

**Press Statement of Selvi J JAYALALITHAA,
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu – 23.6.2013**

The heavy rainfall and landslides in certain districts of Uttarakhand State have caused extensive loss of life and property and untold suffering both to the residents of the affected areas and a large number of pilgrims and tourists present in the area, visiting the holy shrines of Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Hemkund Sahib.

I have already announced the measures taken by the Government of Tamil Nadu to mitigate the suffering of stranded pilgrims from Tamil Nadu. On 19th June, a control room with a phone number accessible by relatives of the stranded pilgrims was opened under my orders in the office of the Commissioner of Police, Chennai.

On 20th June, 2013, I held a high level review meeting to ensure that the stranded pilgrims from Tamil Nadu are brought back safely. On my instructions, a team of officers headed by the Special Representative of the Government of Tamil Nadu in New Delhi and comprising the Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner of Revenue Administration, Disaster Management and Mitigation, and the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department has been deputed to Dehradun to co-ordinate the evacuation of stranded pilgrims from Tamil Nadu. These pilgrims are being transported to New Delhi, where they have been accommodated at the Tamil Nadu House and given immediate medical attention and other facilities. On my instructions they are being flown to Tamil Nadu at the State Government's cost. The first batch of 83 pilgrims arrived in Chennai on 21st June, 2013, and they were received by senior Ministers and officers of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Thereafter, arrangements were made to transport them to their respective destinations in various Districts. As on 22nd June, 2013, 275 pilgrims have been brought to Chennai by the Tamil Nadu Government and similar facilities have been extended to all of them. My Government will ensure that these facilities are extended to all pilgrims belonging to Tamil Nadu returning from the disaster zone in Uttarakhand.

On behalf of the State Government and people of Tamil Nadu, I convey my heartfelt condolences to the family members of all those who have lost their lives in this colossal tragedy. The State of Uttarakhand is faced with a very major task of ensuring effective and immediate rescue, relief and rehabilitation and reconstruction of the devastated area in the coming days. As a token of the support and solidarity of the Government and people of Tamil Nadu with the Government and people of Uttarakhand in their hour of need, I have ordered the immediate contribution of a sum of Rs. 5 crores from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund to the Government of Uttarakhand. The Government of Tamil Nadu stands ready to render any other assistance as may be required by the Government of Uttarakhand.

J JAYALALITHAA
Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

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