

Agriculture Minister has come out with the statements comparing the existing conditions in Andhra and Orissa. This particular statement has also contributed in worsening further the situation in Andhra. Hence the Central Government should come out with a statement immediately clearly mentioning the details of loss and the quantum of assistance it is prepared to render. The statement should categorically speak about quantum of assistance allaying the fears and offering solace to the cyclone affected people in Andhra. It is also appearing in news that rules are coming in the way of offering assistance. Rules are meant for serving the people. If the rules come in the way of serving the people, then the rules should either be amended or abandoned. But in the name of the rules, people should not be made to suffer. Even after declaring that recent hurricane in Andhra was a national calamity, it is really surprising to find that the rules do not permit assistance more than Rs. 50 crore to the affected area. Sir, when late Shri Tanguturi Prakashan Pantulu was the Chief Minister, he happened to visit a village. The people in that village demanded a road. The Chief Minister instructed the accompanying officials to take steps to construct the road as demanded by villagers. The officials have pointed out to him that the rules do not permit taking up of the construction of that road. The Chief Minister told the officers that "We were elected by the people and were meant to serve the people. If the rules come in the way of serving people, please do away with such rules. You change the rule if need be, not the needs to the people". That spirit is now missing in the functioning of the Central Government. When the Central Government quotes the rules which do not allow adequate assistance, are they speaking with the intention to help the people who were totally ruined by the natural calamity? Or is it that in the name of rules, the Central Government wants to skip its responsibility to help the needy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Veerabhadram, will you please wind up?

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI : Two minutes please.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Lot of other speakers are there.

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI : I am the only speaker from my party. I will conclude within two or three minutes.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to make things clear. It should come out with a clear cut statement spelling out the details and the quantum of aid to the State. If the rules come in the way, efforts should be made to do away with such obnoxious rules. One thing that I want to bring to the notice of this august body and also the Hon. Prime Minister, whatever we may say here about rules, it is meaningless to speak about rules and regulations, our statutes and our Constitution to our illiterate, half-starving agriculture labourers who toil all the day to earn their bread, and

above all the same persons are subjected to unmitigated sufferings due to natural calamities. If you tell them about rules, they will ask, in turn, to change your rules. Construction of pucca houses to the poor and needy is one of the common minimum programmes. If the 6.47 lakhs of poor have lost roof over their heads due to the hurricane and beg for the reconstruction of their houses and when the CMP itself speaks about the construction of dwelling unit for such people, we cannot simply quote rules to express our inability to rebuild their houses and keep quiet. After all, under what rule did we include this programme in our CMP? Hence the time now has come to amend such rules. Let us help the people who are in a distressing condition even by doing away rules if need be. Now it appears that the World Bank is also willing to help us. Without the active cooperation of the Central Government, it is very difficult to get any assistance from the World Bank. I request the Central Government to declare in the House the losses suffered by the State, the quantum of assistance required for relief rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the quantum of assistance it is prepared to offer to assist the State in this gigantic task with all the facts and figures. In addition, the Central Government must also help rescue the assistance from various international organisations like World Bank. Also it should coordinate the efforts of various agencies like Coconut Development Board etc. The Coconut Development Board can supply sapplings and other things free of cost and thus help the farmers who grow horticultural crops. Similarly assistance from other agencies can also be had to rehabilitate the victims. Since this happens to be a national calamity, and if the rules do not permit us to go beyond a limit, then in those circumstances the Hon. Prime Minister should take initiative to influence the States and with his own influence and the influence of the Government, should make a concerted effort to get the desired level of assistance from the NGOs and other organisations to help the State and its people to overcome the present crisis.

Thanking you Sir, I conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, the hon. Prime Minister has go to the Rajya Sabha at 4.00 p.m. so he would like to intervene at this stage.

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) : Sir, he should hear us.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is equally important for the Prime Minister to hear the Members of the Rajya Sabha also. He has been here for the last forty-five minutes. At 4 o'clock he has to go to the Rajya Sabha, so he would like to intervene. (Interruptions) We still have got one hour approximately left for this discussion. I will try to give everybody a chance to speak.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA) :

Sir, with your permission, I would just like to clarify one point. So far as the reply to this particular issue is concerned, I myself am going to reply to it. The hon.

Minister for Agriculture has already made a statement and if he wants to add anything more, he is free to do so. But what action we have taken, all these things are going to be replied by me after the debate is concluded.

The only point which I would like to clarify is that we are trying to estimate the magnitude of the damage that has been caused in the recent cyclone. To that effect there is some controversy but I do not want to be a party to that. Several delegations have met me in this context. I myself held the aerial survey and I do not want to tell all the details right now. At the time of reply I am going to say about my assessment to the whole situation.

One delegation came to me and said that the loss is around Rs. 15,000 crore; the Government has submitted a memorandum stating that the loss is around Rs. 6,000 crore; another delegation came to me and said that the loss is around Rs. 8,500 crore.

So, in their opinion they might have assessed the damage as Rs. 15,000 crore or Rs. 8,000 crore. The Government, in its opinion, has submitted a memorandum for about Rs. 6,000 crore. I only said to one delegation: 'The official team is also going. The official team is coming back and it will submit a report. Afterwards I can give my correct views on the quantum of loss.'

Please see, everybody has got his own views. Now I do not want to comment at this stage. Fifty lakh coconut trees have fallen. In two districts, as per one assessment, there are sixty lakh coconut trees and out of which, all have fallen. I have not gone to every garden... (Interruptions)

DR. M. JAGANNATH : rose -

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Shri Jagannath, please wait for one minute. You can talk afterwards. I only said that each team went on making its own assessment. One team has assessed it as Rs. 15,000 crore. They have gone and issued a statement that the Prime Minister has no concern about the Andhra damage. Another team came to me. Everybody says that politics should not be mixed. But saying is one thing. This should not happen. That is all. The Government is equally concerned. So far as the accurate damage is concerned, till the official report comes, I cannot say anything. I will reveal every action taken by the Government up-till now in the evening when I am going to reply to this discussion... (Interruptions)

SHRI VENKATARAMI REDDY ANANTHA (Anantpur): The press is going on saying that the State Government is blaming the Central Government and the Central Government is not taking the responsibility... (Interruptions)

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : No. I am not going to say. I said, 'team'. Three teams have come to me. One team has said Rs. 15,000 crore; another team has said Rs. 8,500 crore and the Government's report is

Rs. 6,000 crore. So, I had to rely upon the official team. The official team is going to study the entire affected area and it will submit a report. Till then you have to wait... (Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : It was not the political parties who accused of lack of concern for those who suffered in the cyclone. It was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh who has blamed the Centre for rigid and non-cooperative attitude... (Interruptions)

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Shri Upendraj, I can understand who are all doing politics. Please do not try to drag the issue further.

I have not named as to who has said Rs. 15,000 crore. I have not named as to who has said Rs. 8,500 crore. I have only said, 'delegations'. I have not said, 'Congress, Telugu Desam or another Telugu Desam'. I do not want to say the name of any party or parties. I have only said that the teams or the delegations met me and said what they have submitted in their memorandum. I have just brought them to the notice of this House.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Andhra Pradesh cyclone, which has to be renamed as hurricane because as per the international standards, when the winds were blowing at 220 kilometres per hour, it has to be treated as hurricane.

I also thank all the political parties for cutting across the party and for having supported our cause. I expect that the Central Government to be generous in allocating funds for relief and rehabilitation.

Cyclones are an inherent feature of Andhra Pradesh which has a coastline of 1,000 kms. Hardly a fortnight after the devastating cyclone hit the coastal East West Godavari in Rayalaseema district of Andhra Pradesh, the State administration is desperately trying to come to grips with the colossal dimensions of the havoc which, by any reckoning has few parallels. In its qualitative features like the wind velocity and destructive potential the 6th November visitation is ranked next only to the nightmarish episode of 1977, although the number of lives lost now - officially placed at over 900 is actually much more than thousand. Besides, 2,000 fisherman were feared dead when they were swept away by tidal waves in the Bay of Bengal in the recent Andhra Pradesh cyclone.

More than 6,48,474 houses including thatched huts were destroyed in East and West Godavari District. There were also heavy losses of livestock and crops were completely damaged and washed away. 3,36,000 hectares of paddy was lost; 4,4000 hectares of sugarcane was lost; Rs. 350 crore of coconut and cash crop were lost.

Train services, road traffic, power supply and communication networks had been completely paralysed in the two coastal districts. Seventy lakh people grappled