

SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Sir, unseasonal rains in the month of October, early November and the super-cyclone have ruined Kharif crops of over 50 lakh hectares, besides vegetables and fruits. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Central Government would announce additional financial relief or assistance to farmers of Maharashtra whose crops have been damaged and destroyed due to heavy rains and cyclone. I would also like to know whether any Central Team has been sent to various parts of Maharashtra to assess the situation and provide sufficient relief.

श्री परशोत्तम रुपाला: सर, यह बात सही है कि इस बार महाराष्ट्र में ही नहीं, कई राज्यों में वर्षा के कारण फसलों को नुकसान पहुंचा है। महाराष्ट्र से भी हमको आवेदन पत्र मिला है। महाराष्ट्र सरकार की ओर से पहली बार जब आवेदन पत्र मिला था, उसी समय हमने डेलिगेशन भी भेज दिया था और डेलिगेशन ने इसकी अनुशंसा भी भेज दी है। हमने इनको इंटेरिम रूप से 600 करोड़ रुपये की राशि मुहैया कराने का अंतरिम निर्णय लिया है, जो पूर्ण नहीं है। बाकी किसानों की राहत में यदि महाराष्ट्र सरकार मदद करे सके, वह कर दे। दूसरा, अंतिम दौर में, पिछले राउंड में जो बारिश आई थी, शायद नवम्बर में ही आई थी, हम राज्य सरकार की ओर से इसकी रिपोर्ट की प्रतीक्षा में हैं। सूचना मिलने के बाद भारत सरकार की ओर से भी कार्यवाही करनी होती है, वह अवश्य ही की जाएगी।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. Nos. 64 and 68 are similar. So, we take up by combining both the questions.

[Question No. 64 and Question No. 68 were taken together]

Privatisation of railway routes

*64. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning large-scale privatisation of railway routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof including authority for controlling fare system in these rails; and

(c) the number of routes that would be privatised during the next three years?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL) : (a) to (c) A Statement is Laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) No, Sir. There is no plan for large scale privatisation of railway routes. There is a proposal to outsource the commercial and on board services of a few trains and also to permit private players to induct modern rakes to run trains on select routes with an objective to provide improved service delivery to passengers. However, the responsibility of train operations and safety rests with Indian Railways.

Privatization of operation of railways

*68. SHRI MANAS RANJAN BHUNIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has planned to privatize operations of railways in a phased manner including the maintenance of the platforms;
- (b) if so, the details on the exact plan of Government; and
- (c) the manner in which this plan would be executed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) No, Sir. There is no proposal to privatise the operations of Railways. However, there is a proposal to outsource the commercial and on board services of a few trains and also to permit private players to induct modern rakes to run trains on select routes with an objective to provide improved service delivery to passengers. The responsibility of train operations and safety certification rests with Indian Railways. Outsourcing of certain services like station cleaning, pay and use toilets, retiring rooms, parking and platforms maintenance etc. is being done on need based manner to improve cleanliness and other services.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Sir, it appears that the Government is thinking of an idea to privatize a set of services of railways on select routes. If the idea is implemented, this will definitely affect prospects of the existing railway employees and future recruitment of railways. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what safeguards that the Government is proposing to take in this regard.

SHRI ANGADI SURESH CHANNABASAPPA: Sir, the interest of railway employees is protected. There is no problem for the existing railway employees due to privatization. And, we are not going in for privatization; it is only corporatization to improve railway services to passengers.