

[English]

MR CHAIRMAN Mr Minister you did not throw any light on the question raised by the hon ble Member from Bhiwani about the compensation to the farmers

[Translation]

SHRI C M IBRAHIM I have asked the Saudi Government to make some arrangement for those farmers whose land has become uncultivable due to oil spread till their land becomes cultivable On behalf of the Government of India I would like to thank the farmers of that village who have actively participated in the relief works there The Government will do its best to get them compensation for their loss Through you I would like to give this assurance to this House

[English]

MR CHAIRMAN Now I would like to have the consensus of the House The hon Prime Minister is here He has got to reply to the debate on Andhra There are also matters under Rule 377 There is also another discussion under Rule 193 regarding the drought situation in Orissa So if the House agrees then I request the hon Prime Minister to give his speech

SEVERAL HON MEMBERS Yes

MR CHAIRMAN Is that all right? Are you ready Mr Prime Minister?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA) Yes Sir

16 10 hrs

## DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

### Situation arising from Cyclone in Andhra Pradesh - Contd

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA) Sir with your kind permission I would like to give the details about some of the relief measures that we have taken so far as the Andhra Pradesh cyclone is concerned

Yesterday my colleague the Minister of Agriculture had made a statement and after that several hon Members of this House expressed their concern about the seriousness of the cyclone and about the amount or the quantum of damage that took place They said that the Government has not responded properly to see that those people who have suffered due to the cyclone are given proper relief This is one of the allegations or charges made against the Government

First I would like to give the details of the incident that took place and how it has happened The whole damage took place in four hours on the 6th of last month That is all Actually the wind which had blown at a speed of about 220 kilometres per hour is the root cause for this Even though the State Government had given sufficient warning unfortunately the people living in the coastal areas did not take it seriously Some of our friends have expressed that people had gone to collect prawn and other fishes That is why even though the prior warning was given it was not taken seriously by the unfortunate victims of this cyclone

I went there on 10th In fact I wanted to go on 7th morning itself I contacted the Chief Minister He told me that the rainfall was still there that I could not land or even make an aerial survey and that it was very difficult to go round in the affected areas I again contacted him on 8th On 8th also he told me the same thing So on 10th morning I went there I contacted the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister

About Pondicherry some hon Member has made a very bitter attack There is no question of neglecting either Pondicherry or Tamil Nadu or Andhra Pradesh Pradesh It is not a question of this region I tried to contact the concerned Chief Ministers and the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister told me that the damage was not so severe and that he did not think that my visit was required at that stage When I went to Andhra the Chief Minister and other political parties leaders were all there After my aerial survey I had a meeting with the officers and the political party leaders and the estimate of the total loss according to their own assessment was roughly about Rs 6 000 crore They gave the particulars also

Subsequently the State Government submitted a memorandum to the Central Government for the relief According to them they want an immediate relief of Rs 125 crore The damage to the horticulture crop that they have estimated is about Rs 4 136 crore and the relief that they require is Rs 350 crore In respect of housing Rs 963 crore is the loss and the help that they want from the Central Government is Rs 1 042 crore Damage to the agricultural crop is Rs 396 53 crore and the amount of compensation required is about Rs 50 crore

The damage to Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board was Rs 102 crore and they want all the amount of Rs 102 crore to be reimbursed by the Central Government In the Municipalities sector the damage was Rs 120 crore and they want a Central assistance of Rs 100 crore In Panchayat Raj sector the damage was Rs 150 crore and the amount expected from the Centre is about Rs 130 crore In the Animal Husbandry

sector the damage was Rs 45 crore and the amount expected from the Centre is Rs 30 crore. In the Roads and Buildings sector the estimated loss was Rs 35 crore and the amount expected from the Centre is all the amount of Rs 35 crore.

In the Irrigation sector the damage to some irrigation tanks is Rs 100 crore and the relief which they sought is Rs 80 crore. In the Fisheries sector the damage is Rs 40 crore and the amount asked for by the State Government is Rs 40 crore. In the Handlooms sector the loss is Rs 27 crore and the relief they asked is Rs 27 crore. In the Industries and Sericulture sector the damage is Rs 10 crore and they asked for Rs 6 crore. In the Public Health and Sanitation sector they asked for Rs 25 crore. The total required amount is Rs 2 142 crore.

This is the amount which was sought by the Andhra Pradesh Government from the Central Government in their memorandum. Some talk about what action we have taken or that the Government is callous or that the Government is not responding to the problems etc. has come. It was the reaction of several hon. Members. I welcome it. But I would like to give these details as to what action the Central Government has taken only for the benefit of the hon. Members and also for the benefit of the people at large through this House. I would like to give the details of the action that the Government has taken.

On the day when I went there I announced Rs 50 crore Central assistance of finance. The same afternoon I have given that money. I came back by about four o'clock and I told the officers from the air itself that the money should be placed at the disposal of the Andhra Pradesh Government.

The entire amount of Rs 93 crore being the Central contribution to the Calamity Relief Fund of Andhra Pradesh has been fully contributed. This is according to the Ninth Finance Commission that the Andhra Pradesh Government was entitled to and it was released. Rs 93 crore the full amount was released. Income-tax exemption up to 100 per cent was allowed for contributions to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister's Cyclone Relief Fund. We brought an Ordinance and that exemption was also given.

From the Prime Minister's Relief Fund Rs 4 85 crore for the families of those who have died was given. According to the figures given by the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh about 970 people have died. We released the amount of Rs 4 85 crore at the rate of Rs 50,000 per person.

A sum of Rs 4 crore was released by the Ministry of Surface Transport to rectify the damages that happened to the roads. The Ministry of Power has made available a loan amount of Rs 30 crore through the

PFC for restoration, repair and reconnection of the sources of electricity supply damaged in the region. We have given Rs 30 crore from the Government of India.

Orders have been issued for the procurement of paddy with relaxation in the quality of norms for eight districts in Andhra Pradesh. Because of the floods the quality has suffered. Even then we wanted to procure that. The conditions with regard to quality as fixed by the FCI have also been relaxed. Fifty thousand tonnes of rice has been released as an *ad hoc* allotment for the Public Distribution System only for those two districts.

An additional allocation of 10 000 litres of kerosene has also been released.

Accelerated devolution of Central taxes and ways and means advance amounting to Rs 331 crore was offered to the Government of Andhra Pradesh so that the liquidity position of the State Government to undertake relief operations was not affected. This is the problem and they declined this offer because they think that it would be adjusted in future days. That is why they want the full amount of Rs 331 crore to be given as an outright grant. This is one area where the State Government is not prepared to utilise the amount which we are prepared to release.

The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment have released an advance instalment of Rs 11 crore under JRY and IAY to two districts, the West Godavari and the East Godavari. In addition an extra allocation of Rs 10 crore under JRY has been released over and above the normal allocation for the two districts. We have done this also.

Then HUDCO have announced a special package of Rs 190 crore of which Rs 50 crore is a grant and Rs 140 crore is a loan at a concessional rate of interest for reconstruction of completely damaged houses or for repairs of partially damaged houses in the districts. In addition HUDCO have offered 10 building centres for the cyclone affected districts with a grant assistance of Rs 1 50 crore.

The other supports being extended to improve the flow of funds to Andhra Pradesh for undertaking permanent relief and rehabilitation works are as follows. We have approved an amount of Rs 113 crore as the Rural Development Cess. This was an issue pending for the last several years and still the demands from various other States have not been considered. Other States are also demanding the same type of financial assistance so far as the Cess is concerned and because of resource constraint we have not taken any step in this regard but particularly in this connection to help the State of Andhra Pradesh we have taken a decision to release Rs 113 crore as the Rural Development

Cess for procurement of foodgrains. There are demands from other States, but I am not going into details now.

In addition to that we made an appeal to all the political parties. In fact the next day through electronic media I myself made an appeal. This is not the question of any party matter and all the political parties should come forward to cooperate. I also requested the Chief Minister to take the cooperation of all the political parties to create confidence among the people that the money which is going to be released is properly spent and told him that there should not be any scope for unnecessarily doubting the *bona fides* of the Government. He told me that he had already constituted an All Party Committee at the district level.

So in addition to that on 11th November itself we contacted the World Bank and the World Bank President has agreed to release 100 million U.S. dollars for housing which comes to about Rs. 350 crore which is a soft loan to be repaid in about 40 years. Now they have submitted a concrete proposal and that is submitted to the World Bank for consideration. They have submitted a proposal for Rs. 1,000 crore for housing and the entire project report has been submitted to the World Bank.

Sir, these are certain steps which we have taken. I do not think the Government has made any mistake while taking decision so far as the relief operations are concerned. I may tell you with all sincerity at my command that this is the highest assistance either in the form of grant or in form of loan or in the form of special assistance which the Government of India has ever given. Cyclones have come earlier also either in Tamil Nadu or in Andhra Pradesh or in Orissa or in West Bengal. These types of damages happened even in the past also. I do not want to narrate how much Central assistance was given in those days. But I would confine myself to what the Central Government has done so far as these districts are concerned which are damaged by the two particular cyclones. I have placed the facts before the hon. House. Sir, there is no question of mixing any politics there and there is no question of giving any special treatment. But we have tried our best by knowing fully well about the magnitude of the problem to cooperate with the State Government. I hope the House will be satisfied after this explanation regarding actions that we have taken. I think the House will at least agree with me that the Government is sincere particularly in this regard.

MR CHAIRMAN: Shri Narasimha Rao wants to say something.

SHRI PV NARASIMHA RAO (Berhampur): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that thousands of weavers in those two or three

districts have been completely stranded and ruined. Everyone has seen that thousands of their looms have been completely destroyed and I would like the Government to take immediate action to give them relief and also rehabilitate them suitably on a permanent basis. If anything has been done, I would be happy to know from the Prime Minister.

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA: I gave the details regarding handlooms. They have asked for Rs. 27 crore. I have already listed out what amount the Government have released up till now. The total package comes to about Rs. 650 crore. It is apart from the amount which we are going to get from the World Bank as soft loan. Apart from that up till now what we have released is about Rs. 650 crore.

SHRI P UPENDRA (Vijayawada): The Minister of Agriculture told that Rs. 37 crore have been allotted for the coconut plants and Rs. 4 crore has been announced by the Ministry of Surface Transport for repairing the National Highways.

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA: I have told everything. I have already mentioned all these things including surface transport, electricity, repairing of powerlooms etc. (*Interruptions*)

DR YS RAJA SEKHARA REDDY (Cuddapah): Sir, since yesterday we have been requesting the Government that the first phase of the cyclone also has to be taken into account. Unfortunately in the Prime Minister's reply nothing has been mentioned with regard to the first phase of the cyclone.

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA: Sir, I would clarify it. Even at the time of first phase of cyclone I went there. We have released Rs. 58 crore for the first phase. The damage is not so much. Out of which Rs. 27 crore was the advance and Rs. 23 crore was the grant.

DR YS RAJA SEKHARA REDDY: Sir, the problem is like this. The most important problem is housing.

Even in the first phase about 90,000 to 1,00,000 houses have been either partially or totally damaged. In the second phase maybe about 6,00,000 houses have been either partially or totally damaged. It is seen from the reply of the Central Government that around Rs. 150 crore of loan or assistance is coming from HUDCO, maybe another Rs. 300 crore of assistance is coming from the World Bank, but the State Government's request is for about Rs. 1,000 crore of assistance towards housing programmes in the second phase. Maybe the first phase also needs another Rs. 1,000 crore as assistance.

MR CHAIRMAN: I think the Prime Minister has adequately covered that point.

DR YS RAJA SEKHARA REDDY: Housing happens to be the basic need and under the Indira

Awaz Yojana it is the policy of the Central Government to provide housing to almost everyone in the course of the next three to four years. Even according to the Common Minimum Programme of the National Front they are to provide housing in the course of the next three to four years. May I request the Prime Minister to see that all those houses which have been either partially or totally damaged both in the first phase and second phase are rebuilt either through the assistance of the World Bank or through HUDCO or through Indra Awaz Yojana or by any other means?

MR CHAIRMAN Shri Murthy may seek the clarification now.

DR Y S RAJA SEKHARA REDDY Let the reply come.

MR CHAIRMAN Let Shri Murthy have his say and then the Prime Minister will reply to it. Shri Murthy please make it brief.

SHRI K S R MURTHY (Amalapuram) We would like to have a specific reply from the hon Prime Minister. As against the State Government's demand for Rs 2400 crore assistance only Rs 855 crore have been offered so far including the World Bank assistance.

MR CHAIRMAN There should be no repetition please. Shri Raja Sekhara Reddy had already raised that question.

SHRI K S R MURTHY As far as horticulture is concerned an amount of about Rs 350 crore is required. But there is no indication as to how much of assistance is going to come. For agriculture the State Government had asked for Rs 50 crore. In addition to the weavers we have a large segment of fishermen who have lost their boats and nets. To what extent are we going to be compensated in these sectors? Thank you.

SHRI G A CHARAN REDDY (Nizamabad) Mr Chairman through you I would like to ask the hon Prime Minister as to why he has not mentioned a word about the missing persons. Fishermen almost close to 1000 are still missing. The second thing is that there was no general appeal from the Prime Minister to the entire nation so far.

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA My God!

DR M JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) In the morning the hon Agriculture Minister said that Rs 63 crore would be given from his Ministry in regard to coconut plantations and that an amount of Rs 100 would be paid for the loss of each tree. We would like to have it increased to Rs 200 for each tree. The hon Prime Minister has not mentioned anything about the fishermen. Boats and nets should be given to these fishermen. Then crop insurance should also be taken

care of. The hon Agriculture Minister was mentioning about purchasing a mother-ship so that it could be anchored in the middle of the sea and whenever such type of incidents take place these fishermen could take shelter. But at whose cost would this ship be purchased? Whether this ship would be purchased at the cost of the State Government or Central Government has not been mentioned in the Prime Minister's statement. We thank all the individuals and the political parties who cutting across parties have supported our cause. Our demand is that this amount of Rs 331 crore should be given as a grant and we are unhappy that most of these things are in the form of loans.

MR CHAIRMAN Please make it brief.

DR M JAGANNATH We are unhappy with the meagre assistance that we got from the Government of India. Thank you.

SHRI P KODANDA RAMAIAH (Chitradurga) Mr Chairman Sir we have had a very long discussion on the havoc caused in Andhra Pradesh by the Cyclone which was of the nature of a tornado and then there have been expressions of dissent as well as agreement with whatever has been done by the Government of India. The Prime Minister was very concerned about the situation and it is explained by the fact that he expeditiously went over to the cyclone ravaged areas and did a survey himself. Subsequently he followed it up by sending the Union Agriculture Minister also to do the survey.

On the top of it the Prime Minister had made some announcements of aid in Hyderabad as well as in Delhi. There have been memoranda for aid from the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Government of India has met most of the demands made by Andhra Pradesh.

There is a point we have to understand. There is the Tenth Finance Commission which says what should be the nature of aid to be given to natural calamities and the Government of India has gone beyond the brief given by the Tenth Finance Commission in meeting the demands of Andhra Pradesh. That is the point which we have to understand. You have never been niggardly in giving aid to Andhra Pradesh.

[Translation]

MR CHAIRMAN Uma ji has any damage been done in Madhya Pradesh?

KUMARI UMA BHARATI (Khajuraho) No damage has been done. Since I have participated in this debate and some of my questions have not been replied to I would like to ask only those questions. I will not make any speech at this time but I have to only ask some questions from the hon ble Prime Minister. My first question is that there is a National Calamity Relief

Fund in our country with a provision of Rs 800 crore. Out of this amount perhaps Rs 93 crore have been given to Andhra Pradesh as per the information given by the Prime Minister as to whether he will call a meeting of this committee soon because Rs 800 crore is a meager amount keeping in view such a big calamity? Whether he will increase this amount?

My second question is that nobody know as how long this Government will last but to prevent recurrence of such incidents further in the country (*Interruptions*)

MR CHAIRMAN Uma ji please confine yourself to the subject only

KUMARI UMA BHARATI I am coming to the point and I would like to know from the hon ble Prime Minister as to whether he would be kind enough to those people who are killed in such calamities and implement those steps to prevent recurrence of such incidents which were initiated during 1978-79 but could not be completed at that time?

Therefore I have two questions—the first question is regarding convening of a meeting of the committee of Natural Calamity Relief Fund and increasing its provision and my second question is that when such a calamity takes place there should be a proper disaster management (*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI M SELVARASU (Nagapattinam) As per the hon Prime Minister's reply not a single word was mentioned about the Yanam cyclone affected area I would like to know how much amount is being given to Yanam which is under Pondicherry. It is a very small area.

MR CHAIRMAN The Prime Minister specifically mentioned about Pondicherry.

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI (Khammam) I would like to speak in Telugu.

MR CHAIRMAN I think you do not want the translator. Have you asked the translator beforehand to interpret your speech in Telugu?

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI No I will speak now in English.

After a daylong discussion the Prime Minister announced nothing new. I am sorry to say that the Prime Minister is not with us. So please reconsider the amount of aid given to Andhra Pradesh.

MR CHAIRMAN The Prime Minister is very much with you. How can you say that he is not with us? He is very much with us here.

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI My humble suggestion is at least please reconsider the statement made. The burden of the loan may be too much. Will the

Prime Minister please reconsider the amount of grant he has announced? Please announce at least Rs 50 crore more grant today.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) Will you just permit me to explain what Shri Veerabhadram Thammineni says? The total amount given is divided into grants and loans. All States consider themselves to be deeply indebted. What he suggests is will the Prime Minister kindly consider reducing the fraction of loans and increasing the fraction of grants in the total amount that is given.

SHRI JAG MOHAN (New Delhi) I have only one suggestion or comment to make. When a large number of houses are being reconstructed or repaired or new construction will take place will the Government take into account the fact that some sort of a cyclone proof arrangements are made?

Where there is a very severe cyclone of course nobody can help that. But in the case of a cyclone of a lower intensity the houses can be safeguarded. It is a question of new technology being evolved, new material being used and new siting for the houses which have been totally damaged. If they have to be re-sited they should be re-sited at places where there is not much risk of their being demolished again on not a comparatively medium size cyclone.

MR CHAIRMAN Would the Prime Minister like to respond to any of these questions?

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA Sir I would like to clarify the position again about the quantum of Central relief that is going to be given under such circumstances. Till the Ninth Finance Commission recommendation whatever may be the quantum of damage caused either due to drought or floods or cyclone the money that was going to be released by the Government of India was only a meagre amount. Only the Plan assistance was given. The Central assistance is only a meagre amount. I think for the first time the Ninth Finance Commission has recommended to create the Calamity Relief Fund. Till then it was given only as an *ad hoc* assistance from the Centre under Non-Plan. Whatever money that was available with the Government of India they used to give amounts like Rs 15 crore, Rs 20 crore and Rs 30 crore. I am going to give the details a little later.

The Calamity Relief Fund as per the recommendation of the Tenth Finance Commission is about Rs 1,197 crore out of which 75 per cent is the grant and 25 per cent is the loan portion. The highest amount indicated by the Tenth Finance Commission in its recommendation is to Rajasthan Rs 179 crore, Andhra Pradesh Rs 124 crore and Gujarat Rs 139 crore. I do not want to mix politics here. The quantum of damage Bihar is going to have every every year due to high floods is severe. There are six or seven rivers

So is the case with Assam. For Bihar, it is just Rs. 51 crore. I do not want to go back to all these things as to how it has happened. In a restrained way, I am placing only certain facts...*(Interruptions)* Please wait. Let the Andhra Pradesh politics not crop up in this House. I have heard it. What the hon. Member says is that we have not done anything. I would like to just draw the attention of the House to one aspect. Madam, you asked me as to what happened in 1984, what happened in 1987 and what happened in May 1990. I will give you the details. In 1990, the number of houses damaged was 13,96,000. This time, according to their figure, it is 6,41,000. I would just like to point out what was the amount of assistance given at that time. Let us not come to the conclusion that this Government is giving this issue a step-motherly treatment. Let us come to the conclusion that this Government has taken some decision on certain humanitarian considerations.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : The estimate of loss at that time, according to the State Government, was Rs. 2,247 crore. The team which went from the Government of India recommended for Rs. 168 crore where the number of houses collapsed was 13,96,000. Out of that, the Inter-Ministerial Group of the Government of India had recommended for assistance of Rs. 167.54 crore in respect of 1990 calamity to the State Government after deducting Rs. 86 crore available with the State Government under the Central Relief Fund. The Ministry of Agriculture had proposed an additional relief of Rs. 81.5 crore. This was put up to the Cabinet in August 1991. The decision of this was deferred. This was considered by the Union Cabinet again in 1992 with the change that 75 per cent of the recommended assistance Rs. 81.5 crore may be treated as grant and 25 per cent as loan. However, this proposal was not approved apparently because the Finance Ministry objected to the grant of any additional assistance over and above the Central share of the Calamity Relief Fund. My hon. Colleague says that this Government has no heart...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt Mr. Murthy. Let the Prime Minister complete it.

*(Interruptions)*

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : We are not a party to the step-motherly treatment.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Please let us not mix up politics on this issue. I can understand about it. I have given a total package of Rs. 650 crore and apart from that we want to release Rs. 331 crore. And they say, we do not want it. Raja Sekhara Reddy, you asked for Rs. 1,000 crore. We have recommended to the World Bank for Rs. 1,000 crore for housing. But what was the amount asked for by the State Government? The State

Government had asked for Rs. 963 crore for housing. Apart from this Rs. 1,000 crore that we have recommended to the World Bank, we have already taken steps with the HUDCO. I have also given the details of how much it is. The HUDCO has announced a special package of Rs. 180 crore of which Rs. 50 crore is the grant. The Rural Development Ministry have released Rs. 21 crore. Then Rs. 60 crore may come out of the National Calamity Relief Fund. Rs. 93 crore is the Calamity Relief Fund which the State Government should get it legitimately. In addition to that, the cess comes to Rs. 113 crore. The Ministry of Rural Development says this in respect of procurement of foodgrains. We have taken this decision. All these things come to Rs. 650 crore. I do not know what I should do.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Is the Foreign Minister ready to make a statement on Afghanistan?

*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : We have had a very detailed discussion.

*(Interruptions)*

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : We are not a party to the statement that the Central Government is making.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not that at all. I think, he has given you a very elaborate and very satisfactory reply. Your Government had asked for only Rs. 900 crore but he has given Rs. 1,000 crore. He has recommended for Rs. 1,000 crore.

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : The State Government has a very serious financial position. It is like a proverbial jackal sitting under a palm tree and the palm fruit is falling on the head of the jackal.

The State Government's financial position is exactly that. So, they are literally going with a begging bowl to every State, every place possible. So, in view of the serious financial position of the State Governments.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I do not think, it is a question of a begging bowl. When a calamity like that occurs, everybody must trip in.

*(Interruptions)*

DR. Y.S. RAJA SEKHARA REDDY : At least, the housing part be taken care of because it also forms part of the Common Minimum Programme of the National Front Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Raja Sekhara Reddy, please.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the hon. Foreign Minister will now make a statement on Afghanistan.

*(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN The Foreign Minister is on his feet

SHRI H D DEVE GOWDA One minute Sir

Whatever the hon Member Shri Raja Sekhara Reddy has expressed I do not want to react to that Every State Government's financial position is one and the same Do not get under the impression that the financial position of Andhra is bad and the other States are financially very strong *(Interruptions)* We know what it is including the Central Government *(Interruptions)* When the previous Government was there why was it turned down? Do not unnecessarily try to make politics in such a very important decision

Your goodself have said that the Prime Minister has not made an appeal For the first time I have made an appeal throught the electronic media through the print media to the entire country — the State Governments non-governmental organizations and the financial institutions which has appeared in all the Papers I do not want to say Sir that within three days I sent my one months salary and I did not want to say this And I do not want to take any credit for this I sent the cheque of my salary within three days and I have requested my people also For God's sake please do not make politics out of this The other States are also there When we want to think of the country as a whole we should not try to mix politics here *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE DUMDUM Each Member of our Party has already donated Rs 5 000 *(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN Now I think we have had a very detailed reply on this subject

Shri Jagannathji please sit down

*(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN I would now request the hon Foreign Minister to make a Statement on Situation in Afghanistan

*(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN Please let us have some order in the House

*(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN Yes Mr Foreign Minister

16 49 hrs

### STATEMENT BY MINISTER

#### *Situation in Afghanistan*

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I K GUJRAL) Sir recent developments in Afghanistan have attracted wide attention and evoked concern all over The fall of Kabul to the Taliban forces on September

27th was a turning point It led to the brutal murder of former President Najibullah and his brother It was all the more shocking because they were under the charge of the UN which was honour bound to protect them Both the Government of India and I myself have expressed our revulsion at this tragic development

The pursuit of obscurantist doctrine by the Taliban leadership and the consequent denial of human rights especially the rights of women have been extensively condemned The implications of these events have been assessed especially the risk of an adverse impact on India's security We continue to follow developments in Afghanistan very closely and evaluate their implications for us

The situation in Afghanistan continues to be fluid The opposing parties facing each other in battle are the Taliban and the forces of the Supreme Council for the Defence of Afghanistan (SCDA) (which comprises the forces of the Government of General Rashid Dostum and of Hizb e Wahdat leader Karim Khalili) Fronts in the vicinity of Kabul and in the western part of Afghanistan continue to be tense and witness sporadic activity After a period of quiet there are recent reports of renewed heavy fighting north of Kabul The on-set of winter will increase the difficulties faced by the people and enhance their need for humanitarian assistance

We have maintained contact with the legitimate Afghan Government led by President Rabbani Though we had to withdraw our Embassy on 27th September 1996 the Afghan Embassy continues to function in Delhi As Hon Members know recently President Rabbani met our Prime Minister during his visit to Rome for the Food Summit We also sent a delegation led by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs to Mazar-e-Sharif on November 10th to meet Gen Rashid Dostum We remain in contact with countries who take an interest in Afghan affairs There is recognition that India has vital interest in Afghanistan and therefore a role to assist in the restoration of peace and tranquility there As is known India was invited by Iran to participate in a Regional Conference organised by them in Teheran in October Unfortunately Pakistan chose to oppose our participation but in the face of Iranian refusal to oblige it did not participate in the Conference

Subsequently the UN Secretary General had convened a meeting of senior officials and experts from 19 countries who has knowledge interest and influence regarding Afghanistan India was invited and we participated in the meeting which was held on the 18th of November India has also been invited to take part in a UN sponsored international forum on assistance to Afghanistan We have confirmed our participation The venue of this conference has not yet been finalised