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Title: The Minister of External Affairs made a statement on India's offer of assistance of 25 million US dollars to Pakistan for flood relief.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Madam Speaker, Pakistan has been severely affected by the massive floods that have caused widespread damage to life and property. The recent floods are being described as the worst in that part of the world in the last 80 years. According to the latest figures given by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 17.2 million people have been adversely affected by these floods. Death toll has reached over 1,600. More than 1.2 million houses have been damaged or destroyed besides widespread damage to infrastructure, crops and livestock. All four provinces of Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir have suffered the consequences. Latest reports indicate that the flood situation in Sindh continues to deteriorate, even as flood waters recede in Punjab.

We cannot remain unconcerned with this grave humanitarian crisis of enormous magnitude in our immediate neighbourhood. I had telephoned the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on August 13, 2010, and conveyed the deepest sympathies and condolences to the people and Government of Pakistan, on this natural disaster, on behalf of the people and Government of India. As a gesture of solidarity with the people of Pakistan in their hour of need, I had also conveyed Government's offer of assistance of US \$ 5 million for provision of relief material from India for the flood victims in Pakistan.

Prime Minister called Prime Minister of Pakistan Yusuf Raza Gilani on August 19, 2010, to express his sorrow and to condole the deaths resulting from the huge floods in Pakistan. Prime Minister conveyed that the Government of India had already made an offer of assistance and was ready to do more to assist in the relief effort.

Pakistan has conveyed its deep appreciation of India's offer of assistance. While mentioning that the United Nations has launched a flash appeal soliciting contributions from the international community to assist the people affected by the floods, Pakistan requested on 27th August that India may channel its contribution to the flood victims through the United Nations.

As a more concrete assessment of the damage inflicted by this natural disaster and the urgent needs of the people of Pakistan emerges, Government has decided to increase its assistance to Pakistan from 5 million US Dollars, announced earlier, to 25 million US Dollars. Out of this amount, 20 million US Dollars would be contributed to the 'Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan' launched by the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The balance of 5 million US Dollars would be contributed to the World Food Programme for its relief efforts in Pakistan.

Prime Minister has rightly said that in such times of natural disasters, all of South Asia should rise to the occasion and extend every possible help to the affected people. We remain committed to assisting the people of Pakistan in all possible ways in this difficult hour.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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