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Title: The Minister of Home Affairs laid a statement regarding Situation caused by cloudburst in Leh, Jammu and Kashmir –laid.

\*THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Hon'ble Members are aware that a massive cloud burst occurred in Leh after torrential rains lashed Leh and its surrounding areas at about 0100-0200 hrs on the intervening night of 5-6 August, 2010. This triggered flash floods in Leh Town and surrounding areas of Chogilumsar, Pathar Sahib, Phyang, Hanoyogma and Nimu. Since the tragedy occurred during the night there has been substantial loss of precious human lives. Damage to property and disruption of communication and services have also been widely reported. A full assessment is under way.

As per the Government of J&K's latest assessment, 179 persons including 6 foreign nationals have lost their lives and approximately 400 persons have been injured and treated in various Army and other medical facilities.

There has also been extensive damage to public utilities viz BSNL exchange,, civil hospital, airport, drinking water supply works, National Highways connecting Leh-Manali, Leh-Kargil and also to private properties.

On receipt of the information of the cloud burst, Government of India immediately swung into action and responded to the requirements projected by the Government of Janmu & Kashmir for undertaking rescue and relief operations in the affected areas. More than 6000 personnel of Army, Air Force, Border Roads Organization, NDRF and ITBP have been deployed along with rescue equipment to assist the civil administration in relief operations. Large quantities of tents (800), blankets (6900), tarpaulins (620), mattresses (1000), food packets and bottled water have been sent. Contributions from the charitable organizations and other sources have also been airlifted.

Apart from the medical teams available with Army/CPMFs/State, etc. one medical team consisting of 8 Doctors and 4 Nurses along with 10 Qtls. of emergent surgical/medical consumables have been deployed in the affected area. Additional medical supplies are being dispatched. Medical equipments have been sent to the affected area.

The Civil hospital has been made functional and two water purification machines of 4000 litres per hour capacity have been delivered at Leh. An additional water purification plant has also been sent. Sufficient quantities of chlorine/water purification tablets have been dispatched. 30% water supply has been resumed.

50 civil aircrafts were deployed between 8-8-10 to 15-8-10 and more than 7400 passengers have been evacuated from Leh to Delhi/Jammu. These aircrafts have also carried more than. 25 tonnes of relief material to Leh, free of cost since 8.8.2010.

Air Force has carried out 202 sorties and airlifted 269.64 tonnes of relief material and equipments and 789 passengers and 15 dead bodies. Prime Minister's Office has announced an ex-gratia amount of Rs.1 Lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased.

The focus is now on the restoration of road link and telecommunication for which Border Roads Organization and BSNL are working round the clock. The Leh-Srinagar road link has been restored and Leh-Manali road is open for light vehicles. 9 BSNL towers have been restored and mobile connectivity established in city area. Landline connectivity to be restored fully by 31.8.2010. Heavy machinery have been airlifted to Leh to expedite restoration of road links. Bailey bridge components are also being airlifted over the last few days. Electricity in Leh town has been restored.

As on date, Rs.429.24 crore is available with the State Government in their State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) account for carrying out rescue and relief operations.

A High Level Central Team consisting of Union Ministers Shri Farooq Abdullah, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad and Shri Prithvi Raj Chavan visited the affected area on 07.08.2010 to assess the situation.

The situation is also being reviewed continuously and the Ministry of Home Affairs is coordinating with all Ministries / Departments / agencies concerned for convergence of the rescue and relief efforts.

The thrust now will be on the rehabilitation of the affected people. The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has been requested to assess the damage and submit a detailed memorandum so that necessary assistance is considered by the Government of India for relief operations as well as long term rehabilitation.

I would like to assure the august House that Government of India would extend all possible help to the Government of J&K for relief and rehabilitation of the affected persons. I would also be happy to receive suggestions of the Hon'ble Members in continuing to provide comprehensive and optimal response to the people in their hour of need.

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