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Title: Need to provide adequate compensation to farmers for the cotton crop damage due to Cyclone 'Neelam' in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

SHRI M. VENUGOPALA REDDY (NARASARAOPET): I would like to draw the attention of the Government regarding the havoc of Cyclone 'Neelam' which has devastated Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

In Andhra Pradesh, there is immense loss to the farmers, as their lands were inundated in flood waters. The paddy, Cotton, Mirchi and other crops were drowned. Many people have lost their houses and shelters. The Union Government has not sent their team till date to assess the damage so that a report be made to release the adequate compensation and other required help to the affected people of Cyclone 'Neelam'.

The Cotton Crop was badly damaged due to Cyclone 'Neelam' but the Cotton Corporation of India stopped purchasing of cotton at Krosuru and Macharla Yards in Guntur District, A.P. In fact, it has to start an additional Purchasing Centres to help the farmers. Unfortunately, the existing two centres have been closed. In this regard, the State Government may be directed to purchase the damaged and de-colored crops from the farmers. Besides, the Government have to initiate construction of pucca houses for those who are residing in huts and affected areas. .

There is an urgent need to announce moratorium of the interest on crop loans, to reschedule the Agricultural loans, to sanction fresh loans to Rabi Crops and to make payment of compensation to the tenant farmers directly without any delay. The farmers and their families have no other option to survive, as already more than 44 people died in A.P. and lakhs of families are in need for the help from the Government.

The Government have declared Rompicharla, Epuru, Karempudi, Veldurthy, Muppalla and Rentachintala Mandals in Guntur District, A.P. as drought-affected areas, but no assistance was announced so far to the cotton growers who had faced immense loss @Rs.10,000/- to Rs.15,000/- per acre.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the river beds, speed up up-gradation of Delta canals; to divert the flood water of Kondaveetivagu; Guntur District, into Bunckingham Canal to arrest the drowning of lands.