

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 749
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.02.2021

Environment Relief Fund

749. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total amount of funds in Environment Relief Fund (ERF) as of December 2020;
- (b) whether the said amount is commensurate with the compensation awarded via NGT orders between 2014-20 and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has clarified the tax status of the ERF and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has scrutinized the disbursement of such compensation awarded by NGT to victims of industrial disasters and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government is aware of the lapses in implementation due to which a significant amount of the fund remains unutilized; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)

(a) In exercise of the powers conferred by section 7 (A) of the Public Liability Insurance (PLI) Act, 1991, the Central Government has established the Environmental Relief Fund (ERF), 2008. The United India Insurance Company Limited (UIICL) is the Fund Manager of the ERF Scheme. As per the information provided by the fund manager, total amount of funds in ERF as of 31.12.2020 is Rs. 895 crores (rounded off).

(b) The ERF was established to provide immediate relief to the persons affected by accidents occurring while handling any hazardous substance and for the matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The amount of compensation to be awarded has also been notified as part of the schedule to the PLI Act. Application for such claims are presented before the respective Collector. The Collector thereafter by an order directs the Fund Manager to deposit an amount from the said Fund to the account of the Collector, who in turn, disburse the same to the Claimant. Further, the Hon'ble NGT has not issued any specific directions for awarding compensation out of ERF.

(c) The Government has not decided upon the tax status of the ERF.

(d) In view of the reply to (b) above, the question does not arise.

(e) & (f) The Central Government have written to the State Pollution Control Boards/ Pollution Control Committees to adequately sensitize implementation and enforcement of the PLI Act, 1991.
