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Title: Need to release funds for the drought relief measures in Orissa from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

SHRI RUDRAMADHAB RAY (KANDHAMAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the State of Orissa encountered a consecutive second year drought in 2010 owing to inadequate and uneven pattern of rainfall in the months of June, July and August which is very crucial for Kharif crops. The State Government has declared 10,991 villages of 117 blocks and 104 wards of 14 Urban Local Bodies in 17 Districts as drought affected having sustained crop loss of 50 per cent and above during Kharif 2010 on the basis of estimated reports. The number of drought affected villages may go up after receipt of crop cutting experiment reports.

The State Government has submitted a detailed memorandum to the Ministry of Agriculture on 13th November, 2010 seeking Central assistance of Rs. 1589.19 crore which includes outstanding release of Rs. 401.13 crore on account of floods in 2008.

In response to the Memorandum, an Inter-Ministerial Central Team deputed by the Government of India visited the affected areas during 22nd to 26th November, 2010.

It is understood that the report of the Central Team has already been considered by the Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture in the meeting held on 20th December, 2010 and the recommendation of the IMG to provide the Central Assistance has been communicated to the concerned Ministries.

However, the High Level Committee, which will take a final view on the matter, has not yet been convened and no Central Assistance has been released so far. The State is, therefore, facing resource problem for financing the expenditure on different drought relief measures.

It is a matter of great regret that when funds have been released out of the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to other States in various occasions without the visit of the Central Team, the Government of India has not released any funds for Orissa in spite of the recommendation of the IMG. Hence, I would urge upon the Government of India to be sympathetic to the people of Orissa and release funds as asked by the Government of Orissa.