

Fourteenth Loksabha

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Participants : [Patil Shri Shivraj V.](#), [Gowda Shri D.V. Sadananda](#), [Krishnaswamy Shri A.](#), [Prabhu Shri Suresh](#), [Patil Shri Shivraj V.](#), [Singh Ch. Lal](#), [Pal Shri Raja Ram](#), [Acharia Shri Basudeb](#), [Swain Shri M.A. Kharabela](#)

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Title : Further discussion regarding natural calamities in the country raised by Shri Basudeb Acharia on 26th July, 2005 .

14.55 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Natural Calamities in the country – contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Calling Attention has been postponed by the hon. Speaker. So, if the House agrees, I request the hon. Home Minister to reply to the discussion regarding natural calamities.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, India is vulnerable to natural disasters as 60 per cent of the land mass is prone to earthquakes, about eight per cent area, that is, over 40 million hectares is prone to floods and about 8,000 kilometres of coastline is prone to cyclones. In addition, drought, landslides and avalanches are also regular features. The country was also recently hit by the tsunami.

In this season also, floods have affected various States and I would like to begin my response by submitting to the august House the present position about floods. Sir, I am replying to the debate which had taken place some days back and I may add a few things which have not been mentioned and yet which have occurred after that period.

I would like to inform the House that rainfall in July, over the country, as a whole is 97 per cent of its long period average (LPA). Over the four broad homogenous regions of India, rainfall is likely to be 97 per cent of its LPA over North-West India, 95 per cent of the LPA over North-East India, 102 per cent of the LPA over Central India and 97 per cent over South Peninsula.

The country has received 426.4 mm rainfall till 27th July, 2005, which is 102 per cent of the average rainfall of the country during this period. Thirty one out of thirty six meteorological sub-divisions have experienced normal to excess rainfall during this period.

I would like to inform the august House that during the current South-West Monsoon season, heavy rains and severe floods/flash floods were reported from the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. There have been reports of moderate to heavy rains and floods of a varying yet lesser degree from other States.

Floods have been caused for more than one reason which *inter alia* include the first wave of the flash floods which took place in Himachal Pradesh on account of a rupture in the artificial lake at Pareechu, heavy rainfall in the catchment areas, rivers carrying a huge quantum of silt, raising the river beds resulting in a decrease in the water carrying capacity, rising temperature resulting in snow and glacial melts and rivers or streams carrying flows in excess of their transporting capacity within their beds resulting in an overflow into adjoining land or area[[reporter28](#)].

15.00[ak29] hrs.

The provisional estimates of damage -- as reported by the affected State Governments -- based on their preliminary assessment is as follows. The number of districts affected is 161; the number of villages affected is 18,771; the population affected is 190.37 lakh; the human lives lost is 1,581, and this does not include the number of human lives lost in Maharashtra; the livestock lost is 70,087; and the number of houses damaged is 4.42 lakh. These were the figures given, and there may be some slight change in the actual statistics, which will become available now.

The concerned State Governments promptly responded to the situation and undertook rescue and relief operations on a large-scale in the areas affected by floods. These include evacuation and shifting of the people to safer places, setting-up of relief camps, providing gratuitous relief, distribution of essential commodities, provision of safe drinking water, health and hygiene measures.

The Government of India has closely monitored and rendered necessary financial and logistic support to deal effectively with the flood situation in the country. The National Crisis Management Committee under the Cabinet Secretary and the Home Ministry has been conducting regular reviews and follow-up meetings with the representatives of the affected State Governments and the Emergency Support Ministries to provide required financial and logistic support.

The Central Government deployed Air Force helicopters, Army boats, Army Columns and Central Paramilitary Forces to assist the State Governments in the rescue and relief operations. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare provided the requisite stocks of essential medicines and drugs, bleaching powder, Chlorine tablets, ORS packets to meet the requirements of the State Government, and to prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases and epidemics. Additional stocks of essential commodities and petroleum products were provided to the flood-affected States wherever needed. The Ministries and other concerned Organisations, that is, the

Ministries of Road Transport and Highways, Telecommunications, Power, Drinking Water Supply, National Highway Authority of India, Border Roads Organisation were directed to ensure immediate repair and restoration of the damaged infrastructure on a priority basis.

The hon. Prime Minister and myself have visited the flood-affected areas of Maharashtra on 28 July 2005 and have first hand information on the flood situation in the State. I had also visited Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat earlier to review the flood situation. Considering the severity of the flood situation in these States, an immediate financial assistance of Rs. 500 crore to Gujarat, Rs. 500 crore to Maharashtra and Rs. 100 crore to Himachal Pradesh has been provided from the NCCF to enable these States to carryout rescue and relief operations, and restore immediate connectivity.

In addition, the first installment of the Central share of CRF amounting to Rs. 92.25 crore to Gujarat, Rs. 83.59 crore to Maharashtra, Rs. 32.42 crore to Jammu and Kashmir, Rs. 95.34 crore to Madhya Pradesh, and Rs. 10.62 crore to Arunachal Pradesh have been released. In respect of Himachal Pradesh, both the installments of CRF amounting to Rs. 75.52 crore have been released.

I would like to inform the august House that the Government of Gujarat has submitted a memorandum demanding financial assistance of over Rs. 8,110 crore, including Rs. 4,113 crore for long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation. The Inter-Ministerial Central Team has visited Gujarat for making an on-the-spot assessment of the damage and requirement of the funds. The team is to submit its report shortly [\[ak30\]](#).

As regards Himachal Pradesh, the Government of Himachal Pradesh has submitted its memorandum in which the damages suffered by the State Government is estimated at Rs. 1,000 crore. An Inter-Ministerial Central Team has visited Himachal Pradesh for making an on-the-spot assessment of the damage and requirement of the funds. The team is to submit its report shortly.

In case of Madhya Pradesh, we have just received their memorandum. A Central Team has already been deputed to visit the State from 29 July 2005 onwards for making an on-the-spot assessment of the damage caused by the floods and requirement of the funds.

The Government of Nagaland has also submitted a memorandum seeking additional financial assistance of Rs. 7.10 crore for landslides and flash floods, which occurred as a result of cloudbursts in Mokokchung and Tuli Towns of Mokokchung district on 26-05-2005. A Central Team was deputed to assess the damages and requirement of the funds. The Central Team has since visited the State and submitted its report. Further action on the report of the Team would be taken in consonance with the extant norms and the items, and as per prescribed procedure, that is, with the approval of the IMG and HLC. In the meantime, the first installment of the Central share of CRF of Rs. 1.44 crore has been released to the State on 21-06-2005.

There have been some suggestions received from the hon. Members about the long-term measures to be taken for the prevention of natural calamities, especially, floods in Assam and northern-part of Bihar. The hon. Members have also spoken about strengthening of Brahmaputra Board, and the havoc created by the rivers coming from Nepal and Bhutan. There are also suggestions from the hon. Members that the inter-linking of rivers can help in solving the problem of floods to a great extent.

Some of the hon. Members have also highlighted the need for proper monitoring of relief funds released to the State Government. I would like to inform the House that a Task Force was set-up for Flood Management / Erosion Control under the chairmanship of the Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC) to look into the problem of floods in Assam and neighbouring States, namely, West Bengal, Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh. The Task Force submitted its report on 31-12-2004. The report of the Task Force was circulated to the various Ministries, Planning Commission and the concerned State Governments. After receiving the comments on the report of the Task Force from the Ministries and the concerned State Governments, the recommendation of the Task Force will be taken up.

The Government of India is having a continuous dialogue with Nepal in the co-operation of water-resource development. The UPA Government took steps, and a Joint Project Office was opened in Biratnagar in Nepal in August 2004 to carry out surveys and investigations on the Sapta Kosi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sun Kosi Storage-cum-Diversion Scheme, for which the Government of India has kept a provision of Rs. 29.34 crore. In addition to irrigation, power benefits and navigational facilities, the above project will also provide flood-control benefits, particularly, in North Bihar[ak31].

I would like to bring to the notice of the august House that a scheme for advanced warning from Nepal has been in operation covering 42 stations on various rivers in Nepal, from where the data is obtained and processed by CWC for flood forecasts. It has been agreed with the Government of Nepal that the stations be increased from 42 to 47 and there is also a proposal to modernise 5 key hydrological stations located in Nepal. To facilitate this scheme, the Government has approved an amount of Rs. 1.88 crore and the Joint Standing Committee is monitoring the progress.

Regarding cooperation with Bhutan to assess the probable causes and effects of recurring floods and erosion in the southern foothills of Bhutan and adjoining plains in India (in Assam and North Bengal), an India-Bhutan Joint Group of Experts (JGE) on flood management has been constituted which held its first meeting in November, 2004. The JGE further constituted a Joint Technical Team to have a more detailed technical examination of the problem.

Regarding Inter-Linking of Rivers, I would like to inform the House that the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government indicates that it will make a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking of rivers of the country starting with the southern rivers and this assessment will be done in a fully consultative manner.

Regarding proper utilisation of the funds released to the State Governments, I would like to inform the august House that the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) and Ministry of Home Affairs have prescribed a format for submission of items-wise expenditure under CRF/NCCF. The State Governments are required to incur expenditure on relief operations as per the Government of India approved items and norms. They are required to send a copy of this information in the prescribed proforma to the Accountant Generals (AGs). The State AGs have been requested to carry out test checks on the basis of information submitted to them by the States. However, I would like to inform that any other suggestion from the hon. Members to improve the system will be suitably incorporated.

Regarding river-erosion problem in West Bengal, I have been informed by the Ministry of Water Resources that Government of India has been providing financial assistance to Government of West Bengal since Ninth Plan. During Ninth Plan, Rs. 17.88 crore was released. During Tenth Plan, Rs. 25.78 crore has been released. There is further provision of Rs. 36 crore in the Tenth Plan and the [R32] amount will be released if utilisation certificate is provided by the Government of West Bengal.

As the august House is aware that besides cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood and hailstorm, the definition of natural calamity, as applicable at present, has been extended to cover landslides, avalanches, cloud burst and pest attacks. The suggestions given by the hon. Members for inclusion of some more hazards in the list of natural calamities covered under CRF/NCCF have been taken note of and the same would be placed before the appropriate forum for consideration[R33].

With regard to the suggestions of the hon. Members regarding inclusion of the subject 'Disaster Management' in school curriculum, I am happy to inform the House that Disaster Management education has been included in CBSE syllabus for VIII, IX and Xth standard. The books have been shared with the State Governments. The Governments should include the syllabus on the same lines through their respective school boards of education.

To meet the challenges posed by natural and manmade disasters, the Government have brought about a paradigm shift in its approach to disaster management. There is a change in orientation from a relief centric approach to a holistic multi-disciplinary approach. The new approach covers mitigation and preparedness in addition to post disaster response and rehabilitation as they go hand in hand for vulnerability reduction and rapid professional response to disasters. With this objective the Government proposes to enact a law on Disaster Management to provide the requisite institutional mechanism for drawing up and monitoring the implementation of the disaster management plans ensuring measures by various wings of Government for prevention and mitigating effects of disasters and for undertaking a holistic, coordinated and prompt response to any disaster situation. Accordingly, the Disaster Management Bill, 2005 has already been introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 11th May, 2005 and is presently under examination by the Standing Committee of Parliament. Pending enactment of the Disaster Management bill, the National Disaster Management Authority under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister has been constituted through a notification for laying down the plans and policies for disaster management.

I would like to assure the hon. Members that the Government would give due importance to the valuable suggestions given by them during the discussion to deal effectively with the situation caused by floods and other natural calamities.

Sir, the discussion had taken place on this topic for hours together, on three days consecutively, I suppose. This is the reply given to that debate. If the reply had taken place on the same day, probably many questions could have been asked and the Government could have been required to reply to those questions. I do not know whether the hon. Members want to ask any questions on this today. If they want to, I shall endeavour to respond to their questions. Thank you.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, erosion in Ganga Basin of West Bengal is a national problem because this river passes through rather four States. In his reply, the Home Minister has stated that a very small amount of Rs.19 crores or Rs.20 crores or Rs.36 crores has been allocated. Sir, a plan was prepared in 1996 and an estimate was worked out. I would like to know as it is a national problem, it should be treated on a national basis and sufficient funds should be allocated to tackle the erosion of Ganga Basis of West Bengal. I would like to know from the Home Minister that in order to have short-term and long-term plans, would sufficient funds be allocated to tackle the erosion problem of West Bengal?

SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA (MANGALORE): Sir, sea erosion is a part of natural calamity. During heavy rains, there are heavy sea erosions in all the places of coastal belts. During this year, in Karnataka, houses of more than 1,000 fishermen have been submerged into the sea. As far as natural calamities are concerned, there are several proposals which are pending before the Central Government for the last four to five years....
(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : If you want a reply, you have to be very brief.

SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the long pending proposals with regard to sea erosion in respect of the State of Karnataka would be cleared by the Central Government immediately so as to avoid further erosion and control natural calamities. ... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (KANAKPURA): I would like to join the hon. Member regarding the pending proposals of Karnataka.

चौधरी लाल सिंह (उधमपुर) : महोदय, जब पिछली बार प्राकृतिक आपदा हुई थी, उसके कंसर्न में मैंने पहले भी माननीय गृह मंत्री जी से दो-तीन बातें कही थीं। अब तो दूसरी आपदा भी आ चुकी है, लेकिन हमारे जम्मू-कश्मीर के गांवों में खासकर मेरे चुनाव क्षेत्र में बिजली भी स्टोर नहीं हो पायी है। दस महीने हो गए हैं। दूसरी बात मैंने कही थी कि लोग नाले और दरिया रोक लेते हैं, वन काट लेते हैं, इसके लिए सरकार क्या कर रही है। पानी निकलने के सारे रास्ते रोक लिए जाते हैं, उसके लिए सरकार क्या कर रही है?

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (RAJAPUR): Is the Minister thinking of creating a national authority and also to bring a new legislation? If so, my request would be that this draft Bill should be put on the website of the Ministry so that he can get comments on this new Bill before it is presented to the Parliament.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : Which Bill are you referring to?

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : I am referring to the Bill on Disaster Management. It should be done so that people could offer their comments before it is presented to Parliament. Secondly, this Bill should encompass the creation of an authority not only at the State level but also at the district level because most of the time when actual disaster takes place, the district authorities have to run immediately. Thirdly, is the Government thinking of making insurance compulsory because of change in climate?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): I think, there is a need for creation of a disaster management voluntary cut in every State. Secondly, with regard to inter-linking of rivers, recently, I had been to Bangladesh.

Now, the anti-Indian lobby in Bangladesh are funding out the anti-Indian campaign. This information should be given as to what exactly we are going to do about linking of rivers.

Hon. Minister for Science and Technology was there

[p34]

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Last time, I just appealed to him that while building a multi-storeyed building, approval of a Structural Engineer is actually required. I would like to know whether the Government is going to make any proposal in this regard.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know this. Tamil Nadu is the most affected Tsunami area. Till today, there is no development in the Tsunami-affected areas of Tamil Nadu. Pucca houses have not been constructed. There was a big expectation among the Tsunami-affected people. I would like to know whether the Central Government has pumped in any money from here or not. It is because the State Government is making an allegation that the Central Government has not pumped in any money for the construction of houses, supplying of boats, nets and everything else. Will the Minister respond to this?... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Sir, I have only one question... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : At 3:30 p.m., we have to take up Private Members' Business.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Sir, the Special Team to the State of Kerala... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Time is short. The Minister has to give his reply.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, do you want to extend the time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. It is now difficult. No time is there. You give your reply.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Do you want reply to the questions, which have already been asked?... (*Interruptions*). I can talk to you afterwards.... (*Interruptions*)

श्री राजाराम पाल (बिल्हौर) : सभापति महोदय, मैंने चर्चा में भाग लिया था।... (व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : मंत्री जी रिप्लाई दे रहे हैं। आप बाद में पूछिए।

... (व्यवधान)

श्री राजाराम पाल : सभापति महोदय, उत्तर प्रदेश में बड़े पैमाने पर बाढ़ आई थी।... (व्यवधान)

कानपुर में गंगा कटनी में गंगा बेराज के इंजीनियरों द्वारा गलत फैसला दिया गया था, जिसके कारण कई गांव बह गए। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि जो गांव बह गए हैं, जिन लोगों की फसल बर्बाद हो गई है, उनके बारे में आप क्या करना चाहते हैं।... (व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदय : श्री पाटील, आप रिप्लाय दीजिए।

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, Shri Achariaji has said that the amount of money, which is given to deal with erosion problem, is very small. I agree with him. But we have some more money. If the Government of West Bengal has spent some money and if that information is given to the Government of India, we would like to give more money.

As far as providing more funds for this purpose is concerned, this is a point which is well taken. We will look into it.

Sea erosion is also a problem. We are looking into as to how to deal with it - whether by having mangrove growth, by having sea-wall at various places - and many other things. In the period of Tsunami, this issue has been discussed at great length. Now, it would be possible to do something which would really help.

A question was asked about disaster management – whether the Government would put the Disaster Management Bill on the internet or not. I would say that we have already introduced the Bill in the House. That Bill is with the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee can invite anybody to appear before it and can record his statement. Any person willing to say anything on that can give his views in writing or orally to it. Those views will be considered. I would like to say that the Disaster Management Bill, which we have introduced in the House, provides for the National Disaster Management Authority, State Disaster Management Authority and also the District Disaster Management Authority[[pkp35](#)].

We have also said that if the State Government wants to have its own law, it will be able to have its own law. It can, under the Bill which we have introduced here which will become a law, constitute the State Disaster Management Authorities or it can constitute such an Authority, under its own law.

As far as Tsunami is concerned, we have given funds to the State Governments; I am sure, the State Governments are not complaining. Probably people do not have full information about the amount of money which is given to the State Governments. In the first phase, we have given the succour; in the second phase, we have made temporary arrangements and in the third phase, we are going to construct the houses. They have prepared the plans; those plans have been shown to the Planning Commission of India. They are looking into it and huge amount of money has been promised to be given to them. In accordance with their requirements, funds will be made available to them and they will make use of those funds. ... (*Interruptions*)

Probably, about boats and nets, he shall have to get the information. The Finance Minister himself and other Ministers who had been there from the Government of India, have looked into this matter in great detail. Boats have been ordered; nets have been ordered and they are being given to the people over there. We have catamarans, bigger boats and some other bigger boats – three kinds of boats – are being given and the nets are also being given. He shall have to get that information from the Minister coming from Tamil Nadu, the Finance Minister. ... (*Interruptions*)

As far as the electricity in Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, funds have been given to the State Government and we hope that the funds will be made use of by the State Government to provide the requirements.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thank you. Now, we shall take up Private Members' Business. Item No. 21. Shrimati Krishna Tirath to continue her speech.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The previous business is over and we have already started the Private Members' Business. Please take your seat.

... (*Interruptions*)