

capacity to recover independently. So, the initial assessment shows that we need Rs.2,475 crores, but the State Government has demanded Rs.2,000 crores as immediate relief from the Union Government. We are worried looking at the past inadequacies in disaster relief. We had asked for Rs.37,000 crores, but we were given only a paltry Rs.267 crores. It is very necessary. This has caused a great damage. The Cyclone Fengal requires a decisive and compassionate response.

I would urge that helping out at the time of need is, of course, a test of federal governance and federal solidarity. I would urge the Ministry of Home Affairs to act with urgency to demonstrate fairness and sensitivity in this issue. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has written a letter to the hon. Prime Minister also. So, kindly release Rs. 2,000 crores for interim relief, which would only rescue the people. People have totally lost their livelihoods. So many houses have been washed out. Still, it has not been recovered. It is still raining there. Tamil Nadu is in a very distressed position because of this cyclone and we have approached it in the right manner. Now also, I would like to draw the attention of the House and urge the Government to kindly act with compassion and give relief to the States concerned. Thank you, Sir.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The following hon. Members associated themselves with the matter raised by Shri Tiruchi Siva: Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu), Ms. Dola Sen (West Bengal), Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal), Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Sandosh Kumar P. (Kerala), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shrimati Mahua Maji (Jharkhand), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri Niranjan Bishi (Odisha) and Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala).

#### **Need to improve the well-being of employees in private sector companies**

**SHRI SAKET GOKHALE (West Bengal):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the issue that I wish to bring to the notice of this House is very important. On 20<sup>th</sup> of July this year, a young 26-year-old woman, named, Anna Sebastian, suddenly died. She was found dead. Her mother then wrote an open letter on social media where the mother said that her daughter had died because she was made to overwork in the company where she was working. The company happens to be one of the big four consulting companies; it is a multinational company.

Similarly, before that, in February, Satish Nandgaonkar, a journalist working with a very major Indian newspaper in Mumbai, suffered a cardiac arrest. At that time also, his family, even the Press Council, said that this happened because, at work,

the boss allegedly was very toxic, who kept berating him and also insulting him. So, after these two shocking incidents, there has been a groundswell of complaints also on social media from people in the private sector saying that presently, at many places, there is a toxic work culture, a work culture where employees are made to work for long hours and are subjected to insults. A lot of this is happening in private companies today.

Sir, for me also, this issue is very important because we are talking about private companies. Why it is important for my State is because Bengal means business. Today, this is a priority for me because we have more than 1.45 lakh active companies in our State. Today, the IT sector in West Bengal employs more than 2.6 lakh employees. So, the issue of reforms in private sector is very important.

Sir, there is a reason as to why I wish to draw the attention of the House to this particular issue. This year, Government revenue from corporate tax was less than the Government revenue from income tax. Who are paying income tax? It is the people working in private companies. I will just give some examples in which they are subjected to a very toxic atmosphere. There is no overtime pay provision in the contracts in India. People are made to work 8 hours, 10 hours and even 12 hours. There is no provision for overtime unlike other countries. A lot of employees, who work in client-facing companies, are subject to whims of their clients, who call them on weekends, etc. So, there is a need that our labour laws regulate this. We do not have legislation right now to regulate it. What happens at times is that employees lose their jobs and unemployment happens. Today, the condition is so bad that people who have worked in my State of West Bengal have not been given their MNREGA dues. The total pending dues amount to Rs. 8,377 crores.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please speak on the subject.

SHRI SAKET GOKHALE: These are the people who have worked. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**श्री उपसभापति:** गोखले जी, जो आप सब्जेक्ट के ऊपर बोलेंगे, वही रिकॉर्ड पर जाएगा। यह आप जानते हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI SAKET GOKHALE: These are the people who have worked. ...*(Interruptions)*... When people lose their jobs, they get this sort of deprivation... ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Confine yourself to the subject. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI SAKET GOKHALE:** That is why I am saying that this toxic work culture and deprivation of people is something which the Government and this House needs to take seriously. People who are employed need a healthy work atmosphere and people who have worked need to be paid, be it the private sector or be it the MNREGA workers in West Bengal. Thank you very much.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Zero Hour Mention made by hon. Member, Shri Saket Gokhale: Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque (West Bengal), Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu), Ms. Dola Sen (West Bengal), Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal) and Ms. Sushmita Dev (West Bengal), Shri Samirul Islam (Kerala), Shrimati Mausam B Noor (West Bengal), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shri A. A. Rahim (Kerala), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri Niranjan Bishi (Odisha) and Shrimati Mahua Maji (Jharkhand).

**Demand to expedite the work related to infrastructure and tourism development projects in Tamil Nadu**

**SHRI P. WILSON (Tamil Nadu):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, there has been a persistent neglect and inequitable treatment faced by the State of Tamil Nadu in the hands of the Union Government, which has led to the stalling of various infrastructure works and tourism development projects. The compensation mechanism promised under the new GST regime was abruptly stopped by the Union Government in the year 2022, resulting in an annual revenue loss of Rs. 20,000 crores for Tamil Nadu.

The Union Government's increasing reliance on Cesses and surcharges has severely restricted Tamil Nadu's share in the divisible pool of taxes. In the Financial Year 2022-23, the Union Government collected Rs. 5.1 lakh crores through cesses and surcharges. Had these collections been included in the divisible pool, Tamil Nadu would have received an additional amount of Rs. 20,800 crores in just one year.

Further, unfair limitation on State's borrowing ability by fixing a ceiling of three per cent of GSTP has led to a loss of Rs. 8,500 crores in borrowing space over the last four years, which impacts Tamil Nadu's ability to finance critical public infrastructure and welfare projects. In the Union Budget 2023-24, Tamil Nadu was allotted a mere 2.5 per cent of national resources, which is inadequate. The Union Government has been progressively shifting the burden of Centrally-Sponsored Schemes on the State Government.