

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to provide financial assistance to cyclone-hit Tamil Nadu.

SHRI V. ELUMALAI (ARANI): Tamil Nadu faced a severe cyclonic storm 'Gaja on the night of 15th November 2018 and early hours on 16th November 2018, during which 12 districts of the State were severely affected. The Gaja Cyclone left a trail of destruction, especially in Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Pudukkottai and Dindigul Districts. Many trees were uprooted. Power Transmission infrastructure, roads, rural assets, plantation crops, agriculture and horticulture crops suffered extensive damage and the normal life was out of gear. In spite of Tamil Nadu State Government's best efforts, 45 human lives were lost due to falling of trees, wall collapse etc., and in 12 districts infrastructure viz., roads, power, housing etc., faced the brunt of the cyclone's fury. One person died during restoration operations in Dindigul district.

Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu met Hon'ble Prime Minister on 22 November 2018 and sought central assistance of Rs 15,633.14 Crore for carrying out relief and rehabilitation work after destruction caused by Cyclone Gaja in the State. Hon'ble Chief Minister also urged the Prime Minister for an immediate release of Rs 1,500 crore towards "temporary renovation" work. Based on an interim memorandum submitted by the Tamil Nadu government for additional assistance, the Central Government constituted an Inter-ministerial Central Team on 20 November 2018 and that Central Team visited areas affected by Gaja in Tamil Nadu from 23 to 27 November 2018.

Meanwhile, it is learnt that the Union Government has approved the release of only Rs. 353.70 crore to Tamil Nadu as assistance for the damage caused by Cyclone Gaja. This interim relief is the second instalment of the central share of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for the year 2018-19 in providing relief measures to the affected people. Government of Tamil Nadu has been repeatedly giving representations for revision of norms for assistance under NDRF/SDRF. Hon'ble Chief Minister announced Rs.10 lakhs (including SDRF and Special Assistance) to families who lost their breadwinner. As on date, the State Government has released Rs. 707.86 crores under SDRF. The State government will need a sum of Rs. 723.14 crores for immediate relief and temporary restoration from NDRF and Rs. 14910 crore for subsequent permanent restoration as special assistance from Government of India. The total requirement sought from Central Government is Rs. 15633.14 crore.

I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to immediately release an amount of Rs. 15633.14 crore to cyclone hit Tamil Nadu, as demanded by Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.