

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The government promulgated an Ordinance for the purpose on 16.10.2003. The Ordinance has ceased to operate on 12.1.2004. The Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha in this regard has also lapsed with the dissolution of 13th Lok Sabha on 6.2.2004. The proposal to introduce a fresh Bill on the lines of the lapsed Bill is under consideration.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A number of writ petitions were filed in various High Courts against the National Tax Tribunal Ordinance, 2003. These writ petitions were transferred to the Supreme Court on the basis of the transfer applications filed by the Government. However, all these transfer petitions have since been dismissed by the Supreme Court as the Ordinance has lapsed and the prayer in the writ petitions have become infructuous.

Financial Aid to Gujarat

1355. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:
SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:
DR.A.K. PATEL

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Gujarat has demanded financial aid for the natural calamities including devastating earthquake of 2002, to the tune of Rs. 12848.16 crores from 1998 to 2003;

(b) if so, what was the demand and the amount sanctioned and disbursed from 1998-99 to 2002-03;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Central Government levied a 2 per cent surcharge on Income Tax for two years to help earthquake affected Gujarat; and

(d) if so, how much was the collection by the Central Government and disbursement to Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Government of Gujarat submitted memorandum for assistance of Rs. 14178.00 crores during 1998-2003. Based on the assessment made as per norms, an amount

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RAJYA SABHA

of Rs. 1745.00 crores was sanctioned and disbursed during this period from National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR)/National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), besides releasing an amount of Rs. 758.91 crores as Centre's share under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF).

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The amount collected as 'Surcharge' for Gujarat earthquake, Kargil war expenditure and NCCF for financial years 2000-01 and 2001-02 were Rs. 2187.82 crore and Rs. 556.89 crore respectively. An amount of Rs. 1467.37 crore was disbursed to the State Government out of NCCF during 2000-01 & 2001-02 on account of earthquake relief.

Corpus for Physically Challenged

1356. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: DR.
T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Supreme Court has ordered the creation of Rs. 723 crore corpus fund for the welfare of 100 million physically challenged persons in the country from the excess realized by government by way of rounding off tax and interest by big banks and other financial institutions;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered this order of Supreme Court;

(c) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard; and

(d) by when this amount will be utilized for the benefit of disabled people in the country?

THE MINISTER OF .STATE. IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Government has decided to implement the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court. However, a clarificatory petition is being contemplated to relieve the Comptroller & Auditor General of the functions of the Chairman of the proposed Trust as suggested by Hon'ble Supreme Court for the benefit of physically handicapped. The implementation of the judgement will be done after obtaining necessary clarifications from Hon'ble Supreme Court.