

Title: Regarding need for extension of time for filing IT returns and payment of FBT in Karnataka due to floods.

SHRI PRAHLAD JOSHI (DHARWAD NORTH): Sir, like Gujarat and Maharashtra, the recent, most devastating rains have affected the southern State of Karnataka also during the last 15 days. People of this region have been displaced from their work and properties. Thousands have lost their lives. Transport, electricity and communication systems have been dislocated and businesses are paralysed.

The Government is aware that it is time for the people and the business establishments to file Income Tax Returns for the Financial Year 2004-05 and Assessment Year 2005-06 the last date for which was 31st July, 2005. However, keeping in view the havoc caused by the rains, the Government has rightly extended this date till 31st August in the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra where people are hardly in a position to even think of these routines as they are made to run for the last straw to hold on to for their survival from the fury of incessant downpour. However, it is strange that this facility is not extended to the people of Karnataka when the plight of the people of Karnataka is the same as in the neighbouring State of Maharashtra. The devastating effect of rains in Karnataka is in no way less than that in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Lives of people in Karnataka are as badly paralysed as in the other two States. About 173 villages are flooded with water and thousands of people have been rendered homeless all over the State. Several people have lost their lives. Thousands of houses have collapsed. The death toll reached more than 100.

The Government of Karnataka has requested the Centre for an assistance of Rs.109 crores to take up immediate relief and rescue operations. But the Government has not extended this facility to the State of Karnataka. I would like to bring to the notice of the Government that the business in the State, especially the northern parts, has a direct connection with Maharashtra. Hence, form No.16-A and 27-C and Statement of Accounts have a direct bearing on the IT returns in the State.

The same is the case with the system of Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) for which the last date for payment of first instalment is 15th of this month. Therefore, I urge the Government to extend the time limit for filing the IT returns and the payment of FBT in Karnataka also till the end of this month, as is done in Maharashtra and Gujarat. I also make a special request for immediate Central Aid of Rs.109 crores to face the flood situation in the State of Karnataka. Roads have also been badly affected, almost flooded and washed away. Hence, I would request the Government to take special care on this and extend financial assistance to Karnataka.