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Mr. Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Member of Parliament from Bengaluru and President of FICCI, has announced a personal contribution of Rs. 1 crore towards hapless victims of the Kosi River flooding in Bihar that has wrought havoc and marooned lakhs of people.

Mr. Chandrasekhar who is also the President of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce (FICCI), has initiated efforts to raise further resources and support by calling upon the FICCI Executive Committee and Associate members to participate in the massive relief operation. The FICCI Socio Economic Development Foundation (SEDF), that had done pioneering work at the time of the Gujarat earthquake, will be leading a major programme of immediate relief and future rehabilitation of the Bihar victims. The effort will be led by Mr. P M Sinha, President, FICCI-SEDF on behalf of Mr. Chandrasekhar. The effort will be significant as in the Gujarat earthquake, FICCI and CARE had managed to collect 20 million US dollars. FICCI is moving a significant amount of tenting material for the construction of camps in Bihar through the aegis of the National Disaster Management Authority of the Government. These will be airlifted from Patna to reach the camps being constructed. Those desirous of contributing could send their cheques to: "FICCI Socio Economic Development Foundation A/C Bihar Relief Fund".

Mr. Chandrasekhar's efforts are in keeping with his earlier initiatives to motivate the community to contribute to worthy causes. He has also been involved with initiatives like building a war memorial in Bengaluru in the memory of soldiers who laid down their lives for India.

Exactly a year ago, Mr. Chandrasekhar had pointed out in the Rajya Sabha that every year the house had visited and revisited floods and what was required was to create a long term sustainable strategy that would tackle floods. Often, little aid reached the people resulting in many lives being irreparably destroyed.

Mr. Chandrasekhar wanted the process of granting financial relief from the Centre to the states to be completely restructured to ensure speed, transparency, stem corruption and political partisanship while allocating funds. The government should also structure its various calamity funds into one central government guaranteed line of credit made available to states. It should have clear guidelines to prevent misuse like including adjusting it against plan outlays, he said.

Mr. Chandrasekhar stressed on the importance of developing forecasting of floods with better technologies and funds. Remote sensing of India's rivers and flood prone areas could help create a modern and high technology database that can aid in planning and strategy to fight floods. Issues of river bank encroachment and erosion must be looked into along with interlinking of rivers, he said.

For any further information please visit website www.rajeev.in

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