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Title: Need to increase the amount of National Fishermen Welfare Fund for setting up of housing units.

SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL (ALAPPUZHA): I wish to bring a significant issue to the attention of this august House. This is about the pathetic living condition of the fishermen, who are living in the coastal areas. Due to lack of sufficient drinking water, hospital amenities and educational institutions, they are suffering a lot. Setting up of a dwelling unit is a major hurdle for them.

I would like to mention a specific issue about the disparity in the allotment of funds for fishermen, for setting up housing facilities. A major housing scheme, implemented by the National Fishermen Welfare Fund is not sufficient to them to achieve the goal and most of the fishermen all over the country are not satisfied with the system of implementation of this scheme. The scheme is providing an amount of Rs.50,000 and at the same time, the other major schemes like the Tsunami Rehabilitation Schemes and the schemes run by the local bodies are giving Rs.2 lakh and Rs.1 lakh respectively for them.

Due to inadequate assistance to build dwelling units, most of them keep themselves away from the schemes and trying to avail assistance from other housing schemes because if one is provided assistance through one scheme, he is not eligible for another scheme.

So, the Government should review the scheme and revise the allocated amount to a minimum of Rs.2 lakh to one family.

Another major necessity of the fishermen community is unavailability of sufficient kerosene for fishing needs. Most of them are forced to buy kerosene from black-market at a higher price. So, an urgent action is needed to ensure sufficient supply of subsidized kerosene through PDS to each and every fisherman.