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Title: Regarding drought and heat wave condition prevailing in Odisha and other parts of the Country.

SHRI RABINDRA KUMAR JENA (BALASORE): Madam Speaker, thank you for allowing me to raise an issue, which is almost close to a national emergency, arising out of excessive heat wave that is occurring in our country and more so in our State of Odisha.

Madam Speaker, heat wave is a natural calamity which is predictable. Unlike drought, unlike flash flood, unlike earthquake, heat wave is predictable. And it is happening year after year affecting our country. Deaths due to heat wave are increasing year after year. Last year, 1248 people died owing to excessive heat wave. This is the reported number, Madam, unreported number could be much higher. If we just take the case for a comparison, the number of deaths is five times higher than the casualties that have occurred in the State of Jammu and Kashmir because of flash flood.

If this is happening and this is predictable, what are you doing to address this issue? Governments have come and gone. But what has happened? The only thing that has happened is that the deaths have increased, the heat wave has increased, temperatures have increased, the number of trees being cut is more than the number of trees that we are planting. How do we address this?

I have got three specific suggestions. One is that heat wave which is not included in the Centrally notified list of natural disasters eligible for relief under National Disaster Relief Fund must be immediately included in that list so that people losing their life could be compensated arising out of that.

Secondly, while the Government is taking and will continue to take various actions, I urge upon the Government to take all such actions including expanding MNREGA, giving special food under PDS, and special meal under school meal scheme, so that we can address this issue.

Lastly, over 20,000 people lost their lives because of natural calamities. So, I urge upon the Union Government to have a special and a separate Ministry to deal with the issue of natural calamities so that people do not have to rush to Finance Ministry, Home Ministry, Agriculture Ministry, etc. Thank you so much, Madam.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra and

Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Rabindra Kumar Jena.