema districts of Andhra Pradesh.

2. The torrential rains caused enormous loss of human life, loss of livestock and damages to both public and private properties in the 11 affected districts of Andhra Pradesh. The worst affected districts are Prakasam, Cuddapah, Nellore, Chittoor, Anantapur and urnool. The average rainfall recorded in most of these affected districts ranged from 100 mm. to 317 mm. in these six days. The heavy loss and flash floods inundated a large number of villages. A number of medium and minor irrigation sources were breached and damaged. This had a cascading effect and caused major breaches to the medium and minor irrigation projects like the Lower Sagileru Project in Cuddapah and Rallapadu and Mopadu reservoirs in Prakasam district. The rains also caused large scale damages to National Highway No. 5 between Nellore and Ongole and to the railway tracks between Nellore to Ongole and at some other points between Vijayawada and Madras. The State Government has reported that the District Administration has taken prompt action in evacuating 1,37,314 people living in low-lying areas to safer places and accommodating them in 174 relief camps. Medical and para-medical teams were deployed in the affected districts. Two IAF helicopters, 10 Army boats and a large number of country boats or crafts and motor boats were also deployed for rescue and relief including providing food packets and drinking water to the victims in the marooned villages. The State Government has reported a total of 338 deaths in the affected districts.

3. The Prime Minister made an aerial survey of the affected areas on 21st October, 1996 and reviewed the relief measures initiated by the State Administration. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh also accompanied the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister

announced the release of Rs. 50 crore for taking up immediate relief and restoration measures. Of this, Rs. 23.285 crore was on account of the fourth instalment of Central share of the Calamity Relief Fund due on 1.1.1997, but released in advance on 22.10.1996, and the balance of Rs. 26.715 crore was on account of ways and means advance.

4. I myself visited the worst affected areas on 30th October, 1996. I have seen the plight of the affected people and have assured all possible assistance to the State Government.

5. The State Government has submitted a Memorandum in the last week of October, 1996 seeking Central assistance of Rs. 550.63 crore. A Central team was immediately despatched to the State on 28-30 October, 1996. The report of the Central team has been received. The National Calamity Relief Committee meeting under my Chairmanship on 18th November, 1996 has considered the issue and decided that since funds have already been released to the State, the issue of additional assistance from the National Fund for Calamity Relief will be considered along with the package of assistance to be made available to the State following the subsequent cyclone of 6-7 November, 1996.

This is what I have to say.

[English]

RE: QUESTION OF REPEAL OF IMDT ACT

(Interruptions)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : Sir, the Prime Minister is present here. As it is creating a law and order problem, let him say something since he is here. You may ask him if he is willing or not. If he is not willing, I cannot force him. It is upto him.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If the Prime Minister wants to speak, he is most welcome to speak but otherwise, with the permission of the House, we would resume our discussion under Rule 193.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, Prime Minister wants to speak.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA) : Sir, with your kind permission, I would like to clarify only one point as regards the IMDT Act of Assam. Your goodself knows and the whole House knows that I visited all the North-Eastern States for about six and a half days. During my visit, I tried to meet all the sections of the society including leaders of political parties, non-Governmental organisations, Governors, Chief Ministers, Ministers and student unions. Like that, I tried to meet all sections of the people during my visit to the North-Eastern States.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT (Dausa) : What about the farmers?

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : In Assam, one of the demands was to repeal this Act. Almost all political parties including the Government party want to repeal it. But the Jamait-e-Islam—one group—came in the last and requested me not to take any hasty decision particularly on this Act. I told them that in the present context, unless all political parties were going to cooperate, it was rather difficult for me to repeal any Act and that they also, knew the composition of the House and that the Government would consider the matter with the cooperation of all parties.

Sir, this issue was also raised by the Press in the Press Conference. A majority of the people wants to repeal this Act because the purpose is not served by this Act. This is one of the major contentions. Under this Act, a Tribunal has been constituted to identify the foreigners. I do not want to go into the details like the impact of this Act. Though they have identified about 3.78 lakh people as foreigners, ultimately, the Tribunal passed an order for about 1000 people to be sent back to Bangladesh. So, this is the net result.

I do not want to enter into the merits and demerits now but there is some controversy on this issue. Unless I take the entire House into confidence, the question of repealing this Act at this stage will not arise.

15.18 hrs.

SITUATION ARISING FROM CYCLONE IN ANDHRA PRADESH - CONTD.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, with the permission of the House, we would resume discussion under Rule 193. I believe Shri K.S.R. Murthy was on his feet and therefore, he may carry on with his speech.

SHRI K.S.R. MURTHY (Amalapuram) : Mr. Chairman Sir, we are grateful to the Prime Minister for having consented to be here while discussing this calamity which never happened in the history of our country. We are particularly happy because there are conflicting reports in the Press that the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister were not getting on well and the State of Andhra Pradesh is likely to suffer as a result of the misunderstandings that have arisen between these two dignitaries.

Sir, I belong to Amalapuram parliamentary constituency where six of the Assembly segments have been completely washed out, out of the seven Assembly segments. When the hon. Prime Minister visited Amalapuram, I had not been informed of told that the Prime Minister was landing. When the hon. Minister of Agriculture went on a visit, I had not been told. Courtesy demands that the Member of Parliament should be informed whenever a Minister or the Prime Minister visits that area.

Even if there is a last minute change, that charge should be communicated to the hon. Member wherever he is.

Coming to the role played by the Meteorological Department, they had forecast a speed of 60 to 70 km. per hour whereas the actual speed was 220 km. per hour. If the speed of 220 km. per hour had been broadcast on the All India Radio and the Doordarshan and signalled the fact that several houses might fall, several trees might fall, people would have taken enough precautions to take their own whelter in places where they needed that shelter. This was not done.

The statement of hon. Minister of Agriculture mentioned that the technology was not available. The technology is very much available in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. We all know that in 1977 a similar disaster took place in Diviseema. About 10,000 people had died. The Americans and Indians living in America saw through the satellite what had happened there. It is very unfortunate that even today the Government of India does not possess the technology which could forecast the speed, the technology which could show on the Television the course of the cyclone and the hurricane. We do see in America how the tornado travels from minute to minute. When this was happening Amalapuram, our great Doordarshan was telecasting a one-day cricket match. This only shows the interest we have in protecting the lives of these people.

Having said that, I must say about the deaths. The Government has forecast 971 deaths and 925 missing. But the local people say that these may be far exceeding 2,000. There has been no effort to search the reserve forests all around the areas where the fishermen had lived. The fishermen say that several bodies must still be lying in the reserve forests to which the Government has no access. Even after 10 days, a fishermen landed at Madras swimming from Amalapuram. He was swimming in the sea for full eight days. And even the Naval aircraft or any other aircraft never noticed him.

The Coast Guard aircraft could have given a signal. If they had gone over the sea, they would have detected all the fishermen, who were there, without radio facility. They could have warned them and said: 'Go back to the shore because a cyclone is likely to come and destroy your lives'.

The scale of relief which had taken place was good. But there is a lot of politicisation. A number of people say that because they belong to a particular party, though their houses have been destroyed, these have not been enumerated. It is very fortunate. We should have formed village level all-party committees even before the relief had been started. This was not done. The district level committees, Mandal level committees and village level committees should be formed immediately before the relief operation is started. When we met the Prime Minister, he was kind enough to agree that all such Committees should be formed. I would like to suggest for your consideration that even for the reconsideration that even for the reconstruction programme, which is of a tremendous magnitude of Rs. 2,000 crore, there must be a committee headed by the

local Minister, that is, Minister is in charge of the district. Let it consist of all the MLA's, MP's and all party leaders so that they can give a direction. The district administration should also have concern for the construction programme. Unless this is done, there are likely to be very many allegations that this has not been done properly.

I must tell you that in this country even today, no States has a scientific management of a disaster. Your Collectors are not trained. Your Mandal Revenue Officers are not trained. Your politicians are not trained. Let us go ahead with a training programme for all these people. Hundred points are necessary to be taken when a disaster strikes. This criterion should be observed by all these people. Unless this is done, our Ham-radio sets have completely gone out of order.

The police wireless system has become completely useless because of this cyclone. We have to think of rectifying this system.

Sir, in regard to the Calamity Relief Fund, I would like to say that my Chief Minister says that a sum of Rs. 164 crores, over and above what has been allocated by the Tenth Finance Commission, has been spent and he is estimating a loss of Rs. 6,000 crore and he is asking for a reimbursement of Rs. 2,000 odd crore.

Sir, you were kind enough to declare this as a national calamity. But what does it mean? National calamity, according to me, means, the nation must bear the expenses of the affected State. We are not disputing that there is no national calamity in Orissa. What happened in Orissa is also a national calamity. What I am saying is that whenever a national calamity occurs, the Government of India must take the responsibility of funding the entire State irrespective of the resources that are available. If the resources are not available within the Government of India, we must find the ways and means as to how we could go ahead. But please do not minimise the gravity of the situation. It is a national calamity and I would request the hon. Prime Minister to take it with all seriousness and see how we could get over this situation. The Tenth Finance Commission might have set certain rules for funding national calamities. But the power to amend the rules is in your hands. You must amend the rules; define what is a national calamity irrespective of what the Tenth Finance Commission have said about the outlines of the national calamity. We should go over and over so that the aspirations of the people are definitely met. Allow the NGOs to come in a big way and see that relief takes place in a very *pucca* manner.

Sir, coming to the issue of the worst affected houses, I would like to say that about six and a half lakh houses have been affected by cyclone - 50 per cent of them fully destroyed; 50 per cent of them partially destroyed. You may not be able to appreciate this fact but if you drive around those two districts then you will appreciate as to what a calamity has befallen them. Even *pucca* houses with Bangalore tiles have been blown off. You

can well imagine about the exact conditions of the thatched houses. Now, the loss has been estimated at Rs. 963 crore. The Central Government, for the year 1996-97, has Rs. 3,000 crore under the Indira Awas Yojana. I would request you to kindly divert Rs. 1,000 crore over to the State for this programme. We are suggesting that a sum of Rs. 22,500 may be given to those whose houses have been fully damaged and a sum of Rs. 10,000 may be given to those whose houses have been damaged partially. The total requirement for looking after this would be Rs. 1042 crore. Sir, the NGOs may be allowed to come in a big way. Kindly imagine as to how we could fund our programmes. I would like to suggest that whichever houses that are going to be built, not only in these two districts but in the entire coast, should be of RCC roof. There should be no house with Bangalore tiles because it is likely to be blown off in such cyclones. All houses of RCC slabs must be there otherwise they would not be able to withstand the cyclonic storms.

We are suggesting that we should go to the World Bank. It is a good idea. Construction of infrastructural inputs like the canals, bridges, roads, drains and houses could be taken up with their help, in case the Indira Awas Yojana does not permit the entire programme to be taken up.

Sir, agriculture suffered very bad damages. The paddy crop has been completely washed out. It was about to be harvested in a couple of days. The crop has been lost. The loss incurred is supposed to be around Rs. 396 crore. Sir, the Government is giving Rs. 625 per hectare for the agriculturists. This is not adequate. We would recommend that it should be increased to Rs. 1500 or so. The scheme of crop insurance is very outmoded. Under this scheme three Mandals are taken to evaluate the crop damage. We are requesting you to take the village as the unit so that all the farmers and their crops are covered in this. Sir, we would also like to request for reduction of crop cutting experiments from 16 to four. We would like to request you to ignore all the 260 crop-cutting experiments that have already been conducted before the cyclone. Kindly write-off all the loans which are below Rs. 10,000. The farmers are very poor. They would not be able to withstand this calamity unless we give this concession to them. Whatever loans that we are going to give them, let them be given that at a concessional rate of interest.

Sir, the economy of the entire East and West Godavari depends on coconut. All the coconut trees there practically have been destroyed.

Some of them have been completely uprooted; some of them have lost their crowns which give the yield of coconut. The loss is estimated at about Rs. 300 crore. We should supply fresh saplings. We should help them in removing the fallen trees. In the Union Territory of Pondicherry, the Government has already announced Rs. 230 per tree to help them in removing the fallen trees. Similar assistance must be given here also. For other horticultural crops also a lot of help is necessary.

There are three categories of coconut plantation. The first category is of a very small man who has five or six trees. Let him be paid Rs. 2000 per plant as was done by the ONGC at the time of the blow out of their rig. The second category is of farmers who have some acres of land. If you give them Rs. 15000 as loan plus Rs. 5000 as subsidy, they would be able to overcome the situation. There is the coconut Development Board under Government of India on which there is no representative from Andhra Pradesh. I do not know where those representatives are from.

A number of cattle have been lost. Poultry farms are totally destroyed. Weavers and fishermen are badly affected. The fishermen should be rehabilitated. They should be given new boats and new nets. Weavers should be given new looms and yarn. There are schemes under the Government of India which can be integrated with the demands of these two sections of people through which they would be able to live a happy life. Artisans, and small craftsmen need to be given bank loans. NABARD and other nationalised banks should be brought in a big way. The relaxations which the Government of Andhra Pradesh wanted as far as the specifications of the foodgrains from the FCI are concerned, should be accepted *in toto*.

Power is still far away from these people. Ninety-five percent of the telephone exchanges in these areas are not working. The Government should see that something is done immediately to restore these facilities immediately. Panchayati Raj Department has suffered enormously. Roads and drains have been washed out. Water supply system has come to a standstill because of lack of power supply. Unless generators are supplied, people in those areas will not be able to get drinking water. This particular area suffers from brackish water. There are six lakh people who had to drink salt water in the absence of potable water. Unless a project is prepared for looking after them there would not be much of a benefit for these people. Irrigation has suffered; roads have suffered; public health has suffered; and all aspects of life have suffered.

I would like to appeal to the House and the Chairman that the hon. Speaker lead an all-party team of the Members of Parliament to see and assess the situation there. I would like all the Members of Parliament to contribute their one month's pay towards cyclone relief work. I would also like to tell this House that an estimated Rs. 6000 crore loss can be helped by a grant of and Rs. 2000 crore by way of assistance is needed. If there seems to be any exaggeration, let the Government of India go and verify the situation on the ground. The magnitude of the loss is unimaginable. Such a thing never happened in the history of this country.

*SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI (Khammam): Hon. Mr. Chairman, the night of November 6 turned out to be a night of doom for the people of coastal Andhra region. There was a cry of pain, anguish

and agony made by the Telugu mother who was caught in a dreadful and disastrous cyclone. This cry for help and request for a morsel of food for her hungry sons who have lost everything was heard by everywhere in the country. And, the country by and large has responded to that call for help which has emanated from cyclone stricken Telugu people. But Sir, the people in Andhra Pradesh doubt whether this call for help from them in their hour of crisis and need was heard properly by the Central Government and especially the Hon. Prime Minister. There is a feeling in the State that the Central Government has not responded adequately when a calamity of such magnitude struck the State. Whatever assistance that has been announced so far appears to be a mere jugglery of figures. The assistance in real terms is nowhere to be seen even in the statements made by the Government what to speak of the actual assistance already rendered. The spirit with which this calamity has been declared as a national calamity has been altogether missing in the Statements made on behalf of the Government. The quantum of aid announced so far does not reflect that spirit. And what is more significant is the fact that only a negligible amount of the total assistance announced so far is in the form of grants, the rest being in the form of either loans or advances. Even the State Government had commented that the Central assistance announced so far is to a large extent restricted to loans and advances and it is merely jugglery of figures. These statements made on behalf of the State and Central Governments are creating apprehensions in the minds of the people who are already suffering a lot. People are now worried more because of these statements and veering around the thought that there is no one in the Centre to rescue them in their hour of need. People had very high expectations from the United Front Government. Everyone thought that under the present dispensation, the State Governments would get full cooperation and help from the Central Government, more rights would be bestowed on the State Governments to make them strong and strengthen the federal fabric, steps would be taken to make the State strong and vibrant in economic sphere, and the recommendations made by the Sarkaria Commission to strengthen the State-Centre relationship by delegating more powers to the States. Everyone in the country felt happy about the declarations that as a part of Common Minimum Programme pucca houses would be provided to the poor and potable water would be made available in every part of the country within a minimum period of 5 years. Against this background, now the people have come to think that the Government is not responsive enough even when they are in a distress, facing a crisis, what to speak of noble declarations under CMP. Added to this, there are certain statements which were purported to have been made by the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Union Agriculture Minister are creating more confusion in the minds of people of the State. Sir, this is not the time for personality clashes. Nor is the time for an ideological conflict. It is the time which calls for

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Telugu.

a united action. This is the time, when the Union Government is expected to rise above partisan and petty conflicts and respond adequately to the cries for help from the people who have lost everything in the recent calamity. This is our party's stand.

Sir, Andhra has suffered a huge loss in the recent calamity. Just a week before the hurricane devastated the entire coastal belt of the State. There was a cyclone which had already brought in equally extensive damage. Nine districts were affected in the cyclone of October. East and West Godavari, Guntur, Prakasam, Nellore, Kurnool, Ananthpur, Cuddapah and Chittoor were the districts which were affected very badly in that cyclone. The State Government had been submitting detailed Reports to the Central Government about the loss suffered due to these natural calamities. As though that was not sufficient, there was a hurricane which hit the State on November 6th at around 8 PM and continued upto 1 AM of 7th. Within those fateful five hours, it totally ruined the entire areas. Nothing has been left out. This hurricane which had a velocity of 220 kmph hit 50 kms of area with a population of 70 lakhs. Just now we have heard the House debating the point whether it was a cyclone or a depression or a hurricane. Experts say that if the wind velocity touches 90 kmph, then it is a cyclone. But in this case, the speed has been 220 kmph. This was treated as a hurricane. Whatever it might be, we have to take seriously the extensive damage that it has brought in 971 persons have died, 927 are missing. These are the figures quoted by the State Governments. People say that the actual number of the dead and missing is much more. 6,47,000 houses collapsed completely. The standing paddy crop in 4 lakh hectares and commercial crops in 1.43 lakh hectares got washed away. 20,000 cattle perished. Poultry suffered a loss as 2.20 lakh to birds died. 2438 fish farms were hit beyond redemption. 6505 fishing boats are missing. Thousands of fishermen depend on these fishing boats for their survival. Now with these boats missing, they have been thrown out of their employment. In addition to this, 4321 small boats are missing. The State Government has been trying its best to help the victims of this tragedy. The relief work is in full swing. It is true that there are some irregularities taking place at the lower rung in implementing the rescue and relief operations. The State Government is committed to carry out honestly the relief and rehabilitation work. Many Non Government Organisations are also assisting the State Government to provide relief to the victims. Several State Governments especially Kerala and West Bengal have also responded favourably and donated liberally.

Sir, I am proud to say that Hon. Members belonging to my party have contributed their one month salary to help the victims. But all this is not sufficient enough. In order to meet the crisis of such a magnitude the response should come from the highest level, i.e., the Central Government. Instead of responding to the call to help

rescue the people who have lost everything in this calamity, the Hon. Prime Minister has expressed his own doubts about the authenticity of the figures of the estimated loss. It is reported in the newspapers that the Hon. Prime Minister has commented that the figures of loss and damage are perhaps exaggerating. It is quite unfortunate. Sir, a cartoon appeared in a Telugu daily recently. In the cartoon, a peon in the office of the PM is telling the PM that he should not doubt about the number of fallen coconut trees as he was fast asleep when the plane was flying over the affected area during his aerial survey. It might be a cartoon. But people in the State may mistake it to be true. That is not a healthy sign. Therefore, it is time that the Hon. Prime Minister responds and responds adequately. It appeared in the news that the Hon. Prime Minister has expressed his doubts about the quantum of loss when several delegations including MPs' delegations belonging to various parties had called on him to apprise him of the situation and seek Central assistance. There is no basis whatsoever to doubt the figures of damage submitted to the Central Government. The Central teams were not deputed to the State for assessment of the loss. Hence, there is no basis whatsoever to doubt the figures submitted by the State Government. Similarly, the Hon. Agriculture Minister is reported to have said that the situation in Orissa is more serious than the situation in Andhra Pradesh which is reeling under a cyclonic effect. He is reported to have said the loss is much more in Orissa than in Andhra. I do not wish to debate the point as to which State has suffered more. I do admit that the situation in Orissa is equally grave, if not more. As urged by the Hon. Members a while ago, it should also be treated as a national calamity. We have to take all the steps that are necessary to help the people there who were hit by drought. As urged by the former Prime Minister Shri Chandra Shekharji this morning, the concerned departments should work on a war-footing in providing drinking water to the affected people in Orissa. We support the demand that the Central Government should release the required amount for that purpose. Similarly, you cannot ignore existing situation in Andhra Pradesh. But at a time when there is a controversy raging that the Central Government had been neglecting Andhra Pradesh in allocation of funds and meting out step-motherly treatment to the State, it is unfortunate that the Hon. Agriculture Minister has reportedly made that comment. It hurt the sentiments of Telugu people. It confirms the lurking doubts in the minds of Telugu people that the Central Government had been neglecting the interests of State Government, that step-motherly treatment is being meted out in allocation of funds, that Hon. Prime Minister is not bothered about the State in all matters including Almatti, that he has no cordial relationship with Shri Chandra Babu Naidu. These are the reasons, the people now feel, why the Central Government is not coming out with massive assistance to rescue the State from this grim situation. It is also unfortunate that the Hon.

Agriculture Minister has come out with the statements comparing the existing conditions in Andhra and Orissa. This particular statement has also contributed in worsening further the situation in Andhra. Hence the Central Government should come out with a statement immediately clearly mentioning the details of loss and the quantum of assistance it is prepared to render. The statement should categorically speak about quantum of assistance allaying the fears and offering solace to the cyclone affected people in Andhra. It is also appearing in news that rules are coming in the way of offering assistance. Rules are meant for serving the people. If the rules come in the way of serving the people, then the rules should either be amended or abandoned. But in the name of the rules, people should not be made to suffer. Even after declaring that recent hurricane in Andhra was a national calamity, it is really surprising to find that the rules do not permit assistance more than Rs. 50 crore to the affected area. Sir, when late Shri Tanguturi Prakashan Pantulu was the Chief Minister, he happened to visit a village. The people in that village demanded a road. The Chief Minister instructed the accompanying officials to take steps to construct the road as demanded by villagers. The officials have pointed out to him that the rules do not permit taking up of the construction of that road. The Chief Minister told the officers that "We were elected by the people and were meant to serve the people. If the rules come in the way of serving people, please do away with such rules. You change the rule if need be, not the needs to the people". That spirit is now missing in the functioning of the Central Government. When the Central Government quotes the rules which do not allow adequate assistance, are they speaking with the intention to help the people who were totally ruined by the natural calamity? Or is it that in the name of rules, the Central Government wants to skip its responsibility to help the needy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Veerabhadram, will you please wind up?

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI : Two minutes please.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Lot of other speakers are there.

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI : I am the only speaker from my party. I will conclude within two or three minutes.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to make things clear. It should come out with a clear cut statement spelling out the details and the quantum of aid to the State. If the rules come in the way, efforts should be made to do away with such obnoxious rules. One thing that I want to bring to the notice of this august body and also the Hon. Prime Minister, whatever we may say here about rules, it is meaningless to speak about rules and regulations, our statutes and our Constitution to our illiterate, half-starving agriculture labourers who toil all the day to earn their bread, and

above all the same persons are subjected to unmitigated sufferings due to natural calamities. If you tell them about rules, they will ask, in turn, to change your rules. Construction of pucca houses to the poor and needy is one of the common minimum programmes. If the 6.47 lakhs of poor have lost roof over their heads due to the hurricane and beg for the reconstruction of their houses and when the CMP itself speaks about the construction of dwelling unit for such people, we cannot simply quote rules to express our inability to rebuild their houses and keep quiet. After all, under what rule did we include this programme in our CMP? Hence the time now has come to amend such rules. Let us help the people who are in a distressing condition even by doing away rules if need be. Now it appears that the World Bank is also willing to help us. Without the active cooperation of the Central Government, it is very difficult to get any assistance from the World Bank. I request the Central Government to declare in the House the losses suffered by the State, the quantum of assistance required for relief rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the quantum of assistance it is prepared to offer to assist the State in this gigantic task with all the facts and figures. In addition, the Central Government must also help rescue the assistance from various international organisations like World Bank. Also it should coordinate the efforts of various agencies like Coconut Development Board etc. The Coconut Development Board can supply sapplings and other things free of cost and thus help the farmers who grow horticultural crops. Similarly assistance from other agencies can also be had to rehabilitate the victims. Since this happens to be a national calamity, and if the rules do not permit us to go beyond a limit, then in those circumstances the Hon. Prime Minister should take initiative to influence the States and with his own influence and the influence of the Government, should make a concert effort to get the desired level of assistance from the NGOs and other organisations to help the State and its people to overcome the present crisis.

Thanking you Sir, I conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, the hon. Prime Minister has go to the Rajya Sabha at 4.00 p.m. so he would like to intervene at this stage.

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) : Sir, he should hear us.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is equally important for the Prime Minister to hear the Members of the Rajya Sabha also. He has been here for the last forty-five minutes. At 4 o'clock he has to go to the Rajya Sabha, so he would like to intervene... (Interruptions) We still have got one hour approximately left for this discussion. I will try to give everybody a chance to speak.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA) : Sir, with your permission, I would just like to clarify one point. So far as the reply to this particular issue is concerned, I myself am going to reply to it. The hon.

Minister for Agriculture has already made a statement and if he wants to add anything more, he is free to do so. But what action we have taken, all these things are going to be replied by me after the debate is concluded.

The only point which I would like to clarify is that we are trying to estimate the magnitude of the damage that has been caused in the recent cyclone. To that effect there is some controversy but I do not want to be a party to that. Several delegations have met me in this context. I myself held the aerial survey and I do not want to tell all the details right now. At the time of reply I am going to say about my assessment to the whole situation.

One delegation came to me and said that the loss is around Rs. 15,000 crore; the Government has submitted a memorandum stating that the loss is around Rs. 6,000 crore; another delegation came to me and said that the loss is around Rs. 8,500 crore.

So, in their opinion they might have assessed the damage as Rs. 15,000 crore or Rs. 8,000 crore. The Government, in its opinion, has submitted a memorandum for about Rs. 6,000 crore. I only said to one delegation: 'The official team is also going. The official team is coming back and it will submit a report. Afterwards I can give my correct views on the quantum of loss.'

Please see, everybody has got his own views. Now I do not want to comment at this stage. Fifty lakh coconut trees have fallen. In two districts, as per one assessment, there are sixty lakh coconut trees and out of which, all have fallen. I have not gone to every garden...*(Interruptions)*

DR. M. JAGANNATH : *rose* -

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Shri Jagannath, please wait for one minute. You can talk afterwards. I only said that each team went on making its own assessment. One team has assessed it as Rs. 15,000 crore. They have gone and issued a statement that the Prime Minister has no concern about the Andhra damage. Another team came to me. Everybody says that politics should not be mixed. But saying is one thing. This should not happen. That is all. The Government is equally concerned. So far as the accurate damage is concerned, till the official report comes, I cannot say anything. I will reveal every action taken by the Government up-till now in the evening when I am going to reply to this discussion...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VENKATARAMI REDDY ANANTHA (Anantpur): The press is going on saying that the State Government is blaming the Central Government and the Central Government is not taking the responsibility...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : No. I am not going to say, I said, 'team'. Three teams have come to me. One team has said Rs. 15,000 crore; another team has said Rs. 8,500 crore and the Government's report is

Rs. 6,000 crore. So, I had to rely upon the official team. The official team is going to study the entire affected area and it will submit a report. Till then you have to wait...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : It was not the political parties who accused of lack of concern for those who suffered in the cyclone. It was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh who has blamed the Centre for rigid and non-cooperative attitude...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Shri Upendraji, I can understand who are all doing politics. Please do not try to drag the issue further.

I have not named as to who has said Rs. 15,000 crore. I have not named as to who has said Rs. 8,500 crore. I have only said, 'delegations'. I have not said, 'Congress, Telugu Desam or another Telegu Desam'. I do not want to say the name of any party or parties. I have only said that the teams or the delegations met me and said what they have submitted in their memorandum. I have just brought them to the notice of this House.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Andhra Pradesh cyclone, which has to be renamed as hurricane because as per the international standards, when the winds were blowing at 220 kilometres per hour, it has to be treated as hurricane.

I also thank all the political parties for cutting across the party and for having supported our cause. I expect that the Central Government to be generous in allocating funds for relief and rehabilitation.

Cyclones are an inherent feature of Andhra Pradesh which has a coastline of 1,000 kms. Hardly a fortnight after the devastating cyclone hit the coastal East West Godavari in Rayalaseema district of Andhra Pradesh, the State administration is desperately trying to come to grips with the colossal dimensions of the havoc which, by any reckoning has few parallels. In its qualitative features like the wind velocity and destructive potential the 6th November visitation is ranked next only to the nightmarish episode of 1977, although the number of lives lost now - officially placed at over 900 is actually much more than thousand. Besides, 2,000 fisherman were feared dead when they were swept away by tidal waves in the Bay of Bengal in the recent Andhra Pradesh cyclone.

More than 6,48,474 houses including thatched huts were destroyed in East and West Godavari District. There were also heavy losses of livestock and crops were completely damaged and washed away. 3,36,000 hectares of paddy was lost; 4,4000 hectares of sugarcane was lost; Rs. 350 crore of coconut and cash crop were lost.

Train services, road traffic, power supply and communication networks had been completely paralysed in the two coastal districts. Seventy lakh people grappled

with calamity: 1385 villages were affected. The assistance of the Central Government is very meagre as the loss happens to be more than Rs. 6000 crore.

Even as the people were preparing themselves to face the onslaught of the cyclone that was forecast to descend on them around midnight, it caught them unawares by arriving around 6.00 PM. The two districts were plunged into darkness following a major power breakdown. Even when their roofs were being blown away, people chose to stay indoors rather than venturing out, for fear of getting blown away.

Konaseema, the cone-shaped estuary of the Godavari River, covers two districts, East and West Godavari. These areas are considered to be the rice bowl of the State. They faced the burnt of the fury. The region which is one of the more picturesque in Andhra Pradesh, was filled up with water and turned into a 'burial ground'.

According to the preliminary estimates, apart from the dead, thousands of people were feared to be injured, some of them seriously. Asbestos sheets which served as roofs were blown away as were electric and telephone poles. A microwave tower at Ravulapalem which was planned to withstand 200 Kms. per hour wind came grumbling down. That shows the magnitude of the burricane. About 6,505 boats, including mechanised ones, each with two or three fishermen on board, were reported missing.

The winds took tidal waves to a height of two metres and the waves swept across the coastal villages causing of pylons. The cyclone brought down electrical installations leading to a major power breakdown in the East and West Godavari districts.

The Calamities Relief Fund of Rs. 124 crore that was earmarked for Andhra Pradesh by the Tenth Finance Commission has run into negative balance with the onslaught of droughts and cyclones.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Dr. Jagannath, if I may very respectfully point out, that in a discussion, the speech is not normally read out. You can take points from your speech and then bring them out.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : With this magnitude of loss, we request the Central Government to generously help us by taking the following steps :

1. Additional Grant from National Calamity Fund.
2. One day salary from (a) Central Government Employees; (b) Public Sector Employees; and (c) Employees of Banks and Financial Institutions.
3. Loan assistance of Rs. 150 crore for power sector and rescheduling of the existing loans.
4. Lump sum grant of Rs. 50 crore from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

5. Twenty-four lakh tonnes of rice for the Public Distribution System in Andhra Pradesh without any linkage to the procurement.
6. Food Corporation of India to open Paddy Purchase Centres to procure paddy with relaxation.
7. Project for coconut plantation revival. Additional amount for tree and bank loan for fresh plantation.
8. Funds for road repairs: Rs. 18 crore for National Highways and Rs. 21 crore for State roads and buildings.
9. Family welfare dues from the Government of India amount to around Rs. 40 crore to be released.
10. Sanction of funds for rural roads (Rs. 55 crore)
11. Additional funds for E.A.S.
12. Additional funds for Rural Water Scheme.
13. Housing: Cyclone Housing Project with World Bank Aid (outlay of Rs. 350 crore); sanction of at least one lakh houses under IAY; and rescheduling of loans to LIC and HUDCO.
14. RADF - Assistance from BABARD.
15. Loan amount of Rs. 150 crore.

Sir, before I conclude, I would like to bring to the notice of this House that adequate precautionary measures were taken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

16.00 hrs.

(Shri Basu Deb Acharia in the Chair)

Had the A.P. Government not taken adequate precautionary measures just like in the 1977 cyclone, the death toll would have been more than ten thousand. The State Government swung into action as soon as the impending crisis was forecast. The district administration was alerted in the threat zones. An alert had gone out to the Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam and Air Force Station, Begumpet. The Railway and State Transport Authorities were also warned about regulating traffic. A wireless communication network had been established between the affected areas and the State Headquarters. Warnings were issued to the population in the vulnerable areas. A total of 1,90,995 people were evacuated and housed in about 800 relief camps. But all these efforts were dwarfed into anonymity by the fury unleashed by nature. The cyclone which was stated to take a course got diverted five or six times and gone in different directions which surprised the people.

So, under these circumstances, I entirely disagree with the allegations made by some of the hon. Members here. Had the State Government not taken adequate

precautions, the death toll would have been much more, as in the 1977 cyclone.

So, I appeal to the Government of India to generously give us funds for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the cyclone hit victims of Andhra Pradesh.

Lastly on the 7th November, 1996, the hon. Chief Minister was there. He has established a mini Secretariat with a number of Secretaries monitoring the relief measures along with a team of Ministers, M.Ps. and M.L.As.

With these few words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI B. DHARMA BIKSHAM (Nalgonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the cyclone which hit Andhra Pradesh this time, is not a new one. Similar cyclones had also taken place in this State in 1953, 1957 and 1977 due to which Andhra Pradesh had to suffer a heavy loss. When the cyclone hit the State in 1977, I was present. I had also visited East-West Godavari, Guntoor, Anantpur and Krishna etc. alongwith the general secretary of our party and MLAs of the State. I have come to know that as soon as the Prime Minister of the country heard about that tragedy, he immediately went there to take stock of the situation. The Chief Minister of our State had also visited several affected areas frequently and took stock of the situation. The Central Government and the State Government got surprised when they assessed the loss suffered by these districts but the assessments made by the Centre and State Government were different which created doubt among the people. If the assessment of the hon'ble Prime Minister somehow differs from the assessment of State Government, he can discuss it with the State Government. It is because of the fault finding attitude of the Central Ministers in regard to the State Government that such doubtful situation has been created and it seems that the Central Government is not co-operating us.

I would like to say something about the loss suffered by the State due to this cyclone. 12 districts of Andhra Pradesh are located alongwith the coast. Several districts of Rayalseema region had been affected due to occurrence of cyclone three times earlier. These districts have been suffering a loss continuously. In 1977, the then Minister had formulated a plan to construct a concrete wall along the coast in order to deal with the tragedy but it has not been implemented today.

I would like to say something about fishermen living Thousands of fishermen live along the coast. They spend half of their life in the sea. Central Government have not taken any step so far for the safety of these people. Had the shelters been made to deal with the situation, where these people could have taken shelter and saved their lives on entering of water in these villages. There is a old shelter in a district

which can collapse any time and cause loss of life and property. Due to entering of the sea water in the Kakinada city, half of the city had submerged by water. The number of fishermen living along the coast is in thousands. That area is becoming a slum today. No safety measures are being taken to save these fishermen. Most of the killed are these fishermen. I went to a village called Balsu which is located close to the coast. I have come to know that 750 persons of that villages were killed in this cyclone. The fishermen of that village suffered a heavy loss. Their houses were washed away and now they have no place for living. They are being neglected whereas the Central Government and State Government and the contractors earn crores of rupees from aqua-culture only because of these people but nobody is ready to make concrete houses and shelters for them. In addition to a long term plan, and another scheme should be prepared for the benefit of those fishermen who live along the coast.

Discussion is going on about natural calamity here. The Central Government should compensate the loss suffered there. If Government do so, we will be able to get assistance from foreign countries also and thus, we can deal with this situation. Thousands of persons are living in that area. Their gardens and houses have been destroyed, as a result of that, they have become homeless now. The position has become such that coconut producing farmers can not stay there to carry out their works for the next 20 years any work there. The flow of sea water has destroyed them completely. Several hon'ble Members have expressed their views in this regard. Hon'ble Prime Minister has also expressed his concern over this Calamity but he should take some action immediately in this regard. I have visited that area but I did not see any officer of the Central Government there. In my opinion, the Central Government should have deployed there military personnels or para-military forces but the Prime Minister has conducted only aerial survey and finished his job. I think that he has ignored the situation. The Central Government should send its machinery there and release funds immediately. The Central Government is releasing a little and its way of giving assistance is not proper so, the Central Government should consider this problem seriously and hold discussion with the officers and representative of the State Government. Efforts should be made by the Central State Government jointly to resolve their differences. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am encouraged to participate in this unhappy discussion only upon finding my senior and esteemed colleague, a very senior member of this Government, Comrade Indrajit Gupta here. My intervention will be a very short one. But I do urge him, as a very senior member of this Government, even though the Minister concerned is not here, to please

reflect on my submission and for the Government to respond adequately.

The natural calamities are of no one's making. Our difficulty is not with the occurrence of the natural calamities. That is a collective disaster. The word, the phrase itself suggests that they are beyond our control...*(Interruptions)* It is only when the natural calamities are permitted to turn into, descend into man-made disasters that this House comes into functioning and into displaying its sense of responsibility. In this particular case of, may be, two cyclones - whether you actually call it a cyclone or do not call it a cyclone, is to engage in semantics, to play with words - two very major disasters occurred in Andhra in very rapid succession.

This House is not engaged in examining what the State Government did or did not do and what they did was adequate or inadequate. Our concern is limited to the role, function and duties and responsibilities of the Union Government. In examining that, I am persuaded to first quote from what the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, from whose party there are Members who are now part of this Government, said. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, not after the natural calamity but after he had done whatever he could do as Chief Minister, after he had come to Delhi and met the Government that he himself and his party are supporting and in response to what the Union Government, the Government that he supports, the kind of sustaining efforts that he found from this Government, this is what he was persuaded to say. I am quoting his words as reported. I may be in error in the exact phraseology, but I have no reason to doubt its veracity. The Chief Minister said :

"The inadequate response of the Central Government in the aftermath of the cyclone in Andhra Pradesh has exposed the imbalances in the federal structure."

I wish to address myself to these two aspects. The first is what he has found to be 'inadequate response' and the second one is 'imbalances in the federal structure' in regard to natural calamity which we then converted into a man-made disaster. The second thing is also equally important that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has said. These remarks are very stringent, very trenchant criticism of the Government that his own party is supporting.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : We are supporting from outside.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : They are not simply supporting they are participating in the Government. You are supporting, but not participating.

I do not know, in the face of calamity - when you yourself call it a calamity and when you say that it has been converted into a man-made disaster by the manner in which we have handled it - whether you are participating or you are supporting from outside, the

extent of guilt spreads equally. It is without doubt a calamity. If even now, you do not find it as a calamity, I do not know why you initiated this discussion. The second thing which is even a more trenchant observation on the function is :

"The rigid and non-cooperative attitude of the Central Government raises questions about its willingness, ability and preparedness to come to the rescue of the victims and the State Governments concerned."

These are not the ordinary statements. These are the statements questioning the Government's willingness, ability and competence. These are made in the face of two major catastrophes that certainly visited the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh in rapid succession.

What are the aspects involved? My colleague has earlier referred to them. The first aspect relates to a timely disaster warning. I know, Sir, starting from the very early efforts that we made in space technology - and the hon. former Speaker is also here who has handled that portfolio - we spent enormous talent and enormously talented Indians went into space technology, early warning systems and I do believe that so far as that aspect of the wherewithal is concerned, India is second to no one else in the world. The spare transponders that are available, the meteorological data can be collected by the space vehicles we have launched periodically over a period of time. They do enable India, Indian scientists and Indian Meteorological Department to collect early warnings about some of these kinds of natural calamities that might occur.

Therefore, the question that was asked in response to the Minister's statement that we broadcast over Doordarshan, All India Radio and through other channels that there was a storm coming acquires pointedness. She asked a question as to when actually and how the warning was given. She quite rightly said that the people do not move about with mobile radios or cellular telephones in coastal Andhra Pradesh so that they can be informed that a very severe cyclone that is likely to convert itself into a hurricane is about to hit the coast. This is a very relevant point and the Government owes it to us to answer both the aspect of non-utilisation of the existing early warning systems which are inherent in our space vehicles and satellites as well as the aspect of transmitting the information. To whom did the Government give that information? She quite rightly pointed out that the District Collector of the most severely hit district, upon being asked by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on the next morning, not on the night of the occurrence of the cyclone, said: "All is well." He was not even in the district and he says that all was well. He did not even find it necessary to go to the district!

SHRI K.S.R. MURTHY (Amalapuram) : He was in Amalapuram. What the Chief Minister said about the District Collector is not correct.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : I think it is a small point. I would much rather believe what the Chief Minister has said because after all the Chief Minister is responsible for the State. But that is not the point. I do not think the point was about the presence or the absence of the Collector. The point is about the timely warning and the response of the Union Government to give that timely warning.

The second aspect is about the disaster management. I think in the whole system of disaster management, it is in the management of a calamity that we almost always tend to convert it into a man-made disaster. It is in the efficiency, application, determination, and the time taken in response to a calamity that this difference lies. Between the occurrence of the calamity and the response mechanism to it we convert a calamity into a man-made disaster. I will come to certain specific aspects of how we can improve this at least now for the future.

The third aspect is the fiscal component and in the fiscal component I am not going into a point that is already made which is about the proposal of going to the World Bank borrow long term funds. This is a very substantial point made by my colleague, the previous speaker Kumari Uma Bharati. But in the fiscal component let me just point out the systems that we adopt, three or four aspects to it and also about the whole system of sanctioning reliefs.

The disaster or calamity or whatever you may call it occurred in Andhra Pradesh on the night of 6th November, 1996 from 9.30 p.m. onwards. I would really like to know as to when did the first relief, as such from the Union Government find its way to Andhra Pradesh. Days pass and this whole system of evaluating a calamity that occurs, the overweighed bureaucratic procedures etc. go on and on. Calamity and consequent human suffering and tragedy that follow do not wait for bureaucratic file clearance. If we do not recognise this despite repeated calamities that have occurred in India and given the size and diversity of our land, they will unhappily and unfortunately continue to occur - then this is the kind of management of a disaster that we will continue to display.

I would be very happy if the Government actually responds to what is the thinking about these things.

Now the Tenth Finance Commission also took note of this particular aspect. Taking cognisance of the ground reality it then recommended the establishment of a National Fund for Calamity Relief. But as is our tendency, even the management of this Calamity Relief Fund has got tangled into all kinds of complicated bureaucratic and political consideration.

Let me quote just what the Tenth Finance Commission's report on this subject says. The Tenth Commission had expressed a hope and I am now quoting :

"That with the setting up of the National Fund for Calamity Relief, it would now be possible to tackle calamities of rare severity more effectively."

It is not saying, 'totally satisfactorily'. It is content to say, 'more effectively'. But what it says next moves me. What is more it says :

"We hope that the system recommended by us would also help create a sense of national solidarity in a common endeavour which would then abide beyond the period of distress."

This is only one judging criteria that I apply. Look at the response of this House to this calamity. All the Members from Andhra and not just simply from Andhra, others also, have found fault with the manner in which the Union Government has responded. Even in the face of calamity converted into a disaster, we have not been able to do what the expectation of the Tenth Finance Commission, which was to achieve national solidarity, at least, in the face of a calamity. We are unable and why are we unable? Simply, because of what the Chief Minister of Andhra earlier said - insensitivity and unwillingness. These are very severe words. The Government owes it to us to reply. Nothing short of a clear and categorical rebuttal of what the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has said read and examined in the light of what the Tenth Finance Commission has said could justify.

There are two or three other small points which I sincerely hope the Government would respond to. The first is the time lag. The time lag between the occurrence of a natural calamity. It is a part of the total disaster management. The time-lag between the occurrence of a natural calamity and its conversion into a disaster because of the absolutely laggard manner in which the Union Government moves into supporting it. Look at the time-lag involved - 6th of November to 26th of November. Twenty days have gone by and it has taken 20 days for the Union Government to come out with just Rs. 50 crore from ways and means as advance against the demand raised by the State Government of something like Rs. 2,140 and odd crore. Now, these 20 days are the most important days. These are the 20 days when you need money, when the State needs money and when immediate relief has to be provided. Human suffering does not wait for bureaucratic file clearance. The Government must share its thinking on this time lag.

The next thing I suggest is that please abolish this absurdity of study teams sent from the Central Government. At a certain level if I had anything to do with the administration of a State or running of State

Government. I would find it insulting. The same IAS officers in the State are not competent to examine a calamity or competent to come to a conclusion and decide what is to be done.

The same Indians elected to the Legislative Assemblies and coming into office in their respective States are not competent to take a decision on what immediate relief is to be provided. They have to be overseen by a study team comprising possibly of an unwilling Joint Secretary being sent against his wishes to go and examine the coastal districts of Andhra and come back in three days to tell us what has happened, what is the damage and how much money should be given. I think we have to rethink about this kind of a study team sitting as monitor upon the same service, the same administrative method or the same democratic method which have elected the Government. This is one single contributory factor both to time-lag as also to what the Chief Minister of Andhra has called about the federal structure. This is a very serious point that he has made. I would advise this House to take it seriously. This time-lag is caused by this methodology of an half-hearted and unwilling study teams.

I come to my final point. I think, the time has come even now after fifty years of Independence, fifty years of our actually having worked with this system, this Constitution - leave alone the other deficiencies that we find in its functioning because the debate today is confined to the calamity that has arrived upon the coastal Andhra, let us confine to Andhra and say that we have to even now work out a suitable mechanism for immediate sanctioning of that kind of financial support which provides the State Government, the necessary flexibility to respond in time. And here the Calamity Relief Fund is no longer working satisfactorily. You constitute a Committee of five Chief Ministers. What about the Chief Minister whose State is affected? He is not there? These five Chief Ministers meet and advance sanctioning from the Calamity Relief Fund. I do not want to go into the previous examples. When the previous Government was there, one of the hon. Ministers who was then holding the portfolio of the Minister of Agriculture, sanctioned from this Calamity Relief Fund monies which were really political sanctions, with the result, when the calamity really occurred in other States like Rajasthan etc., there was no money for flood relief, there was no money available to be given to anyone. Now because of this kind of playing with the Calamity Relief Fund for the partisan purposes, we have to, therefore, find altogether a different answer.

I did not really intend to participate in this discussion but for the fact that the discussion was wandering off into all kinds of by-lanes and channels. Therefore, I sought your permission and I am very grateful to you that you granted it. It is my earnest hope and request that the Government would respond to the points that I have made. I have not gone into the arithmetic of

human disaster - how many dead etc. I have raised points which are directly the responsibility of the Union Government. I think, it is the bounden duty of the Government to respond at least to these points because do not know that even after fifty years down the path of history of our independent functioning, if even now in the face of such human tragedies and calamities, we have to question whether the problems are in the management of the disaster, whether the problems are attitudinal, procedure, financial or whether the problems are actually of Governmental indifference. And I am inclined to think that it is really on account of the Government's indifference to human tragedy of this kind that we continue to face the problems of the kind that we are doing today in Andhra which have persuaded the Chief Minister of Andhra to criticise his own Government in the terms that he had.

[Translation].

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : The hon'ble Prime Minister has visited there but even the concerned Minister is not present here.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has gone to the Rajya Sabha.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The concerned Minister is not present here.

MR. CHAIRMAN : This issue is being discussed in the Rajya Sabha also, therefore, he has gone there.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs is present but the Minister of Agriculture is not here.

[English]

SHRI VENKATARAMI REDDY ANANTHA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, about the recent devastating incidents affecting the State of Andhra Pradesh, the first one occurred in the month of October affecting the Rayalseema region, that is, Anantapur, Cuddapah, Chittoor, Kurnool, Nellore and Prakasam districts; and the second devastation of severe magnitude occurred on 6th of this month affecting the East and West Godavari districts. Due to this severe devastation and the lack of sensitiveness to these two incidents, more than 2000 people have died and lakhs of people have become homeless. And, it has caused a loss of more than Rs. 7,000 crore.

Let me thank the hon. Prime Minister for making a personal visit to both the affected regions, by aerial surveys along with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

The Prime Minister has said that the magnitude of this devastation is 'more than a national calamity' and at the same time the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has said that this devastation is 'a national calamity' and 'more than a national calamity'. It is simply evading of responsibility. Both the Central Government as well as the State Government are not taking any responsibility in regard to this calamity.

Here, it is my humble submission, Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you that the Government should provide fullest assistance to the affected people there.

In the first incident, the backward region of Rayalseema was severely affected. Due to this calamity, not only there has been loss of more than 400 people but also lakhs of acres of crops were damaged, especially the groundnut crop. The communication system, highway roads and the irrigation tanks have been severely damaged.

The entire country know the backwardness of Rayalseema region which is being affected by the severe drought for the last so many years. But in contrast, this year it has been affected by floods.

Sir, it is my humble submission to the Central Government and the State Government not to make fuss about taking up responsibility of the affected people. They should simply take care of the affected people. They should try to bring back the normalcy in these affected areas.

I also request the Centre to please be generous in releasing adequate funds for the affected people in Andhra Pradesh.

[Translation]

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not want to repeat those points which have already been discussed in this House. But I would like to say that the Hon'ble Prime Minister realises that it is a national tragedy and when it is a national tragedy, the differences of opinion are being witnessed between the Centre and the State Government. As a result thereof, the people offering their voluntary help, have stopped to do so. The second thing is, since the science has made great progress in the field of technology and missiles, the people should have been given the information about the cyclone. Now it is being said that the hon'ble Minister has just stated that an announcement was made through T.V. and Radio in this regard. But infact, we have not been told as to when such announcement was made. Even the Minister concerned has not told us. I would only like to know that if such announcement was made then what were your officers doing there, why did they not stop the fishermen from going in the sea so that their lives could be saved?

Another point is that when in 1977, such cyclone had taken place, it was said at that time that now the direction of the cyclone had diverted towards Andhra Pradesh instead of Bengal and we should have taken precautionary measures but no such measures have been taken so far and as a result of that we have suffered such a big loss today. Today, I am compelled to say that I have witnessed piles of dead bodies lying there every where and nobody was available to remove those bodies as a result thereof foul smell was spreading everywhere. There were some children whose parents

had died and their houses were washed away. I would like to submit that the Government should provide immediate relief to those who are in trouble and the people rendered homeless should be rehabilitated.

A situation of starvation is increasing there. The track between Vijayawada and Calcutta which is 1000 kilometer long, has been damaged. No track is available to go to other State due to which trade operation has been affected. The Central Government should take steps to improve the condition of these tracks. Railway tracks have been damaged. Atleast these tracks should be repaired, first. The work in regard to assessment of loss due to this tragedy can be made later on. I would like to conclude my speech after mentioning that the people of Andhra Pradesh have come to know that the Union Government did not provide them the required assistance and that he is not the Chief Minister of Karnataka anymore and is the Prime Minister of the entire country while there is dispute in Andhra Pradesh over Almatti dam. People say that the Government is ready to provide money for raising the height of the said dam while it is not providing assistance to the cyclone victims and dislocated people. The Government just provides the meagre assistance of Rs. 50 crore and conducts an aerial survey that's all. I would not like to say more but the Government should have increased the amount after witnessing the devastating scene. But the situation has worsened and if any individual or any voluntary agency invokes upon the people or nation out of generosity, he is compared with a beggar with a begging bowl. It is strange argument. They do not understand that it is a national calamity. India also has helped the distressed people of the world. Our forces have established peace in the disturbed countries and sacrificed their lives. Therefore, saying it a begging is very strange. After all, it depends as to how one thinks. "Mujhe kahna nahin hai fikra ke liye, har pahar ki fikra juda hoti hai." I would like this problem to be solved as soon as possible and the work should be done immediately with patience. A joint team of State and Centre should be formed to undertake the relief work and provide assistance to the sufferers.

I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia) : Sir, already the matter has been discussed at length and the details of the calamity in respect of loss of life and huge loss of property etc. have been given. I would like to just say that this type of calamities are not new. About nineteen years back when a massive cyclone had hit the eastern coast, more than fifteen thousand people died along with the tidal wave. That was one of the biggest natural calamities of our country.

We have had many other such calamities also. In 1978, as you know, in West Bengal a massive cyclonic storm and flood had hit the State's economy. Thousands

of people lost their lives and about nineteen lakh houses were destroyed. Out of seventeen districts, sixteen were totally damaged; a large part of them had been destroyed also. Orissa experiences every alternate year such a cyclonic disaster.

Tamil Nadu has also had some such problems. Our experience is there. Our Meteorological Department has all the data of the last fifty to hundred years. They have all the information. But why are we not making ourselves efficient? We are not able to utilise the latest technology while facing such natural calamities. We know that in countries like Philippines and in several other foreign countries such natural calamities occur at regular intervals. But there the information system is much better; the people are informed much earlier, they are evacuated before much damage is done and they face the situation in a better way. Our disaster management system is still not much advanced though we have a lot of scientists and research institutes. There is a lot of communication gap and we are lacking in efficient management. In the coastal regions, this way, we are suffering every year or every alternate year. These are some of the points which our Government should ponder over: how could we utilise the latest technology, scientific research and get all the information on time; inform the people on time and face such calamities in a better way. We cannot stop the occurrence of calamities but we have to evolve methods whereby we can face them with the minimum loss.

They claim that the communication system has advanced. If our communication system has improved, at the same time, our development in other areas should be commensurate. In that region, we know, these calamities occur every year. Even the time of occurrence is known. It happens in May, and then in October or November. So, before it occurs, we have enough time to take precautionary measures. We have seen, in the recent case, as the report says, that evacuation is a big problem there because there are no proper roads. About forty per cent of the villages in that area have no all weather roads. So, if immediate evacuation is required, vehicles cannot move easily. That way, a problem is created. Then, we have seen that where there is a roof, that is where people live under a roof, the damage is less. That means huts and *kuchcha* houses are damaged more.

For this type of a cyclone prone area, the Government should have a masterplan so that we can face the cyclones easily. For that, adequate investment is necessary; proper planning is necessary and the latest technology should be utilised so that we can have a protected coastal region. There should be all weather roads and some better houses where the people can take shelter when such calamities occur. When these calamities occur, we discuss all these aspects in the House, in the Assemblies, in Parliament and funds are allocated but later they are all shelved. This is why these damages repeatedly occur. If we do

not have a comprehensive masterplan to face such situations, then, we have to discuss these issues every year and again and again we have to lose valuable human lives.

This is one of the major problems this Government should ponder over. As has already been mentioned and as you also know it is a national calamity and the entire nation should stand by the people of Andhra Pradesh. Such things happened earlier also. We have seen it Latur, Maharashtra during the times of earthquake and we have seen such things in Garhwal region also. When such major calamities occur, the whole nation, the Central Government, the State Governments and the common people should stand by the suffering people and help them to rebuild their houses and to go back to their normal life again.

One of the major sections of the society which suffers most is the fishermen community. They are the worst sufferers. Still one thousand are missing and among them most of them probably would be fishermen. They would never come back. When it is recorded as 'missing', they do not get any benefit. After fixing a time limit we should give the benefit to those missing people which is given to the kith and kin of the dead so that they can face this problem. These are the immediate steps that the Government should take which was put before us when our delegation visited the area.

We have placed the following demands before the State Government, the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister. Firstly, We should take a liberal view in this matter and we should not allow the rules to become impediments in giving them financial help. A liberal view should be taken by the House and by the Government while giving them grants. Secondly, we should take measures for the rehabilitation of those who were affected in order to revive their agriculture activity. Thirdly, the fishermen, as I have already said, are in great trouble. They should be given adequate assistance for they have lost their lives, boats and nets. All these requirements should be provided. Fourthly, there is massive destruction of plantation. That should be taken care of. Replantation of coconut and other trees should be undertaken so that they can revive their economic activity. Fifthly, paddy and other crops have been damaged. In some areas crops are totally damaged and in some other areas they are partially damaged. Those things should be purchased by the FCI. At least some benefit should go to the farmer, those who produce crops. As the crops have been damaged, the quality cannot remain better. So, it should be procured by the Government. Then, for the cultivation, necessary seeds and fertilizers should be provided to the farmers so that they can start the agricultural activity again.

Another thing which should be taken up immediately is this. A special employment generating programme should be initiated immediately so that those who have suffered - who are now unemployed, who are now

starving and who have a lot of problems now - are taken care of fully. Moreover, effective measures to stop any type of epidemic disease from spreading should be taken up.

Finally, we should instal short range weather forecasting centres in the entire coastal region, not only in Andhra Pradesh, but in other places like Cuttack, Contai, etc., where such things occasionally occur. So, short range weather forecasting centres with latest technological instruments should be set up and they should be utilised. The information about warning should immediately go to those people who need it; and we have to keep everything ready for evacuating them so that we can avoid loss of life and can face such calamities with minimum loss.

I hope that the Prime Minister and others in the Government will take care of all these demands and we further hope that we would face the situation in a much better way.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Nalanda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the statement given by the Hon'ble Minister this morning, it was stated that the Indian Meteorological Department had been keeping track of the cyclone and simultaneously warning the State Government from time to time about the likely course and landfall of the cyclone and these warnings were broadcast through Doordarshan and All India Radio also. I would like to have definite information from the Government as to when and how were the warnings given. Whether the warning was given through All India Radio or whether the Union Government or any department of the Union Government had given any warning to the Chief Minister of the State or his aide or to the Chief Secretary or any other official? The hon'ble Prime Minister should clarify it.

Secondly, I want to know whether you had broadcast it through All India Radio or whether the information was relayed to the Government in Hyderabad? If the information was given to Hyderabad, what action was taken thereupon in Hyderabad? Whether the Union Government have sought information from Hyderabad and if so, whether the Prime Minister felt the need to seek information in this regard when he went over to the State to conduct an aerial survey of the area and if so, we should also be given this information.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, thirdly, when we talk of administration, we take into account district level administration also. Four districts namely, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam and Prakasam have been affected. Out of these, two districts have been badly affected and one has been worst affected. I want to know as to what concrete steps were taken by the District Magistrates or the Collectors, who are the chief administrative authorities in the district?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the reason behind raising all these questions and seeking a reply from the hon'ble Prime Minister is not only to expose the guilty persons but I want a reply also because this is not the first time that such a calamity has occurred in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh has been facing such calamities frequently and every time, discussions have been taking place here. Though we have not been able to do something more this time, I feel the Government, after this discussion, will come out with a concrete programme to avoid such difficulties in future and it would be a great achievement.

17.00 hrs.

Sir, the politicians often take along a large number of people for staging demonstrations, public meetings and rallies. Any major political party the particularly the ruling party can manage to get a lakh or two lakh people to travel to any metropolitan city of the country within twenty four hours. The number of people affected by this calamity is a mere 1,72,150. It has been stated that these people were evacuated from the affected areas and taken to safer places. These 1,72,150 people belonged to two districts and if the Chief administrative officers of these district has been alert, more than one thousand people could have been saved from there jaw of death. The Government should have taken steps to take people to safer places. If the Government had taken the political parties into confidence and sought their cooperation, it would have been possible to take effective steps to protect the lives and property of people. So, I would like to know about the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in future.

Sir, secondly, what did the Union Government do after this tragedy? The Government's duty is not limited to issuing statements. I do not listen to the radio nor do I watch the television but I know that for last four-five decades, the news bulletins broadcast by All India Radio and telecast by Doordarshan Commence with the statements of the Prime Minister or the Ministers. Only the statements are given and the actual work done is rarely reported. I am not interested in as to whether the Prime Minister called it a national calamity or extra national calamity but what I am interested in is the immediate action taken by the Government. He is the Chief Executive officer of the country. It is the question of the dignity of his office because he enjoys all the powers. When did he come to know about the national calamity and what steps did he take thereafter to alert the nation and inspire them to save the people affected by this disaster and to offer relief? If the Prime Minister of the country does not take the initiative himself, the Chief Minister of the State concerned should raise his voice for immediate relief and if he also does not do so, they should not indulge in blaming others. Hence I want to know as to what steps were taken by the Government of India in the face of such a big disaster. The relief measures are being discussed. I have heard

the speech made by the hon'ble Prime Minister. He stated that different estimates have been put forth, i.e. twenty five hundred crore rupees, six thousand crore rupees, eight thousand crore rupees, even, fifteen thousand crore rupees. Many people have submitted their representations and have made their own calculations. I do not know as to who is right and who is wrong because I have not read their representation nor do I have any knowledge about this. But so far as the action taken by the Government with regard to offering relief is concerned, it is totally negligible. The Government have given fifty crore rupees and that too in the form of wages and means. Only fifty crore rupees have been given out of the exchequer of Government of India, whereas Rs. 133 crore had been drawn earlier from the exchequer for misappropriating in the purchase of urea. According to their estimate, one thousand people have died in Andhra Pradesh whereas others maintain that the toll is much higher. If the Government did not want to pay heed to anyone, it should have at least listened to the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Everyone agrees that two thousand crore rupees are required there. The fifty crore rupees have been given as a loan which will have to be repaid. We have asked the World Bank whether there is any possibility of a loan which could be repaid in instalments of forty years. I feel agitated that this House is discussing the possibilities twenty days after the occurrence of the calamity. The Government have not discharged its responsibility properly and has merely issued a statement that this is a national calamity. An attitude of indifference has been displayed towards the sufferers. I still request the Government to take the initiative in the matter.

Just now Shri Jaswant Singh said that such occasions awaken the spirit of national unity. There is no shortage of money in India. People are always prepared to make contributions in such incidents. You should observe this spirit in case such calamities strike smaller towns. This is the country from where Dr. Kotnis was sent to China to save the people there from difficulties. This is the land where a large number of young girls readily parted with their jewellery at the time India was attacked by China and these girls said that the country must be saved first and that they were ready to offer any sacrifice required for the purpose.

The programme of Michael Jackson is organised in Mumbai and people rush there and an amount of Rs. 20 crore was spent in a night. The number of persons buying the minimum ticket for Rs. 1500 runs in thousands. People have paid Rs. 15,000 for a ticket and had to undergo a lot of difficulties for getting it. One family purchased a special ticket for Rs. one lakh and fifty thousand. There is no dearth of money. Recently, a programme was organised in Bangalore for Miss World contest. The organisation, organising the programme had funds enough to pay Rs. two crore for police arrangements. I do not know exactly but I guess that about 20 crore rupees have been spent on the

programme organised in Bangalore. Our country has money to spend on all such programmes. On the other hand, Andhra Pradesh had fallen in the jaws of natural calamity people were dying but this country had no money for them. It is not only the question of money but there is lack of determination and sensitivity which is talked much in the country and which is required at every steps. It is not only the matter of Andhra Pradesh but today, nobody bothers about these heavenly virtues.

You deliver speech in Rome that you will supply foodgrains to the world within three years. I would like to request you to supply foodgrains to Kalahandi instead. But it cannot be done so because lack of sensitivity has become main basis of our life. We do only lip service, we do not adopt it in our practical life. I would like to request the hon. Prime Minister to withdraw as much amount as he can from the exchequer and send it there not as wage and means nor as debt but as relief and assistance and as a compensation to the persons entrapped in the cyclone. I would not mention the name of Bihar and I would also not mention as to how the fund released from the exchequer is spent because it will mar the entire discussion. Whatever party may be in power in Andhra Pradesh, it has its limitations. The Government of any State has its limitations and the Union Government should know it. Therefore, you are requested to arrange for funds and also to advertise it through Doordarshan and Akashvani. The hon. Minister of Railways publish every day full page's advertisement even on inauguration of survey. The Government spends lakhs of rupees on such advertisements. Has the Government no funds for advertising that the people of the country should donate some money, atleast one day's or one month's salary for the persons entrapped in Andhra Pradesh? I want the hon. Prime Minister to make this appeal since the sensitivity is attached to all these things.

I would like to conclude my speech after raising one more point. A news appeared in the newspapers that the hon. Prime Minister, after meeting several delegations said to one of the delegations that he did not believe in details presented by them. He shall decide only after a Central Government team visits there and presents its report to him. When the Members of delegation asked the hon. Prime Minister as to why he does not send some financial assistance relying on the facts and data sent by the State Government, he replied that he was also a Chief Minister and he knows as to how the facts and data are prepared and sent. I would like to ask two questions in this regard. Firstly, how many times did you send this fake facts and data when you were a Chief Minister? It means, as a Chief Minister you have been doing all this and raise your eyebrows on the facts and data sent by the hon. Chief Ministers and say that you know everything. If I tell the actual data of damage done, everything will topple down here. Only one thing can topple down and that is your Government.

[English]

Everything will topple down. If I say what the truth is.

[Translation]

We would like to know as to how many times did you do such acts and secondly, tell the House as well as the country as to how much loss did the State suffer actually as per the reports given to you by the Central team?

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will be happy to know that all the Members of Bharatiya Janata Party's Parliamentary group have donated their one month's salary to the victims of Andhra Pradesh cyclone...*(Interruptions)* Samata Party has also done so. Some hon. Members have just now mentioned the name of Gujarat where they manoeuvred to gain their ends but they did not mention the name of either Rajasthan, Delhi or...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly) : All the Members of C.P.M. in Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha have donated one month's salary.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : You all deserve congratulations. But the entire country wants to know whether the Union Ministers have donated their one month's salary or not? I want to say one thing in this regard as to how insensitive this Government has become?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Shimla) : Every Member of Parliament of the Congress Party has given in writing to donate one month's salary...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : This Government is insensitive to this issue and it is evident from the fact that there is Government of Janata Dal in Karnataka and Karnataka...*(Interruptions)* Please listen. One should be courageous enough to face the truth. Andhra Pradesh is neighbouring State of Karnataka which is being ruled by the hon. Prime Minister's party...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, like Shri George Fernandes, we did not make any advertisement but all the Ministers have decided to donate one month's salary.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : When?

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Members of Parliament belonging to Congress Party have also done so but we do not make propaganda of it.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : A poet from Andhra Pradesh, Shri Dasharathji has composed a poem in Telugu, the gist of that poem is :

[English]

What can be done when the elements that sustain life, air and water turn to destroy us.

[Translation]

The post has described the pains and sufferings of millions of people through pessimism about devastations caused by cyclone every year or so in Godavari basin area of Andhra Pradesh, East and West Godavari districts and coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh. But it does not suit to your administration, administrators and today's scientists to show such insensitivity or disinterest on the occurrence of such a tragedy.

Telugu Desham Party is in power in Andhra Pradesh at present which is an ally of your Government. The neighbouring State Karnataka is being ruled by Janata Dal and there is Janata Dal's Prime Minister in Centre also. Hardly 20 days might have elapsed, tears of mothers and sisters of deceased persons might not have dried up, they are passing their days in all odds in open relief centres but the programme organised by some ABCL in form of Miss World Competition in Karnataka's capital Bangalore by spending crore's of rupees, exhibits the insensitivity of the Government.

This incident took place on 6th or 7th November. The Government of India did not declare it a national calamity till the November 13th. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Gujarat to Nagaland, ours is one nation. In it, if any art comes in grip of any calamity, it is experienced by all. In this devastating cyclone, more than 350 villages have been destroyed, more than two thousand people have lost their lives, more than four and a half lakh people have been rendered homeless and millions of people are bound to pass their nights in open relief centres. More than 15 lakh coconut trees which were main sources of their livelihood, have been destroyed. The property, worth four thousand crores alongwith paddy crops in more than 7 lakh acres of land in East and West Godavari region have been destroyed. The Government is not declaring such a worst calamity as national calamity. The entire country would have experienced the sorrow's and sufferings of Andhra Pradesh. The Government could have telecast, broadcast and advertised this calamity and could have created a feeling in the minds of the people that it is a national calamity and the people of Andhra are not alone in this moment of suffering but the whole nation is with them. But this Government is always busy in political manoeuvring. There is nothing common in this United Front Government.

I would like to raise two-three points in this regard. This tragedy has not occurred for the first time. In 1977 and 1978 also such cyclone and devastation occurred there. Since then 18-19 years, have passed but were the roads constructed during this period? They say that information was telecast. The hon'ble Agriculture Minister has circulated a time-table when these informations were broadcast/telecast. I would like to ask him-since he belongs to rural area as to how many people hear radio or watch T.V. in villages? The

fishermen who go for fishing in boats, people living in jungles and coastal areas of East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Krishna, Khammam, people working in fields, living in huts cannot foresee the fall of calamity. Had the Government adopted the method of warning and alarming people through syren as was done during Pakistani or Chinese aggression, through newspapers, T.V. and radios and by beating drums or through relief volunteers, so many persons would not have lost their lives. Why was this not done? Whenever any such calamity occurs, we think that our duty is over when we have discussed the issue in the House and announced some financial assistance. Such a devastating cyclone had come in 1977. The Government did not undertake the repair works of 40 percent of roads which are at present in a very bad shape in Godavari after 1977. The people of that area should get information and there should be good roads so that at the time of need, they could be shifted to safer places. But 40 percent of the roads of that area cannot be used in all seasons. It was already known that there was heavy rains in October which claimed 300 lives. People were entrapped in flood, the roads were damaged and the same were damaged due to rains. Efforts were not made to shift the people to safer places. The area which is cyclone prone, experiences heavy rain fall, tide and web generate several feet high waves in the sea, has 20 percent such areas where there are no road. The storms have been striking this area for so many years. Could the Government not make efforts to stop the tide by constructing a concrete wall along the coast while it was possible for them to construct big dams to stop and store the water.

The hon'ble Prime Minister often visits foreign countries. He might have heard about people living in the coastal areas of Florida, Phillipines and South America. The scientists of that country could have been contacted to know about the arrangements made there and accordingly arrangements could have been here also. It could have minimised the loss. The cyclones have been coming and will continue to come but the attention was not paid to the construction of a concrete wall along the coast. I would like to add one more point in this regard. We depend on radio and T.V. for dissimination of information but was any arrangement made to inform the persons killed about the impending danger in the form of storm? So long as any such arrangement is not made and we depend on radio and T.V. for warning and alarming, people will continue to die in such cyclones. Roads should be constructed and repaired. I would like to urge upon the hon'ble Prime Minister to convert Rs. 50 crore provided as loan to combat this national calamity into grant-in-aid. The total loss in that area is to the tune of Rs. four thousand crores. All the parties alongwith the Government of the State are requesting you to convert Rs. fifty thousand crores into grant-in-aid. The pucca houses should be constructed for such flood affected as well as cyclone

affected people whose houses have been destroyed because these houses are durable. You are requested to make schemes for the construction of houses under Indira Awas Yojana to minimise their loss. Millions of people are residing in relief camps under open sky. Proper arrangements should be made for them. It has been learnt that the persons whose houses have been destroyed have been given Rs. one thousand each. They will be provided Rs. one thousand immediately and 25 kilogramme rice will be provided to each family affected by the cyclone. Will rupees one thousand be sufficient for him to construct his house? What else will he be able to do with this meagre amount? Likewise Rs. 50 thousand are being provided to the family of each deceased. On the other hand family of the deceased who died in rail or air accidents are provided Rs. one lakh-two lakh or five lakh and on the other hand those who died in cyclone due to Government's negligence are given Rs. fifty thousand as compensation. The number of deaths increased because proper arrangements were not made for them and they were not alarmed in time. Therefore, the Government should increase the relief amount and make it available to the right person immediately so that they may get a sign of relief.

I express my condolence to the victims of this natural calamity and pray to God to embolden their families to bear this loss and hope that people will come forward for the help of cyclone victims and to bring them out of this crisis.

SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI (Tenali) : *Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not feel it necessary to repeat all that has been said about Andhra Pradesh and its people who were subjected to a worst ever crisis by the recent cyclone. Already, Hon. Members who have been participated in the discussion have dealt with the subject at length.

The State was subjected to a cyclone which ruined many districts and brought the life to a standstill. Before the State could recover from the fury of this cyclone, there was yet another cyclone which has proved to be a doomsday for the State. Sir, in India, we consider Kashmir as most beautiful place. In South it is Kerala and in Andhra it is Konaseema which are known for beauty. The way a star adds beauty to the moon, the Konaseema region adds beauty and splendour to Andhra. All its beauty and glory were gone, gone beyond redemption, all within a matter of those five fateful hours. I pray God, the almighty, to not to subject my State or the country or for that matter, no part of our beautiful mother earth to such a devastating spell of nature's fury.

Sir, the moment our Hon. Chief Minister Shri Chandra Babu Naidu came to know about the cyclone and enormous damage it has brought in it fold, rushed to the affected one alongwith Government machinery. He

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.

is camping there itself and personally monitoring all the rescue relief and rehabilitation work. He has instructed all the concerned who are involved in rescue and relief operations that there should be no petty considerations like party affiliations etc. or whether they had voted for them and who have or not should not be allowed to come in the way of extending help to the affected. He instructed that everyone who has suffered should be treated equally and with humanitarian consideration. He is leading from the front to extend help to all those who are surviving after losing everything they had. He has seen to it that all the basic minimum requirements are provided immediately without any loss of time in the areas devastated totally by hurricane. Sir, I am grateful to Shri Deve Gowda Garu, Hon. Prime Minister, of his visit. He made an aerial survey of the entire affected region.

Sir, the farmers in Andhra are now undergoing a harrowing time. They are now subjected to difficulties unknown to them hitherto. Their difficulties defy description. On one hand, they constantly face the fury of nature. On the other there will not be sufficient water in the canals, to quench the thirst of the withering crops. Either their crops get washed away due to excess rains, or there will be no rains sufficient enough to raise the crops. Added to this, there is that age old threat from the money-lenders. All the time, it is the farmer, who is a loser. They are leading a miserable life. But fortunately enough, the farmers in the Konaseema region are spared from these things to a certain extent. They were well off, at least to a certain extent. But one single night has brought all the misery and untold sufferings by the cyclone. The cyclone has not spared anyone now. It ruined everyone. Millionaires have become beggars in a matter of hours. The plight of these farmers is beyond description. It may well take 15 to 20 years for the affected farmers to limp back to normalcy. Sir, one of the basic needs of the man, after food, is clothing. Persons who are engaged in the production of cloth are the weavers. These people are exceptionally skilled workers. They are capable of weaving a cloth approximately 5 metres in length which could be folded and kept in a tiny match box. So much skilled are they. The cruel fate has made their lives miserable further. All the members of a family have to work hard in order to produce a saree. In spite of that much of effort, it is very difficult for them to make their both ends meet. The reason is that they get perhaps the lowest wages. In a small house, two or three families live together. These dwelling units do not have adequate ventilation. These people are living in unhygienic conditions. Added to their already existing miserable life, whatever they had, the so called houses collapsed and got washed in the recent cyclone. Many people have died because of the collapse of the houses. Their looms were broken. The yarn placed on the loom has also got damaged. There hardly remains anything. Thus

their livelihood was mercilessly snatched away by the cruel fate. Sir, they have to spend at least Rs. 7,000/- to purchase new looms and yarn. But the condition of these weavers is such that they cannot afford to secure and spend even Rs. 7/-.

The fishermen are yet another community which had to face the brunt of cyclone. Normally the fishermen are very poor economically, yet they are the people who feel extremely satisfied even if they get bare minimum necessities of life. Sir, it is the usual way of the world that when a person starts earning enough money, he or she goes acquiring property. One goes for the construction of a house, the other goes for acquiring some real estate. This is the normal practice. But, Sir, this fishermen community is quite different kind of a community. They do not leave the places where they live in and spend most of their time on sea waters. Sir, when we visited their area during last bye-election, they received us with warmth and affection. Sir, we were deeply moved when we heard the news that at least half of the thousands of fishermen who had ventured into the sea previous evening have not returned home and many of them have died.

The condition of minorities and other sections belonging to the middle class is not better. These are the very sections of the society who by and large abide and scrupulously follow their traditions. Now they are also subjected to many difficulties. Dalits and those who belonged to economically or socially backward communities are now totally out of gear. Their huts have collapsed and got washed away. The rout is total and complete in their case.

Sir, the State Government is trying its best to provide succor and relief to the people in the cyclone affected areas. But for coping up with the devastation of such a magnitude, the efforts of the State Government are too inadequate to do justice to the affected people. The Central Government is like mother and State Governments are like her children. Usually the parents bestow more attention on their weak children. But the attitude of the Central Government is not encouraging. Now the Government at the Centre has taken the stand that since the State has suffered heavy loss, they would somehow provide some negligible amount as assistance, and advising us to get the rest of the amount in the form of loans and advances. Should the assistance be delayed further, many people who need immediate help many succumb. Many people belonging to different political parties, different States, NGOs and the people from the rest of the world are coming forward and donating liberally to rescue the people in cyclone hit areas. We gratefully acknowledge their timely help and assistance. Sir, it is not my intention to criticise the Central Government. We are a part and parcel of Central Government. Criticising the Centre means criticising our own selves. Sir, when a mother finds her child crying, she will immediately leave aside the work she is doing,

however important it might be, and attend to the crying child.

It is not a healthy and encouraging attitude to leave the crying child to his or her own fate. Hon. Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowda knows the sufferings of the people. We need not particularly mention about the innumerable difficulties and sufferings to which the people are subjected.

MR. CHAIRMAN (SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA) : Please conclude. We have to conclude this debate today.

SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI : Sir, finally I would like to say one thing. I acted in a film called "Tulabharam". It was made in 4 languages. It was named as "Tulabharam" in Malayalam and Tamil languages. In telugu it was named "Manushulu maarali" and titled as 'Samaj Ko Badal Dalo' in Hindi. It was written by Comrade Topul Basi. In that film, I played the role of a girl who belonged to a well to do family and married a poor man. In course of time her husband dies. The days pass by, it becomes increasingly difficult even to feed her children. She could not withstand the miseries of life, she ends the lives of her children and her own life by consuming poison. Sir, that was a movie. But if the situation is allowed to drift by further by negligence of the Centre, the story becomes real in all these affected families and it may go out of hand and many lead to serious consequences.

Hence, before I conclude, as a woman I request you once again to treat us as your own children and not as step-children.

Thanking you, Sir, for the opportunity to speak, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) : Mr. Chairman Sir, thank you for the opportunity given to me to express our views on the important aspect of national calamity. On behalf of my party RSP, I am willing to place it on record that we sympathise with the people who are the worst affected and who have lost their lives and property.

Sir, I welcome the hon. Prime Minister's visit to this badly affected area in the first week of November, i.e. 6th and 7th of November. This visit indicates that the Government has an intention to stand by the poor people who have suffered much in this area because of the natural calamity.

But I am sorry to mention that money can never be compared with the loss of human life; money can never be compared with the loss of land and property and with the loss of crops. I think, there is no financial crisis but I am sorry to mention that this Government could not show any crisis management capacity. I beg to place on record that this is the failure of the Government.

If we read the statement given by the Minister of Agriculture, Shri Chaturanan Mishraji, you will see. I quote:

"The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh met me on the 19th November and handed over a memorandum seeking Central assistance of Rs. 2,143 crore."

This is the demand of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. In this statement we find that the Central Government is giving an assistance of Rs.50 crore only. Sir, with your kind permission, I beg to quote from the statement:

"In order to enable the Government of Andhra Pradesh to carry on relief and rehabilitation measures, an amount of Rs. 50 crore has been made available to the State Government."

This is a very meagre sanction. This is a very negligible sanction. This sanction of only Rs.50 crore to combat the situation does not exhibit the actual willingness of the Government to stand by the Sufferers. So, I beg to mention that this Government has absolutely failed to show their crisis management capacity and they have failed to show their calamity management capacity.

We are living in an age of science and technology. Super technology is also based on computer and electronics. With the advancement of science and technology, many things can be forecast earlier but our Information and Broadcasting Department had absolutely failed to respond to that situation. They could not give any prior intimation or any earlier information so that the people could save them, could manage the affairs. Actually the fishermen sailing on boats could manage the affairs but they could not do it because of the failure of the Information and Broadcasting Department.

I have heard many valuable speeches on this important topic. I do not want to continue my speech any more but I have an intention to urge upon the Government with a simple request that relief and rehabilitation measures be immediately taken up so that the whole Government, the national Government can stand by that.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMBAHADUR SINGH (Maharajganj) : Sir during the month of October heavy rains and floods had caused widespread destruction in Andhra Pradesh and people of the State were still to overcome the tragedy when loud cries were heard and people were seen bewailing in that area which is known as the rice bowl of Andhra Pradesh. At that time, the whole nation was bracing up itself to celebrate Deepawali but the people of that area had lost everything.

Sir, the geographical area of Andhra Pradesh is such that it touches the Bay of Bengal in the East.

Maharashtra in the West, Madhya Pradesh in the North and Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the South. This State has a vast coastal area which is generally a cyclone or storm-prone area. There could be no two opinion that it is the destiny of Andhra Pradesh. But no Government of this State has learnt a lesson from the experiences of past events. Sir, there are several other countries of the world which are surrounded by sea and Governments of these countries have constructed walls, dams and maintained a modern and effective information and broadcasting system to protect the people from these storms. But the situation is totally different here, leave aside construction of dams, the agencies responsible for collecting information and broadcasting weather report are careless. Though we have effective means like radio and T.V. transmission network for collecting information such incidents take place due to carelessness of the concerned department. The information collected by the Scientists is not released on time and if it is released, the employees of Meteorological Department take such information lightly and get it broadcast to complete the formality only. As a result of it people suffer losses in such incidents and we cannot take preventive measures which could have been taken if alerted in advance. This huge loss of property and lives could have been averted if there had not been carelessness on the part of the concerned department. No one puts one's life in danger deliberately. People would have become alert and protected themselves if they had got information that the storm was advancing at a speed of 200 miles per hour and tidal waves were rising upto 5 metres but they did not get any such information. The hon'ble Minister stated that the information was being broadcast from time to time while replying to this discussion the hon'ble Minister should let us know about the time when this information was given and the medium thereof. Whether the people were informed in advance of the impending cyclone or not?

Sir, in the end, I would like to make two three more points. The hon'ble Prime Minister has called it a national tragedy. If it is so, then the Central Government should make every effort to create awareness among people and seek financial assistance from them to tide over the situation. Rs.50 crore given as grant earlier is very meagre. It proves that the Central Government have no will power to provide relief to people of Andhra Pradesh affected by this cyclone.

I would also like to make a suggestion that a Committee should be constituted comprising Members of all political parties, social workers and voluntary organisations. Arrangements should be made for monitoring of funds provided for this work by the Centre as well as the State Government.

My third point is that the problem of laxity on the part of Meteorological Department should be addressed to for making this department efficient and the persons found guilty for this damage should be punished.

The hon'ble Member, Shri George Fernandes stated that hon'ble Prime Minister had admitted that he was not convinced of the veracity of the report sent by the State Government and he had assured that he would send his own team to inquire into the matter as he was aware of the fact as to what sort of reports were submitted by the State Governments. It means that hon'ble Prime Minister does not believe in the report submitted by the Andhra Pradesh Government and it is not credible. It clearly means that State Governments indulge in manipulation of facts in the reports. I want to ask whether the hon'ble Prime Minister, also indulged in such manipulations during his tenure as the Chief Minister? If it is so, then he would again indulge in such act and country will suffer a huge loss. Sir, I would request him to refrain from such a habit.

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry) : Are we continuing the debate tomorrow?

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, the debate will be concluded today. So we will have to extend the time of the House by one hour and tomorrow, the reply will be there. So, all will be accommodated. Just after the Question Hour, the reply will be there.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : In case the reply is there tomorrow, then why do we extend the time of the House today?

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is because we will have to accommodate so many speakers. There are a number of speakers.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore) : Let us continue the debate tomorrow without extending the time of the House today.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will extend the time of the House by one hour. Let the discussion be concluded. Tomorrow, just after the Question hour, the reply will be there. Then there is a Calling Attention Motion also tomorrow.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, We are debating here the cyclone tragedy in Andhra Pradesh under the rule 193. I have not gone to Andhra Pradesh but the news items published in various newspapers reveal that a large number of people have died and several others are in a deplorable condition. Thousands of people are still missing. No one knows of their whereabouts. People living in coastal areas are in very bad condition. Not only the people of Andhra Pradesh but the whole country is concerned over this tragedy. This is a national loss. Our Hon'ble Chief Minister has given a grant Rs.50 lakh when news about this tragedy reached Maharashtra and efforts are on to collect Rs.100 crore. It is our duty

and we will fulfil it. Even if five persons had died in Andhra Pradesh we would have considered a loss of five persons of the country. How we can live peacefully when these people are facing so many problems. We are not inculcating national feeling among the people and that is why we say that people of Andhra Pradesh are in distress.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon'ble Chaturanan Mishraji has given notice to know as to when this message was given and whether preventive measures were taken by the State Government in this regard? In this context, a question arises as to what means of communications were used to inform the people living in coastal areas? Was it T.V., radio or any other medium? It has been said that a message was broadcast in radio bulletin on 5th November at 5.45 that a cyclone was likely to hit the coastal area. Andhra Pradesh was hit by a massive cyclone earlier which had killed 15000 people. In spite of all this the Government of India did not take the required preventive action in this regard. We should think about the measures to be taken in such a situation. What is the use of crying over our unpreparedness? The important thing is to think about the action to be taken now to deal with the situation. So many persons have died, the surviving people have nothing to eat. There is nobody to support them. At this juncture, we can only raise sufficient funds for giving them relief. After this, we will forget all about it. What steps are you taking to prevent recurrence of this situation in future. We should think over it seriously and have a discussion on it as to what extent assistance is to be provided. What the Prime Minister has done and what should be done.

[English]

That piece of advice we should, no doubt, give. But, at the same time,

[Translation]

It is essential to see as to what steps we should take to prevent it. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture has made a statement here. In this statement it has been mentioned that the Meteorological Department was keeping a watch on this cyclone and the State Government was being alerted from time to time regarding the possible direction and the intensity of the cyclone. This was also broadcast and telecast through All India Radio and Doordarshan. But we are not aware about all this.

[English]

Whether the messages that were sent to the people, had any effect, whether people were aware of those messages and whether the State Government had taken adequate precautions to remove all the people staying near the coastal areas and shift them elsewhere where they could get protection.

[Translation]

I do not know as to whether it was ensured. Four districts have been affected—East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna and Khammam. As per the information made available by the Andhra Pradesh Government, about 971 persons have died. The number of victims in East Godavari, West Godavari and Khammam district is 872, 78 and one respectively. I have received the information from the statement made by the Minister. In fact, we do not know the position as to how many persons have died, how many persons are not getting food and what difficulties are being faced by them.

[English]

This year we will be celebrating the golden jubilee year of our Independence.

[Translation]

When such calamities take place, we are faced with the problem as to whether the Government, really works for the people of this country? Every day we read in the papers that a number of persons have died. In such a large country 200 persons die every day. Some die in accidents and others in different ways. The value of human life is becoming cheap in our country. And this is the national calamity. The Government should give reply as to what steps are being taken to prevent this. What has happened is over. The need of the hour is to think on the measures to be taken to avoid recurrence of the problem in future.

We should keep this in mind that there is nothing wrong in my opinion, if the Prime Minister ask the State for the verification of the budget prepared by it. There is a crisis. Someone has said that in view of the requirement, it is not advisable to provide money blindly. The Prime Minister will have to work with responsibility. Otherwise, we would say that he has not provided the funds sought by us.

[English]

Please tell us whether you are going to countercheck the information that you have got. This will be the first question that will come in respect of anything.

[Translation]

This is how it is done. Have you counterchecked the information that has come to you? Every where this question is asked. On this, there was much criticism. But I feel that,

[English]

If he had done it, it was a right thing.

[Translation]

But, it is not good to send only Rs. 50 crore when the amount sought was Rs. 2000 crore. I doubt if

Rs. 50 crore would be sufficient when the need is for Rs. 2000 crore. According to this statement, this amount is not even Rs. 50 crore. It is less than that. This is what I feel.

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry) : Not even one rupee has come to us.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : According to them not even a single rupee has reached them. If it is so, it is very sad and it seems that we do not have a feeling of love for the people. We have no such desire for well being of the people. In view of the national calamity, they need help and financial assistance. The need is to see how we can help them and accordingly, we would have to act.

The second thing I want to say is that several coconut trees and the crops have been destroyed and a large number of houses have also been destroyed. There should be a discussion and deliberation on the programme we are going to take up to help them... (Interruptions)

[English]

This is the problem. No one takes the thing seriously.

[Translation]

They are talking among themselves. The seriousness of the matter should be kept in mind. We should be concerned about the steps the Government is going to take. We should know the time by which they would be provided houses, food and financial assistance... (Interruptions) You can sit outside and talk, we should be serious on this calamity. We should help the missing persons. The families of the deceased know that those who have died will not come back. What about those who are missing? But there is no hope that they will return. We should try to search for them. The families of the missing persons should also be given help. This I want to tell the Government in particular. And this would be evident from the steps to be taken for the affected people. It would better if the Government finds them. The Central Government has sent a special team there. This team has conducted a survey regarding the loss suffered. This information should be made available to the House. We should be informed of the nature of help to be given and the amount to be contributed by the States and Central Government. It is not sufficient to say that we have donated one month's salary. Mere discussion will not serve the purpose. This is a national calamity. Therefore, every one should render help. This is what I have to say.

[English]

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY (Cuddapah) : Sir, thank you for finally giving me an opportunity to speak.

Whatever that happened in Andhra - a depression or cyclone or hurricane or tidal wave - it can be called in many ways depending upon the severity in different places. The six of seven districts of the State of Andhra Pradesh were battered in two phases - first on the 19th of October and second on 6th and 7th of November. Many of my colleagues have elaborated on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Reddy, please wait.

Now it is six o'clock. Would the House like to extend the sitting by one hour so will reply that the discussion is concluded today and the hon. Minister of Agriculture will reply tomorrow just after the Question Hour? ... (Interruptions)

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY (Nizamabad) : Sir, we will have the discussion tomorrow... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : We can have the reply just after the Question Hour. There is a Call Attention Motion also for tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

18.00 hrs.

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Since the reply of the Minister is to come tomorrow, we can have an hour's discussion tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will have to accommodate a number of speakers who are there on the list.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : If possible, you may extend the House today... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : We can extend the House by one hour.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : Hon. Speaker has said that everybody will be allowed to speak. We have given names of the Members whose constituencies are badly affected. They have come back from their constituencies. Unless they bring things before this House, it will create a difficulty. So, I request you to extend it today or allow Members to speak tomorrow. All the Members whose names are before you should be allowed to speak.

How many names do you have?

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have got seven names.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : It will take only one hour or one-and-a-half hours. We can complete it either today or tomorrow, whenever you want.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Tomorrow the matter relating to Orissa would be taken up.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Tomorrow, there is also a Call Attention Motion.

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Tomorrow, one hour can be accommodated. If necessary, the House can be extended by one hour tomorrow.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Let the debate be completed today. Tomorrow, I have to reply in Rajya Sabha also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister will have to reply in Rajya Sabha tomorrow.

Let the House be extended up to seven o'clock. Let us see if it is concluded by seven o'clock. Let the House be extended by one hour.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : The debate may be concluded today. Tomorrow, I will have to go to the other House also.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : The debate may be completed today.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The problem is that the Minister will have to reply in Rajya Sabha tomorrow. If the discussion is stopped now and continued tomorrow and it goes on for one hour after the question Hour, then I think, there will be difficulty for him to reply in Rajya Sabha. So, let the sitting of the House be extended by one hour.

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Tomorrow, we can extend the sitting of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think all the Members would be accommodated.

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : Many of my friends have elaborated on the various aspects of the damage. I want to make here one distinction. I would say that whether it has occurred as a result of October depression, as the Minister of Agriculture calls it, or the torrential rains, as the Minister of Agriculture calls it, this has happened in areas where drought is very common. In the districts of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur, drought is very common and every alternate year, we face the situation of drought. Sir, I tell you, the torrential rains which occurred in this area have breached many big tanks which irrigate 4,000, 5,000 or 6,000 acres of land. The tanks of Porumamilla, the tank by name Racheruvu, the tank by name Rallapadu and another big irrigation system called Lower Sagileru Project have breached.

18.04 hrs.

(Shri P.C. Chacko in the Chair)

Sir, these individual medium and minor irrigation tanks got breached because the surplus weirs which were to accommodate the excess water in any rain were not sufficient. The maintenance of these tanks was not attended to properly in the past few years and that was the reason why all these tanks breached. Sir, as you know, when the surplus weirs are not sufficient, the tank over-flows and when the earthen tanks, when the earthen bunds overflow, they cannot contain the

amount of water even for half-an-hour or one hour. So, big breaches occurred. There was so much of loss not only of human lives but also of cattle. Sir, one will have to only see it to believe the amount of loss that was caused on agricultural lands.

The land was eroded almost to the tune of 20 to 30 feet in each area. In many villages hundreds of acres of land got eroded beyond any repair. In some other areas it caused sand cast. This particular damage would have been definitely averted if only enough preventive measures were taken.

Sir, I do get confused with the nomenclature. I really do not know what to call it. Some said that this was a national disaster or a national calamity. The Prime Minister said: "This is more than a national calamity". The break-away Telugu Desam said, this is an international calamity. I am not going into the details of this nomenclature. But whatever it is, everyone has appreciated and that the entire nation has to come to the rescue of the situation and then only it can be called a nation. If every State is left to take care of itself or to mend itself, how can we be called a nation at all? In a calamity like this, every individual citizen of the entire nation has to rise to the occasion; not only the Central Government, but everybody in this nation has to stand up and say that we are all here to protect them - whether they belong to Andhra Pradesh, whether they belong to Karnataka, whether they belong to Pondicherry - everybody should say that we are all there to protect them. That sort of an attitude and that sort of a feeling or moral courage will have to be shown by everybody concerned.

Sir, I was mentioning about the disaster and how this disaster could have been really contained at least in respect of the loss to human lives if only proper care had been taken. In a place called Rallapadu, a tank got breached and more than 200 lives were lost just because of this particular tank breach alone. There is a system which has to be followed in similar cyclonic weather conditions. There is a department called Irrigation Department. This department has to positively monitor the situation. According to the Manual which is available with the State Government, the Officers of this department or the concerned engineers have to positively go on to the tanks wherever they are threatening to breach, they will have to indicate the severity of the breach that can occur and they will have to alert all the people in the concerned areas to be evicted from that particular area. The district revenue administration and the Irrigation Department have to positively take care of that. Unfortunately, since this was totally neglected, the tank of Rallapadu got breached and 200 lives were lost in this particular incident alone, without any doubt.

In Cuddappah district there is a big irrigation project called Somasila Project. This irrigation project is almost complete. But unfortunately the people in the submersion area have not been evicted completely

because no compensation has been fully paid to them. In 1994, during the then Congress Government, even the Congress Party MLAs agitated on the floor of the House, they sat in the well of the House and forced the then Congress Government to pay compensation upto the level of 315 contours, because till then that much of level was constructed in the dam. The programme was that in the next two years compensation upto the level of 330 contours will have to be paid, may be, at a cost of another Rs.35 to Rs.40 crore.

Sir, because the compensation was not paid, the local people were not evicted and in the meantime the torrential rains came. Over and above this, the management of Somasila Project has been kept in the hands of the Chief Minister because he wanted to release water to Madras city and he was very keen that water to Madras city will have to go positively. He had instructed the local officers that the gates of this dam shall not be opened until and unless he so advises. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for the officers to talk to the Chief Minister and the torrential rains came. Some tanks in the vicinity got breached and all the water rushed. The level of water rose not only to 330 contours but even above that and because of that heavy damage occurred in all the areas. You must only see to believe. Fortunately, in this particular area the damage occurred during the course of the day. All the people were anticipating this. They rushed to the nearest hills and that saved many lives. But while going, they could not carry the older people with them. It is very touching when they tell the tales of their own mothers and of their own grand mothers who could not be lifted up and could not be taken to the nearest hills. They were forcibly left there just to die. What sort of thing is this? Is it to be talked about only that whether this is a national calamity or just a disaster or that it is also a man made disaster? Sir, unfortunately, - I am not trying to blame anyone - the financial position of the State of Andhra Pradesh is so precarious that the Chief Minister has himself said that the State is bankrupt. They are not able to pay even the salaries of the employees. When such a disaster takes place and when the Chief Minister goes to the area, he is not in a position even to say as to when compensation will be paid to this particular area. He says that he will think of paying the compensation for these people who are to be submerged in the course of next two years. He has not even categorically committed. He says that in the next two years he will think of paying the compensation. Sir, this is the financial position of Andhra Pradesh. The poor man in going with a begging bowl to every State headquarters seeking money. My only request here is that the Central Government without mincing matters have to come forward to help the State. Their just saying that they will recommend to the World Bank is of no consequence. Let them take up immediate necessary measures. Let them start the process. Let them start spending the money. Let them get, at a later date, the

World Bank assistance or whatever assistance. Let that assistance be reimbursed to the Central Government for whatever money that has been spent by them. The amount of loss encountered by the poorer sections is really unimaginable. Most of our people live in small hutments. Almost every hutment is either partially or totally destroyed. Even today they are just living in the nearest hills or in the nearest forest areas. They are living in their carts along with whatever little household attachments they have.

Your own Common Minimum Programme says that in the next two to three years you will provide houses to everyone concerned. The Budget of Rural Development for this Five Year Plan is not going to be a small amount. It is around Rs. 60,000 crore. When that is so, constructing about six to seven lakhs of houses in all these five of six districts is not really an impossible thing for you. Please do so to save the poorer section of the people permanently from this devastation. This is absolutely essential.

So, Sir, it is my submission to the Government to please construct about six to seven lakh houses, as a part of their Common Minimum Programme.

Sir, there is another very important aspect which some of my friends have failed to mention here. It is about the Insurance. The insurance portion - unfortunately, the so-called crop insurance - is not really a crop insurance.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please be brief.

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : But this insurance is only for the sake of the bankers who lend the money to these farmers. In any sort of a calamity, only the bankers' loan portion is being taken care of and the actual plight of the farmers is definitely not bothered about.

Therefore, it is my request to the Government to please make this insurance a compulsory and comprehensive thing. About whatever the crop loss has been done, the Government of Andhra Pradesh says that they will give just about Rs 500 per acre. The amount of Rs. 500 is a pittance. I think, Rs.3,000 per acre must have been spent by the agriculturist to raise his crop. So, at least, Rs.3,000 per acre of compensation for this land is absolutely essential. And, not only that, due to land erosion, I am sure in many areas, the agriculturists will not be in a position to make their lands cultivable.

Therefore, the Government should see - whatever is the cost - that the lands are made cultivable again.

As far as the fishermen in the coasts are concerned, many people told me - when I visited them - that the Insurance companies are not accepting their premiums. They are somehow or the other dodging and not insuring their motor boats and small boats. This is the main reason for all their problems.

Sir, I request, through you that the Government should please see to it, bring upon necessary pressure on the Insurance companies to see that this insurance is made mandatory. And, if need be, let the State Government or the Central Government pay the premium of insurance.

Sir, as far as the coconut trees are concerned, well, whether it is 50 lakhs or this way or that way, the Government must pay necessary attention to it so that the farmers are made to raise their crops again, by giving them free saplings, by giving them enough financial assistance in the course of next five or six years, till they are able to raise their coconut planting completely.

Lastly, I would like to mention that some sort of accountability will have to be fixed up. Thousands of lives have been lost due to this disaster. Many of my learned colleagues have said that if proper precautionary measures were taken, all these lost lives would have been saved. Whether the State Government is at fault, whether the Central Government is at fault or whether the Meteorological Department is at fault, proper accountability will have to be established. Anyone who is at fault - whether it is the Chief Minister or the State Government or the Central Government - whoever, whichever, however mighty or great he may be, he should be made accountable. And, proper action will have to be taken so that at least this sort of calamity or man-made disaster can be prevented to a large extent.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, we have only 40 minutes left and we have eight more speakers. So, five minutes each will be given. I will be strict on that, please remember.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore) : Imposition of time-limit has started the moment I have risen to speak!

Mr. Chairman Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this subject. On behalf of my party CPI (M), I had been in a team to Kakinada and a few other places of Godavari delta after the devastation to see for ourselves the situation, to understand and to be with the people who are suffering as a result of this disastrous tidal wave and cyclone. The enormity of the damage and destruction warrant me not to enter into any politics in the matter. That is why I shall refrain from making any remarks on this aspect of the matter. But there are definite points to mention, there are definite points to elaborate and there are definite points to establish that this is a man-made disaster. It is not simply an officer of the Meteorological Department or the Broadcasting Authority who is responsible.

We have grown fifty years as an independent nation and we are going to observe the 50th anniversary of our independence next year. Three years later we will be entering into the 21st century. We know that human civilisation has developed encountering the onslaught

of nature, controlling it and utilising the forces of nature in favour of the mankind. Now we are a country entering into the 21st century, observing the 50th anniversary of our independence next year and we shudder to learn, shudder to understand and shudder to be informed that in the face of such onslaughts of nature we are helpless as yet. Without accusing each other, we as a body should rise up and take a vow that we shall build up a national consensus at the earliest to take a short term and a long term programme to prepare our country to meet the onslaughts of the nature. There are areas which are cyclone prone. There are areas which are prone to tidal waves sometimes. There are areas where occasionally it occurs once in ten or twenty years. That is accidental. But there are definite areas which we can call sensitive to such disastrous onslaughts of the nature because of the Bay of Bengal and other geo-physical reasons.

We had visited that area and found that drinking water was scarce. Drinking water was scarce there not because of the cyclone, but the problem was there perennially. We had observed that there were shelters for taking shelter during cyclones but these were all built when the number of inhabitants in those villages was simply five hundred or seven hundred and now the population has risen up to five thousand to ten thousand. Those shelters are now dilapidated and are insufficient to take care of the increased population in the villages.

There are countries which have taken care to grow forests in the coastal areas, evacuate the people and move them to a little distance beyond the coast so that the onslaught of a cyclone or tide hits the forest. So, such measures can be taken or shelters provided. It cannot be said that the people should not live in the coastal areas. People will live in the coastal areas; they will work there for their own survival and contribute to the country as well by prawn culture, production and trade of marine products, etc. That not only takes care of their livelihood, that take care of the Government exchequer as well.

We must stand united and accept the position that we are now helpless. It has been bound and established but we should not be in such a position in future. It is good that the Government of Andhra Pradesh is trying hard. It is correct that a State Government cannot just meet the necessities to bring about relief and rehabilitation on a disaster of such a dimension. The Government of India should come forward with help. There are hindrances by way of rules and regulations. These can just be modified or taken care of in a proper manner so that for exceptional cases these rules and regulations do not stand in the way if we have got the will, if we do not have the will, then, rules and regulations will come up. If we have got the political will, if we have got the social will, if we have got the will and determination to meet a catastrophe in a united manner, then, the rules should sometimes be overruled.

I conclude with this point that in this matter, so far as relief and rehabilitation work is concerned, we should continue it. We should not abuse one another instead of taking part in the relief and rehabilitation work.

[Translation]

SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT (Hamirpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, several persons were killed and excessive damages has been caused in great devastation by the cyclone storm that hit Andhra Pradesh on sixth November, at 9.30 p.m. About 14 districts and 96 blocks have been affected. The worst affected area is east Godavari, where 872 persons lost their lives. About 98 persons were killed in the west Godavari and about 6,47,554 houses collapsed and large number of persons have been rendered homeless. In east Godavari 4,32,715 and in west Godavari 2,14,839 houses were damaged.

The paddy crop covering about 3,46,810 hectares of land had been destroyed. Similarly coconut trees in 30,000 hectares of land have been uprooted. Another crop in 1,12,768 hectares of land was also destroyed. Crops covering about 4,89,578 hectares of land have been destroyed. Horticulture crops have also destroyed in about 30,000 hectares of land. About 19,823 cattle heads perished in this cyclone storm. Over two crore persons engaged in poultry have suffered loss. The fishermen have suffered loss of Rs. 6505 crore. And 2438 water tanks have been damaged. The loss suffered by the Government has been reported as Rs. 1500 million under Panchayati Raj System. The details of the loss suffered by various Government organisation has been reported as Municipality Board Rs. 1200 million, Electricity Board Rs. 1025 million the Irrigation Department Rs. 1000 million, the Animal Husbandry Rs. 424 million and the Fisheries Department Rs. 400 million. Similarly the loss in respect of roads and buildings is Rs. 234 million and other losses total Rs. 331 million. The total loss has been reported to the tune of Rs. 6184 million. But it is a matter of regret that the Prime Minister has sanctioned a little amount Rs. 50 crore for this purpose. Similarly the assistance given by the Prime Minister for the people of Andhra Pradesh is inadequate. It is a matter of deep regret and concern.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a national calamity. It is not the time for criticism and counter criticism. It is a matter of great concern. Today the people of the country have to face this problem. The people should express concern and render help to the affected persons. But I think that there is no such atmosphere in the country. The Government should tackle the problem on a war footing. The Government should take it like an external attack. There is no such feeling in the Government. On the one hand the people of Andhra Pradesh are dying of starvation, they have been rendered homeless, large number of people are missing, parents of the children

are missing, people are crying out in pain, and on the other hand, our Government is organising 'Miss World' beauty contest in our country. Our Prime Minister is going on foreign tour and enjoying life with his family. It does not seem as if our Prime Minister and the Members of the Cabinet are sad due to this tragedy. I would like to inform the Government particularly the Minister of Agriculture, Shri Chaturanan Mishra, who belongs to a party of poor farmers and workers, that the poor farmers and workers are the worst affected persons in this cyclone storm. My suggestion is that all the political parties should go there and perform 'shram dan'. The Government and all political parties should contribute their utmost. I would like to suggest that even external assistance can be sought for this. There are several such nations whom we had helped in time. So we should seek their help in this calamity. As the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is meeting the Members and the Ministers here, and seeking help, the Prime Minister, in the same way should try to seek help from various Heads of the nations. The countrymen, including school children, students, employees and officers, should come forward together to render help and assistance for rehabilitation of the affected persons of Andhra Pradesh. The officials should go there to share the sorrow and suffering of the people. My suggestion is that after the Winter Session of Parliament, the Prime Minister should call a meeting of all the Members and the Ministers and instruct them to visit the affected area to perform 'shram dan' there for fifteen days. Though this may not solve all their problems but they will get moral support. When all the Members and all the Ministers would perform 'shram dan', the people would forget their sorrows. It has been reported that there is discrimination in the distribution of relief funds as some unscrupulous persons are involved in this as a result thereof the needy and affected persons are not getting the relief. All the affected persons are not being treated as one. They are getting relief on the line of party affiliations. The Chief Minister of that State has asked for 19,932 tons of rice. This should be sent there by the Government. He has also asked for 14 lakh litres of kerosene oil. In addition to this arrangements should be made for supplying wheat, pulses, vegetables, clothes etc., and text books for the children because they have lost everything in the cyclone.

Now, I want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister towards a serious matter. Hon'ble Minister is not paying attention towards the seriousness of the matter... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not waste time.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : While talking to other hon. Members, he can also listen to you. Please continue.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : My suggestion is that the Government should send the gazetted officers in every village. They should not return back from there till the rehabilitation work is over. All the assistance being given there through the Non Governmental Organisations and also foreign assistance must reach the poor in a proper way. Hence my suggestion is that a gazetted officer be sent in each and every village to ensure relief operation work.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. It is a very good suggestion and the hon. Minister will take notice of that...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay, you have made some good suggestions.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : There are a number of officers in the Government who have no work to do. From other States such officers should also be sent.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We will send the Members of Parliament.

SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : The Members of Parliament are ready to go. The Ministers should also go. It is a national calamity.

With these words I conclude and urge upon the Government to release the amount of Rs. 2000 crore as demanded by the Andhra Pradesh State and foodgrains should also be made available for those people.

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry) : Sir, thank you very much for having given me an opportunity to speak.

Sir, Yanam happens to be a part of our Union Territory. It also happens to be in Andhra Pradesh and was the target of attack. It was not only the target of attack but also the most affected area in the whole of Andhra Pradesh in this catastrophe which has happened recently. I am just coming from Yanam where I had gone on a visit. Previously, I have seen two cyclones in Yanam when I was the Chief Minister but one cannot imagine the extent of damage this time when compared to those devastations. In fact, there is a lot of anxiety and also fear in the minds of the people which have not gone even after such a long time. I am thankful to the Andhra Pradesh Government because it has also helped us and the State Government also has done its best.

I would like to tell a very unfortunate factor in this august House, that is, Andhra Pradesh has been given at least Rs. 50 crore as initial payment but not even an

amount of Rs.5 has been given to the Union Territory of Pondicherry...(Interruptions)

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Your State did not ask...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK : No, it is not so. On the other hand, as per the report of the Minister, it has been clearly said that the cyclone had also severely affected life and property in Yanam. And the Chief Minister has also given a memorandum seeking an assistance of Rs. 68 crore. This has been given.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Not yet...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK : It has been given in your statement today.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I said that it would be...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK : I tell you that the Chief Minister of our State had met our Prime Minister on the next day itself when he visited Madras and had given a memorandum. Then he said that he will look into the matter. If one remembers well, it had happened on the 6th and 7th and I had written to the Prime Minister on the 8th. I have written to the Minister of Agriculture. I have written to the Home Minister. I have got copies of those letters with me. The Prime Minister had acknowledged the letter and said that he would send my letter to the Minister of Agriculture immediately. But nothing has happened so far. Are we second rate citizens of this country? Please consider us.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That has gone to the notice of the Minister and the Minister may refer to it in his reply.

(Interruptions)

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK : It is a fact that I am just telling you. I had written a letter and the Prime Minister had acknowledged that letter. I will produce it before you...(Interruptions) What is most important is, it is disheartening that we have not got even one rupee. Others are asking for big things. But we are not asking for big things; we are asking for few. Why has it not been given? We do not know the reason. At least as first instalment he should have thought over it. My Chief Minister has given a memorandum asking him for Rs. 68 crore but you have not given even six rupees. I am just asking this from you. Why is there a discrimination? 'You' means your Government...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Farook, there is no time. You have made your point.

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK : My concern is this and I want to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister that Yanam, among all the regions, is the worst affected. All industries have been ruined. More than 85,000 coconut trees have completely gone down. You must go and see the place. So many hectares of land is inundated. Water has come even to the level of ten feet high and got into

the ponds and wells. People do not have water even to drink. It was a tidal wave. 76 people are missing.

In my territory, the kith and kin of the people are being away in front of their own eyes. But we are not able to give relief to those 76 people who have been missing because of technical reasons. 'Technical' means that we do not know where they have gone. But so far, they have not come over there. What are we going to do about it?

I agree with all my good friends who have been there and spoken about it. It is a national calamity. I agree with their views and suggestions which have been made. If you give me time, I can give many suggestions. But my concern is, please try to give some immediate relief now from the Central funds pending a visit of the team which is going there. Please give something to our territory. Then, you go and see whether we deserve it or not. In fact, the loss is worth more than Rs. 1,000 crore.

I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister and the Central Government that the industry has been closed completely. There is no electricity. Five thousands people are on the roads. Yesterday, I had a meeting with all the industry people. I told them that this is a calamitous period. Do not leave them. They say: "Our industry is not working. How could we pay them?" I told them that they must pay something to them. The bank has to come up with soft loans. Otherwise, you cannot revive the industry. So, a lot of things have to be done there. I am writing to you about it. But my main concern is: Try to release at least some money today from your side as an interim measure. That is what I would like to suggest. I can speak more about it. But because of paucity of time, I am not able to express all the things. I am happy that you have given me this opportunity. Please consider the matter.

*SHRI K. SUBBA RAYADU (Narasapur) : Mr. Chairman Sir, East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna districts in coastal Andhra Pradesh region are known as the granary of Andhra Pradesh. They supply quality rice to not only the entire State of Andhra Pradesh but also export rice to other parts of the country. The entire region was affected by the cyclones and excessive rains in the recent days. The successive natural calamities have reduced this fertile land of ours into a grave yard. Prakasam, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Anantpur and several other districts were very badly affected during the cyclonic storm a month ago. Andhra Pradesh, one of the few States in the country, which was made rapid strides in Agricultural sector. Andhra farmers can even compete favourably with the farmers of advanced countries like Japan. Such a State has now been reduced to a burial ground in the successive cyclones which affected the State in last few days. The Andhra farmers now feel crippled. Especially the recent cyclone has ruined the entire economy of the coastal belt. Life

in this region has come to a standstill. Lakhs of houses both permanent and semi permanent have collapsed. Electrical poles were uprooted. All the commercial crops have been washed away. The grain got discoloured. Sir, if any one looks up he would find only the sky and nothing else. Neither a branch of a tree, nor any roof top is visible. Everything has been washed away in the cyclone. Everything has been reged to the ground. The situation is grim and grave in the State. When the State has been facing a calamity of such a magnitude, which was also declared as a national calamity, the attitude of the Central Government towards the State has disappointed everybody. In an extraordinary situation like this when the country is at war when any external aggression takes place, or when a natural calamity such as the present one strikes, what should be the role of the Union Government? It is expected from the Union Government that it comes to the rescue of a State Government by extending a helping hand in a big way in extraordinary circumstances. Even now it is not too late for the Union Government to come to the rescue of State Government in Andhra Pradesh. It should announce the immediate release of required funds and rescue the people there.

Sir, I represent Narasapur Parliamentary constituency which happens to be the worst hit area. I may please be given some more time. We lost everything in the recent cyclone. Please permit me for at least 5 minuts more.

Sir, the farmers in the area raised their crops by spending the amount they got by pledging the Mangal Sutras of their wives. But all their effort has gone in vain. The standing crops are now lying in the field in a totally damaged condition. Sir, let me remind the present Government that when Shri V.P. Singh was the Prime Minister of the country, the loans of farmers upto Rs. 10,000 were written off. I take this opportunity to request the Central Government to write off the loans of the farmers in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh who have lost almost everything they had in the recent cyclone. The coconut growers too have suffered loss extensively. It takes nearly 15 years for a coconut tree to yield the nuts. For such a long time, they have to take care of those trees. Now lakhs of coconut trees were uprooted leaving the growers high and dry. Even to clear the debris the grower has to spend nearly 300 rupees. How can they get this money? Where can they get this money? Hence I request that the Central Government and its agencies like Coconut Development Board should come to the rescue of the coconut growers in the affected region in a big way. Free saplings should be supplied to them and an amount not less than Rs. 400 per tree should be given to these farmers, so that they can stand on their own feet again. Sir, people in the coastal have lost all their belongings in the recent cyclone. Some have lost their bread winners, some have lost their kith and kin, some have lost their dwelling units, some have lost their cattle, and some have lost

* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Telugu.

their belongings, grains, clothes etc. You will not find anybody in the region who has not lost something or the other in the cyclone. At least they used to have coconut trees in the past and now they have nothing. Nearly six and half lakh houses have collapsed in the recent devastating cyclonic spell. The Central Government should take steps to rebuild these houses under the Indira Awas Yojana. The fishermen work day and night, yet their earnings are too meagre, they are half-clad, hungry and have no roof over their heads. Whatever they had, they lost them in the cyclone. Thousands of fishermen are either dead or reported to be missing. They have lost their boats, fishing nets, etc. The Central Government should come to their rescue and help them in a big way so as to make them stand on their own feet once again. Similarly weavers have also lost everything. Their looms are now broken and even washed away in certain cases. The yarn is now in a totally damaged condition. Because of the loss of looms and yarn, the entire weaving community has been thrown out of employment. The Government of India should assist in a big way in rehabilitating them.

The estimated loss to the State in the recent cyclone is around Rs. 6126.45 crores. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a memorandum seeking Central Assistance of Rs. 2143.00 crores. Sir, these are the figures arrived at by responsible officials. It is not either Shri Chandra Babu Naidu or K.S. Rayudu who have submitted the figures. This was the result of the assessment of the loss after a careful study of the affected areas by the Government of Andhra Pradesh officials. It is really unfortunate that the Hon. Prime Minister is reported to have commented that the figures are exaggerated ones. That is not a fact. We too have a Government machinery at the State level as you have your own machinery at the Central level. After a very careful study of the affected area, the Government officials have assessed the damage and arrived at these figures. Hence it is not correct to say that these are inflated figures.

I appeal to the Central Government to come to the rescue of State Government by releasing adequate money for helping the people who had lost everything due to the cyclone.

Sir, I conclude my speech, thanking you for the opportunity you had provided for taking part in this debate.

[Eng//sh]

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA (Nellore) : Respected Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

As the hon. Members of the House are aware, Nellore District in Andhra Pradesh, which is my constituency, has experienced very heavy rains from 13th to 19th October resulting in great devastation to human life and public utilities. People were caught in

the flood waters. Many houses collapsed and many houses were damaged. Official figures reveal that there were 23 deaths and 15,000 houses were damaged. Several colonies in low-lying areas, particularly those belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as they are located there, were affected due to breaches to banks, canals, culverts, etc. The torrential rains caused heavy losses to the livestock, crops and other public properties. It was reported that about 53,450 acres of land got damaged and about 1000 cattle lost their lives. Taking all the damage in the District into account, the District Administration has estimated the loss to be about Rs. 84.45 crores.

I will also bring to the notice of the House that after the experience of the 1977 cyclone in the State, the then Government prepared a contingency plan of action for cyclone with clear guidelines from the Chief Secretary level to the Mandal Officer level as to how a natural calamity should be faced with measures such as preventive relief and rehabilitation. It also envisages setting up of a High-Level Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Sub-committees under the Liaison Officers etc. The High-level Committees were to meet in the month of September since the cyclones generally occur between the months of October and December every year. The State Government has to be blamed for not implementing these guidelines. Had advance steps been taken to evacuate the people to safer places, these many lives would not have been lost not only in Nellore District but in the other Districts as well.

Another feature of this cyclone and floods is that the railway network was totally damaged and the traffic was disrupted. Even a month after the heavy rains of October, normal running of trains was not restored and road traffic has also not resumed fully. I take this opportunity to inform the House that cyclone or floods occur in Nellore District and other coastal Districts in Andhra Pradesh in the months of October, November and December every year. These result in heavy losses to human life and public utilities. To restore normalcy, crores of rupees are spent towards relief and rehabilitation. Why cannot we, once and for all, take some concrete step to withstand such calamities to some extent.

19.00 hrs.

I would suggest some of the steps for consideration.

Distribution of house sites in upland areas as this is not being thought of at the time of land acquisition and distribution. Similarly housing for all poor irrespective of the caste, creed and religion. Housing should be ensured of qualitative construction.

Revetment to tanks and canals etc. has to be planned to avoid breaches. Ensuring proper drainage system is also essential. Cyclone shelters, strengthening of school buildings are required to be made on a priority.

The railway should also consider laying of upland route connecting Venkatagiri on the Gudur-Ranigunta line with Nadikudi-Bitragunta line (Bibinagar line). This will ensure an alternative route in case of disruption of traffic on the existing coastal lines between Vijayawada and Chennai.

Existing National Highway should be strengthened and a Super Highway should be constructed from Tada to Itchapuram as an alternative National Highway.

Central Stores should also be established at Nellore and Rajahmundry which are Central places in the coastal belt where necessary tools, implements and other modern equipment required to rush rescue and relief operations to the affected areas at short notice should be made available.

A comprehensive crop insurance covering all crops and plantations should be considered.

A National Institute of Disaster Management should be set up to study all aspects of natural calamities and up to date disaster awareness and management with the experiences gained. This centre can be located at a central place on the coastal belt.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are the more speakers. If the House agrees, we will finish the business in ten minutes....(Interruptions) One among the three speakers, Shri Anil Basu is not present....(Interruptions) Please bear with the House, we will finish the business in ten minutes.

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY (Nizamabad) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving this opportunity. I am from Nizamabad, Andhra Pradesh. Even though my area in Andhra Pradesh is not affected, still we feel the anguish and pain which our brothers and sisters of that region of Andhra Pradesh are facing today. No man can prevent this kind of disasters. But certainly today's technology to some extent can relieve. Unfortunately in India today, we do not have that technology. I do not have to give further examples. The recent air accident itself is an example. The international community has said that we do not have the proper equipment to monitor and the same thing happened with this kind of incidents too.

The other thing is that here we say natural calamity and then it turns out to be a national calamity. It is a national disaster. We can see in the rest of the world that any time a national disaster occurs it is the Central Government which comes to the total rescue of the States. It is unfortunate that at this hour, after 20 days, still the State and the Central Government are cursing each other saying that it is 'your' responsibility. To some extent they are fighting on the data itself. Unfortunately after 20 days, still to a close of a thousand people are missing. It is a disgrace to the State and the Centre. Still we are talking about monitoring and the numbers. To some extent, it was a general appeal. The appeal should have gone the very first day itself from the Prime

Minister. The moment the Centre has considered the disaster a national disaster, the appeal should have gone to the entire country, to some extent, to our neighbours also, asking for relief.

It is not just the responsibility of the State of Andhra Pradesh which should take care of it. No one is bothered about the figures. They are talking about 2000 or 5000 or 15000. There is no need to assess the damage. The first priority is to take care of the people and the damage and to rehabilitate the people, at this stage. It is 20 days after, the entire international community has seen the dead bodies lying in the disaster areas. If you cannot take care of the living people, let us take care of with respect, the dead bodies. I do not know whether to blame the Government of Andhra Pradesh or the Centre, but the dead bodies were left to the vultures.

This is an insult to human beings. When we talk in this House, we consider ourselves as the world's largest democracy. What we discuss or debate in this institution or the decision taken by this institution will have an impact not only in this country but also in the rest of the world. The decisions we take here, will have, to some extent, an impact on the future generations also. But how can we take a decision when the dead bodies are lying even many days after the cyclone hit Andhra Pradesh?

I want to make a few suggestions now. Firstly, the Prime Minister should come forward immediately and make a national appeal. Every citizen of India should feel the anguish and pain and come to the rescue of Andhra Pradesh at this critical hour. Secondly, he should make sure that the new technologies are made available to Andhra Pradesh. Now, I would like to quote the message which was broadcast over All India Radio on the 6th November at 6.37 hours :

"System moved slowly westwards and lies centred at 0230 hours of 6th November about 350 km. east of Machilipatnam and likely to intensify and crossed Andhra Pradesh Coast between Ongole and Visakhapatnam during night of 6th November."

This was a precautionary message. It should have been followed and taken seriously. One of my colleagues has said just now that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh took enough precautions with the result that the loss of human lives and properties was less. Had he not taken enough precaution, the disaster would have been still worse. I am not here to blame anybody but I will appeal to the Prime Minister at this stage to come forward and try to sponsor new meteorological equipment to the State of Andhra Pradesh. Let us hope that at least, from this hour onwards, the nation will carry the message from the Prime Minister which will definitely have some impact.

SHRI RAVINDRA CHITTURI (Rajahmundry) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, with a heavy heart I stand before this

august House and say how badly the East Godavari and West Godavari districts were affected by cyclone.

In East Godavari District, 6,48,000 houses collapsed. We need about Rs. 1000 crore for rehabilitation. The Government of India should come forward and assist the people to rebuild their house under Indira Awas Yojana. There were about 1000 deaths due to house collapse, and 1000 fishermen are still missing.

As far as agriculture is concerned, the entire paddy crop has been washed out. Sugarcane crop in 44,000 hectares has been affected. Coconut crop in 29,100 hectares has been affected. The loss comes to about Rs. 3000 crore.

Standing crops of banana, vegetables, cocoa, mango, and cashew have all been badly damaged. The agriculture loans given to farmers should be waived and fresh loans at concessional rates of interest should be given to them. The crop insurance should be operated at village level and not for three Mandals put together.

Regarding animal husbandry, I would like to mention that poultry has been washed out and a lot of cattle have perished.

Weavers, whose looms have been badly affected, need to be rehabilitated as they have nowhere to go.

The relief given to the fishermen should be enhanced. New boats and nets should be supplied to them free of cost. The restoration work of power and telecommunication lines is not at all satisfactory. Though some important towns have been benefited, even today 75 per cent of the villages are without electricity and telephone.

The public water supply scheme which needs electricity for pumping water, has become non-functional in the absence of supply of electricity. So, the Government of India must rush extra teams to restore power supply immediately. The State Government must be helped adequately in the restoration of telecommunication immediately.

Since it has been declared as a national calamity, the Government of India should bear the entire expenditure without making any reference to the National Calamity Fund.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I thank all the hon. Members for their cooperation.

19.10 hrs

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the
Clock on Wednesday, November 27, 1996/
Agrahayana 6, 1918 (Saka)*