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Title: Regarding flood situation in Kerala.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the havoc that has been unleashed in Kerala by two inter-related problems. First is the floods caused by the monsoons on which we have had a discussion in the House. The second is the severe damage caused by the coastal erosion inflicted by the turbulent seas. The State has witnessed flash floods and landslides which have disrupted the daily lives of lakhs of people. In fact, over a lakh of people have been relocated to relief camps. Over 8000 houses have been damaged. Madam, 116 people have lost their lives including journalists who have been sent to cover the floods who have drowned. That is how serious the situation is. The worst affected are the coastal villages. There are hundreds of crores of rupees damage to crops and houses as well as the submerging of agricultural land. I travelled in that area myself last weekend and I have seen houses with water almost up to half the height of the house. The State Government has sought Rs.831 crore for flood relief. But the Centre has only sanctioned 10 per cent of that, that is, Rs. 80 crore. I would urge the Government to provide the entire requested amount on an emergency basis in order to help the suffering people of Kerala.

But the monsoon also amplifies the fury of the sea which in turn affects coastal hamlets in my constituency of Thiruvananthapuram, as they lack barriers to stop waves destroying their homes and affecting their

livelihood. In fact, the fisherfolk who have traditionally inhabited the coastlines, who belong to economically and socially disadvantaged minority communities, are suffering terribly.

While some manmade barriers do exist, these have fallen into disrepair. The seawalls protecting the coasts of Thiruvananthapuram, particularly along Valiyathura pier and the Valiyathura-Cheriyathura stretch, have never properly recovered after the devastating impact of Cyclone Ockhi, despite my previous request to the Government.

I want to urge the Government, once again, to provide financial assistance to strengthen rock groynes, as they are called, or *pulimuttu*, as we call them, the walls into the sea along Poonthura, Panathura and Beemapalli shorelines, in order to overcome the difficulties being faced by these poor people, my constituents, along the sea line. Thank you, Madam.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Rajeev Satav and Dr. Kulmani Samal are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Dr. Shashi Tharoor.