

[23 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

Central Assistance for Cyclone and Scarcity in Gujarat

***368. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to be state;

(a) whether the Memorandum for Central assistance for cyclone 1998 and scarcity 1999 was submitted by the Chief Minister, Government of Gujarat on 26th October, 1999 to the Prime Minister;

(b) if so, what action has been taken in the matter;

(c) whether the Union Finance Minister, has assured the Government of Gujarat to take a final decision regarding the source and mode of assistance for calamity relief; and

(d) if so, the reasons for inordinate delay in finalising the matter?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (d) A memorandum was received from Government of Gujarat seeking additional assistance of Rs. 610.65 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR), for relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of the cyclone of June, 1998. After following the prescribed procedure, the National Calamity Relief Committee (NCRC) decided, in March, 1999, to release an assistance of Rs. 55.35 crore from the NFCR. This was released to the State Government by the Ministry of Finance on 31.3.1999. The Ministry of Finance had termed the release as ad-hoc only because it was beyond the corpus of the NFCR. The release of Rs. 55.35 crore was the final payment towards the additional assistance in the wake of the cyclone of June, 1998, as approved by the NCRC.

A preliminary memorandum projecting requirement of Rs. 528.86 crore for relief measures in the wake of drought conditions during the current year has also been received in the last week of October, 1999. The memorandum is under consideration in accordance with the procedure laid for the purpose.