



Statement on 'Situation arising out of recent floods in various parts of the country, particularly in Assam'

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Following is the text of statement made in Rajya Sabha today by Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju on 'Situation arising out of recent floods in various parts of the country, particularly in Assam':

"India receives heavy rainfall from June to September every year during the South West (SW) Monsoon Season. The rainfall during this period accounts for about 70-90 % of the total annual rainfall over India. As a consequence of this rainfall, flooding of rivers is a natural weather phenomenon. This year monsoon set in over Kerala on 30th May, the monsoon has already covered entire country by 19th July 2017. In terms of area wise distribution, 89% of the area in the country received excess/ normal rainfall and 11% of the area received deficient rainfall till date.

Over 40 Million hectares' land of the country is prone to floods and river erosion. The flood prone regions of India are the Himalayan Rivers Basin (Kosi and Damodar Rivers in particular), the North Western River Basin (Jhelum, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas Rivers) and the central and Peninsular River Basin (Narmada, Chambal, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery River).

During the current South West monsoon season, various parts of the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal reported to have been affected by heavy rains / flash floods / and rain oriented calamities of varying degrees. As per the information of damage received from these States 508 persons have lost their lives, 24,811 cattle heads have perished, 63,215 houses/ huts have been damaged and about 2.8 lakh hectares of crop area have been reported affected due to heavy rains/ flood/ landslides etc..

Primary responsibility to deal with natural calamities rest with the State Government concerned. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments by providing financial and logistics support to effectively deal with such exigent situations. The concerned State Governments have been taking necessary relief, preparedness/ preventive measures, which inter-alia includes distribution of relief, evacuation and shifting of the people to safer places, setting up of multipurpose relief shelters/ camps, providing Governments have also taken necessary health and hygiene measures to prevent outbreak of any epidemic during floods/ post flood calamity period. State authorities are monitoring rainfall, water level of the rivers/ dams in coordination with the IMD and CWC as well as issuing weather advisories to all vulnerable districts.

With regard to Assam, there are 2 major rivers system (viz; Brahmaputra valley and Barak valley) in the State which causes floods. The State faces acute flood problem in the flood plains of the river Brahmaputra and Barak and other smaller river sub-basins. Assam has faced two waves of floods till 19th July 2017 affecting 29 districts out of 33 districts, resulting in loss of human lives, livestock and large scale damage to the dwelling houses. The State Government is providing necessary relief assistance affected people in the State. As per information received from the State Government of Assam, about 59430.45 quintal rice, 11142.18 quintal dal, 3541.71 quintal salt, 37249.89 liters M. Oil and 58092 numbers of tarpaulins etc. have been provided to the affected people in different districts of Assam. The State Government has mentioned that 1160 relief camps (357 relief camps + 803 relief distribution center) have been opened and 1,31,416 inmates are housed in these camps, so far. However, at present the situation is under control in the State. The State Government is closely monitoring rescue & relief operations in the districts to deal with any eventuality. The Ministry of Home Affairs is also keeping constant round the clock watch on the situation in the country including Assam.

In order to assess the loss of immediate nature, upon receipt interim memorandum an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) was constituted on 21st July 2017. The Inter-Ministerial Central Team, in consultation with the State Government, are visiting the affected areas of the State, from 25-28th July 2017 for on the spot assessment of damages of immediate and temporary nature. Further, action would be taken in the matter, in accordance with the established procedure.

To ensure effective preparedness, MHA conducted annual meeting of Relief Commissioners/ Secretaries, Department of Disaster Management of State / UTs on 17 May 2017 to review the status of preparedness and to discuss other disaster management related issues. The representatives of various Central Ministries/ Organizations rendering Emergency Support Functions also participated in the meeting. During the conference the emphasis was laid on close coordination with forecasting agencies such as Central Water Commission (CWC), India Meteorological Department (IMD), GSI and INCOIS.

As stated earlier, the State Governments concerned are primarily responsible for undertaking necessary rescue, relief and preventive measures in the wake of natural calamities. Apart from providing logistics support, the Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments by extending financial assistance through State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) as per the laid down procedure. An amount of Rs. 9382.80 crore has been allocated as central share to all the States in their SDRF accounts for the year 2017-18. An amount of Rs. 3387.15 crore has so far been released, as the installment of Central share of SDRF for the year 2017-18 to 21 States. In addition, financial assistance from NDRF amounting to Rs. 1555.84 crore has been provided during 2017-18, so far, to different States which were affected by calamities of severe nature. In addition to regular schemes of crops damage, the farmers are also entitled for compensation under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna of the Ministry of Agriculture, which is being implemented by the State Government.

MHA have deployed about 88 specialized teams of NDRF in 26 States and UTs with 304 boats another necessary search and rescue equipment. Based on vulnerability profile of different regions of the country, NDRF teams have been presently stationed/ deployed at 12 Bn HQ viz; Guwahati (Assam), Haringhata (West Bengal), Mundali (Odisha), Arakkonam (Tamil Nadu), Pune (Maharashtra), Vadodra (Gujarat), Bhatinda (Punjab), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh), Bihta (Bihar), Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and Doimukh (Arunachal Pradesh). Besides, pre-positioning of the NDRF teams has already been done at 31 different locations in the country depending on the vulnerability profile of the area. In addition, NDRF teams also assist to the State administration in distribution of essential relief material and provide medical support to affected people at the time of emergency. NDRF also conducts mock drills along with the relevant departments and State agencies in the country for effective management of floods, response and rescue operations.

Hon'ble PM has reviewed the flood preparedness of the nation via PRAGATI on 12th July 2017. Hon'ble MOS (PMO & DONER) has reviewed the flood situation of North-Eastern States including Assam on 13th July 2017. Hon'ble MOS (Home) has visited and reviewed the flood situation of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh from 13th to 15th July 2017. I would like to assure the Hon'ble Members that the Government of India will give due importance to the valuable suggestions given by them during the discussion to deal effectively with the situation caused by floods and other natural calamities."

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