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## City deluge in 2005, relief cheque in '08

Prafulla Marpakwar | TNN

Mumbai: Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi has finally kept his word. But it has taken Modi, often described as the most efficient of chief ministers, nearly three years to fulfil the promise made to his Maharashtra counterpart Vilasrao Deshmukh. A cheque for Rs 10 crore arrived last week as Gujarat's contribution to the CM's relief fund—the money had been promised when Maharashtra was reeling under the devastating floods of 2005.

But the timing of the cheque's arrival bears enormous significance as Bihar is now facing what Maharashtra faced in 2005 and several states have promised to help Bihar just as they did to Maharashtra during its difficult days.

But Gujarat, despite the three-year delay, has done better than the others as more than half-a-dozen chief ministers who had promised help in cash or kind in 2005 are still to make good their promise.

Maharashtra was hit by its worst floods ever in July 2005 and Deshmukh had urged the heads of all the states as well as the Centre to chip in with fi-



**Among the half a dozen states that promised help after 26/7, Gujarat's cheque was the first to arrive last week. Yet, Maharashtra's been generous and has offered Bihar Rs 10 cr**

ancial assistance as the damage caused was estimated at Rs 15,000 crore. Both Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the flood-affected areas to see for themselves the havoc wrought by nature's fury.

Big promises poured in immediately. Modi was the first CM to respond to Deshmukh's appeal, pledging Rs 10 crore. Six other states, including Orissa and Tamil Nadu, followed suit. "But so far there has been no response from any of the states except Gujarat. And Gujarat's cheque, too, arrived only a week ago," a senior official said.

## State govt to Bihar's rescue

**Prafulla Marpakwar | TNN**

**Mumbai:** The Maharashtra government has shown a big heart when other states have faced natural calamities. The Vilasrao Deshmukh government has sanctioned more than Rs 150 crore to seven states, including Gujarat and Orissa, to tackle floods in the recent past. The cheques were delivered to the heads of the states concerned within a week of the announcement.

Maharashtra has now come to Bihar's rescue, giving it Rs 10 crore to tackle floods.

The government will also give 15 tonnes of milk powder, besides medicines, tents and tarpaulin. Besides, three BMC rescue teams will be sent to Bihar following chief minister Nitish Kumar's request.

Maharashtra relief and rehabilitation principal secretary M Ramesh Kumar has personally spoken to his Bihar counterpart R K Singh on the areas the material is to be delivered. A special official will be deployed to deliver the cheque and the entire material will be handed over to the Patna collector within a week.