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Title : Need for providing Relief and Rehabilitation to the people affected by floods in Tamil Nadu & Pondicherry.

SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI): In the annals of Tamil Nadu history, people would never have witnessed such a downpour for days and its worst effect in lands and lives of the people.

In Tamil Nadu including the Capital City Chennai 15 districts are worst affected. Cuddalore district is totally submerged. In Madurai district Melur taluk is completely under the sheet of water. Hundreds of villages in low level area have disappeared overnight from the scene. According to an estimate, cultivation well over 2.2 lakh acres in Cuddalore district and more than 10 lakh acres all over Tamil Nadu is totally destroyed.

All the kanmois, lakes, tanks, ponds, ooranis, etc., breached heavily and the water column rushed in the down stream submerged all the cultivation in the adjoining paddy fields.

Had Tamil Nadu Government ordered periodical deepening of all the important feeder canals and eviction of unauthorised encroachment this calamity could have been prevented to certain extent. Further periodical deepening and desilting were not carried out in all the water storing bodies.

Many roads in the affected districts have been washed away by floods. Almost all the rivers are in spate. The gushing water carried away everything under the railroad. As a result many towns became islands without transport facility worth its name. Bodies from watery graves are being dug out. Two passenger buses were washed away by the rivers in two different places. 150 passengers are reported to have lost their lives.

Many lakhs of people belonging to BPL, landless poor, Dalit, Scheduled Tribes, etc., are rendered homeless. Such people are getting a mere Rs 1000 or Rs 2000 from the Government of Tamil Nadu which is meagre a relief inadequate and

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

insufficient. Their dwellings constructed with muddy walls collapsed instantly bringing the roof to the ground.

No doubt this is a national calamity. And therefore I request the Central Government to declare this as a national calamity.

Therefore I urge upon the Government that proper medical help to the flood affected area to prevent epidemic, immediate relaying of roads, rail links, desilting of all the water storage bodies including feeder canals are to be undertaken immediately, pucca houses should be constructed and supplied to all those who lost their huts in the floods, Rs 5000 should be given to the every family that lost all their belongings and war footing action for urgent and over all rehabilitation measures are to be initiated. All the loans of the rural folk viz. small and tiny traders, cattle herders, handloom weavers and small artisans should be waived forthwith.

I thank Hon'ble Shivraj V. Patil and P. Chidambaram Central Ministers for their timely visit to flood affected area in Tamil Nadu. At the same time I may add that the Centre's offer of Rs 500 crore as the first instalment is quite inadequate. So this should be increased. In all, Centre may consider a sum of Rs 5000 crore for Tamil Nadu flood relief.

Besides, I request the Central Government to extend all the possible help to Tamil Nadu by declaring the deluge it suffered as national calamity and help for its rehabilitation. â€. (Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER: Please sit down. Allow me to regulate the proceedings of the House.

â€. (Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER: Hon. Member, those hon. Members who have taken the trouble of giving notice are waiting patiently to get their chance, but without giving any notice you are trying to get the benefit of making a special mention now. This is not correct.

SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN As an unprecedented natural disaster unheard of in the history of Tamil Nadu at least in the last 50 years, incessant torrential rains have caused a great devastation in 15 districts including Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Cuddalore,

Tiruchi, Sivagangai, Ramanathapuram, Thiruvallur, Perambalur and Madurai. In Nagapattinam alone the district that comes under my constituency at least 2.5 lakh acres of land has been inundated with rain floods and people have been rendered jobless and shelterless. In Thiruvarur district standing crops in about 1.50 lakh of acres of land has been

damaged. Several tanks and irrigation canals had their bunds breached. Roads have also been damaged in several stretches. Even after all these mishaps, relief measures have not reached the people in an adequate manner. In these two districts about 50,000 houses have collapsed. At least about a lakh families have met with losses due to partial damages in their houses. When our leader Dr Kalaignar Karunanidhi was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, in 1971 he had gone in for a novel scheme then for the first time in India to construct dwelling units for Adi Dravidas that Scheduled Caste people. Every unit was raised at a cost of Rs 4500 then. All those houses have been marooned now seeking major relocation now. Hence there is a need to construct houses for Dalits who have been hit hard by this rain floods. In order to repair the dwelling units Rs 15000 grant must be given. People who have total damage to their houses must get new houses and relief must be extended in that fashion. Those who have been affected must get houses under IAY and SGSY schemes. Those who have their cultivable lands flooded and rendered uncultivable must get a minimum of Rs 5000 per acre as compensation. In order to ensure that all these relief measures reach the affected in a proper manner without any discrimination all party monitoring committees must be set up. On 27th of November, our hon. Home Minister surveyed the flood affected areas on a 2-day visit. He stated that Centre would rush all possible relief within 2

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days. But the same evening at Nagapattinam the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had criticised the Centre. Even tsunami affected are yet to get relief in Tamil Nadu. Permanent pucca houses have not been constructed as yet for those who were left homeless then. I have already recorded this in this august House.

MR SPEAKER: You cannot deliver a speech. I cannot allow it like this.

SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN: I have stated with solid evidence that tsunami relief measures were not handled properly. But to my dismay hon. Home Minister is yet to react to this. He is still soft pedalling and is still kind to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu which is beyond my comprehension.

SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN: Our leader Dr Kalaignar convened an all party meeting immediately when the news reached him that lakhs of people have been put to great hardship. He had pleaded with the Centre to extend all possible assistance sought by the Government of Tamil Nadu. He has also stressed the need to set up all party monitoring committees to oversee relief work. I also urge upon the Government to treat and declare this as a national disaster and Nagapattinam and Thiruvarur districts as the worst affected ones. A Central team and an all party delegation must be sent to assess the damage and to recommend a relief package.

â€¦(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you have finished your statement. Please take your seat now and listen to me. I am prepared to allow a Call Attention on this or even a discussion. You cannot have all the solutions that you want by just mentioning it here because the concerned Minister is not here to reply[k16].

I [r17]am prepared to allow a Call Attention. If there is a notice, I will allow it forthwith. How can you get a solution of an important matter like this, by mere mentioning it? I am calling those who have given notices. Shri Kharventhan, please be brief. This is not the way to get relief. If you want a proper discussion, you should ask for the hon. Minister's reply. That can be done on a proper motion.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN Sir, due to unprecedented rains and floods, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry are very badly affected. Nearly 15 districts, including my district Dindigul, are very badly affected. In Dindigul District, particularly, Palani, Veda sandur, Ottanchatiram, Natham and Dindigul Towns are badly affected. Above all Districts, crops worth thousands of crores have been washed away. The agriculturists have lost their crops, like sugarcane and paddy. In Ottanchatiram, recently constructed Nanganjiyar Dam was breached. In Veda sandur, Athumedu areas, particularly Rajagopalapuram, Indiranagar, Kungumakaliamman Koil Sreet, Annanagar, have been badly affected. All the residential houses and grocery shops have been washed away. Thousands of people in Veda sandur Taluka at Veda sandur, Vadamadurai, Kuziliambari have lost their houses,

utensils and all the properties.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House that while allocating the money to be given to the flood affected people, the State Government officials are selecting mainly the non-affected people belonging to the Ruling Party. Only a few affected people have been benefited. The State Government has failed to open flood relief centres. In most of the villages, so many people have been affected as so many diseases are also on the spread there. The State Government is not providing any facility to these people. Hence, I would request the Union Government to allocate sufficient funds, not less than Rs. 5000 crore, for the flood-affected areas and people there. The hon. Home Minister and the hon. Finance Minister have already visited all the areas. They should allocate necessary funds to construct free houses for those who have lost their houses. Medical care should be provided to the affected people. Water bodies should be restored. As far as the farmers are concerned, a sum of Rs.5000 per acre has to be given to those who have lost their crops, like paddy and sugarcane.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Then you do not want a discussion, it seems. I will not allow this. Only as a special case, I am calling Shri Ganesan as he has given a notice and also met me. Nobody should raise his hand please.

SHRI L. GANESAN Mr. Speaker Sir, thanks a lot for having given me this opportunity to draw the attention of the Government to the agony and anguish of the Tamils sustained because of the floods.

Sir, with unbearable agony and anguish, I would like to bring to the notice of this Government as well as this House the devastation sustained by Tamil Nadu. The Biblical deluge- the deluge that used to be referred to in epics has now damaged Tamil Nadu. The torrential rains, for five successive days, have caused unimaginable damage and immeasurable devastation in Tamil Nadu. Rivers are in spate flooding several lakh acres of fields with standing crops. Bunds of rivers have been breached at several points and water seeped into and marooned many villages. Roads and rail tracks have been washed away in many places. Bridges and culverts are heavily damaged. So much so, the traffic has been completely affected. Standing crops, this is much more important, in several lakh acres are totally damaged. Above all the flood has taken the toll of more than 150 lives.

Sir, I should have to profusely thank the hon. Prime Minister for having allocated a sum of Rs.500 crore immediately. Earlier, only after assessment and all that, they used to allocate money, but as far as this is concerned, he was so benevolent that a sum of Rs.500 crore has been allocated to the State of Tamil Nadu. He has also arranged and sent a team of Central Ministers immediately to assess the situation.

Yesterday, we, under the leadership of our General Secretary, Shri Vaiko, met the hon. Prime Minister. During that time also he has promised that whatever is possible will be done. As soon as this occurred in Tamil Nadu, Dr. Kalaingar, the Chairman of the Democratic Progressive Alliance convened the meeting of the allied parties[r18].

He appealed to the Government of India to do whatever possible. With all differences of opinions in politics he has been so very benevolent and he has been so very democratic to appeal to the Government of India to give whatever assistance required by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. This is what he has asked.

Under the circumstances, - I would like to mention a very important point – huge amounts will be spent, and invariably there will be a lot of scope for misuse. I do not want to allege anybody. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You need not go into those matters now.

SHRI L. GANESAN : Sir, some mechanism should be evolved to avoid the misuse. That mechanism can consist of all the elected Chairmen of local bodies, elected MLAs and MPs of the localities so that the misuse could be avoided. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ganesan, this is a special mention. You cannot make any long speech.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI L. GANESAN : Sir, due to floods, sands have been deposited in the fields making them unsuitable for cultivation. Therefore, steps should be taken to reclaim the land.

Additional loans should be given. Unless additional loans are given, agriculture cannot be carried on.

Now, I come to my last point. All the areas have been totally marooned. If cultivation is to start once again, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. will have to be given in advance. Therefore, I appeal to the Government of India through the hon. Speaker to kindly see that life is restituted once again.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members from Tamil Nadu, I fully appreciate the seriousness of the matter.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please allow me to finish. I feel that this matter should be properly discussed in the House as early as possible. I am prepared to allow it under either Calling Attention or Discussion under Rule 193. If you do not cooperate with the Chair, how can I do it? You are all making long speeches.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not stand up when you have not given any notice. Do not force me to make any comments.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, you please allow Discussion under Rule 193 on this matter. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You please give a notice for Discussion under rule 193.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We have already given a notice. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If there is a notice, I shall see. I have already asked my office to look into it.

We are deeply concerned about this. I am sure, everybody is deeply concerned about this. Now, you have taken 20 minutes. What will be there for the Calling Attention? Nothing more left to be said. You are not cooperating.