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Title : Regarding poor state of disaster management apparatus in West Bengal particularly, in Kolkata.

DR. TARUN MANDAL (JAYNAGAR) : Sir, I seek your permission to speak from this place. Sir, this is regarding disaster management affairs in the State of West Bengal. It appears that there is no disaster management apparatus or if there is anything like that it has totally collapsed. You take the case of recent tropical storm, tornado in the district of North Dinajpur or the case of last year's Aila in the Sundarbans coast and in other places in the State or the recent fire accidents that happened in the Metro city of Kolkata.

Last month, on 23rd March, a fire in the broad daylight, around mid-day hours happened where around 43 persons died and the fire services did not reach in time; they did not have the sky-lift to rescue the people who were trapped in the upstairs of that particular building. That is a heritage building. The Government itself and the Chief Minister himself admitted that the extension project of that particular building, the sixth or seventh storey, was illegal and the Kolkata Corporation is run by the same Left front led by the CPI (M). We feel that the police administration, the Government and the Corporation have a big hand in the underhand deals to sanction this type of construction and putting people under much stress. Similar incidents in Nandoram Market and McNeil McKenzie Houses in the city of Kolkata happened in the past.

In the district of North Dinajpur, after the tornado, we have heard about this from the other speakers also, that people are still remaining in the open, under the sky. What could the Bihar Government do, the West Bengal Government could not do. That is a very sad incident.

Through you, I want to appeal to the Union Government that there should be a definite high-level agency's investigation into the incident that occurred in Stephen's Court fire that happened on 23rd March in Kolkata and the persons who were involved, who are guilty should be given exemplary punishment.

Secondly, the Union Government must look into the aspect whether the Government of West Bengal has developed any disaster management mechanism or not. It is not a sort of political blaming. The lives of innocent people are being lost in such catastrophes.

My third submission is that the Central Government must also jump to help in this time of distress. They should not only observe and keep it as a State subject, but they should also jump into the occurrence and try to save the lives of the people. Thank you.