

**Bill No. 102 of 2024**

THE VICTIMS OF NATURAL LIGHTNING DISASTER  
(COMPENSATION) BILL, 2024

By

SHRI V.K. SREEKANDAN, M.P.

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BILL

*to provide for the rehabilitation and compensation to the victims of natural lightning strike disaster and for matters connected therewith.*

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Victims of Natural Lightning Disaster (Compensation) Act, 2024.

Short title,  
extent and  
commencement.

5 (2) It extends to the whole of India.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) “appropriate Authority” means an Officer appointed under section 3;

(b) “natural lightning disaster” means the disaster caused due to lightning strike which generally occurs during rain or prior to it;

(c) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made under this Act; and

(d) “victims of natural calamity” means a person who suffers physical bodily harm or whose property, including livestock, crop, orchard, field, machine or tools, is lost, destroyed or damaged due to lightning strike and includes, in the case of death of such victim due to lightning disaster, his family members.

Appointment  
of Appropriate  
Authority.

**3. (1) The Central Government shall, in consultation with the State Governments appoint an Appropriate Authority in such a manner as may be prescribed for providing financial assistance and other benefits to the victims of lightning disaster.**

**(2) The Appropriate Authority appointed under sub-section (1) shall be provided with such staff as may be necessary for efficient discharge of his duties under this Act.**

**(3) It shall be the duty of the Appropriate Authority to ensure provision of food, medical care, adequate shelter and financial assistance to the victims of lightning disaster in such a manner as may be prescribed.**

**(4) The financial assistance to the victims of lightning disaster shall be disbursed as early as possible but not later than three months from the occurrence of the lightning disaster.**

Financial  
assistance and  
other benefits.

**4. (1) A claim for receiving financial assistance shall be made in the prescribed form by the victims of lightning strike to the Appropriate Authority, who shall disburse the financial assistance to the victims, after making such inquiry and in such manner, as may be prescribed.**

**(2) The victim of lightning disaster shall be provided with the following financial assistance and other benefits:—**

**(a) in case of loss of life,**

**(i) financial assistance in the form of a compensation of not less than rupees ten lakh shall be given to the next of the kin of the deceased; and**

**(ii) suitable employment shall be provided to one of the dependants of the deceased;**

**(b) in case of severe injury,—**

**(i) medical treatment free of cost; and**

**(ii) such financial assistance as, in the opinion of the Appropriate Authority, is necessary for his rehabilitation, subject to a minimum amount of rupees two lakh and maximum amount of rupees five lakh;**

**(c) in case of damage to the dwelling unit or property of any forms which includes commercial space, machine, tools and vehicle, victim shall be provided**

**with such financial assistance as is required for the repair or reconstruction of dwelling unit or property after due assessment by recognised assessors;**

**(d) in case of loss of livestock, the victim shall be given adequate financial assistance in proportion to the losses suffered by him.**

5           **5.** The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other law for the time being in force. Savings.

**6. (1)** If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by general or special order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for the removal of the difficulty: Power to remove difficulties.

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                  Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of the commencement of this Act.

**(2)** Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before each House of Parliament.

15           **7. (1)** The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act. Power to make rules.

**(2)** Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised of one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both the Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

20

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The loss of lives and damages to dwelling units, commercial spaces, machines, tools, crops, livestock, etc. due to lightning strikes across the country have increased in recent times.

There has been nearly a 35 per cent. increase in the overall count of lightning strikes and 40 per cent. increase in incidents of cloud to ground lightning in the country. Thunderstorms and lightning have emerged as major weather hazards in recent years, killing about 2,500 people annually and the most affected are people in rural areas or working outdoors are most at risk.

Because of the climate change constituting heat waves further in coming years, the lightning strikes are also expected to increase more.

India suffers huge human casualties from lightning compared to other developed countries and about two people in a million die from lightning and properties worth several crores get damaged in India each year.

A bolt from the blue that kills thousands in India and yet the Central Government is yet to declare lightning a natural disaster, saying that deaths caused by lightning can be avoided through education and awareness. This justification by the Central Government cannot and will not be accepted as every disaster can be prevented by education and awareness and not only the lightning disaster alone.

Many States have been demanding the Central Government to declare lightning strike a natural disaster. Therefore, the Central Government should declare lightning a natural disaster or calamity to get compensation for the victims of this lightning natural disaster.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;  
*July 9, 2024.*

V.K. SREEKANDAN

## FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for the appointment of an Appropriate Authority for providing financial assistance and rehabilitation measures to the victims of lightning disaster. Clause 4 provides for financial assistance of rupees ten lakh to the next of kin of a person who dies in any lightning disaster and medical treatment for injured persons and other welfare measures for the victims of lightning disaster. The Bill, therefore, if enacted, will involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. It is not possible to give an exact estimate of the actual expenditure to be involved to meet any unpredictable eventuality. However, it is estimated that recurring expenditure of rupees one thousand crore per annum would be involved from the Consolidated Fund of India.

A non-recurring expenditure to the tune of rupees five thousand crore is also likely to be involved.

## MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 7 of the Bill empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. As the rules will relate to matters of detail only, the delegation of legislative power is of a normal character.

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