

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, though this question is not related to the main question but for the information of the House, I would like to say that departmental Committee has been constituted, which has three Members. This Committee is looking into this matter and I would like to add that this time, there is not sugar mill against which payment of farmers is due and from which free sale sugar has not been released. We have started releasing quota in accordance with the production capacity of sugar mill. I will send the list of the sugar mills along with the information regarding quota released to them, if the hon'ble Member wants to get detailed information.

LT. GENERAL SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this issue was to be take up during Zero Hour but as a question has come up on this subject, it should be discussed. I would like to make two three points in this regard. I have already apprised the hon'ble Minister and also written a letter to him that payment of farmers is due on Gauri Bazar Sugar Mill for the last three years. The Hon'ble Prime Minister had given an assurance in this august House that orders for 50 percent payment of dues were being issued but so far, payment has not been made. Rs.46 crores are due on sugar mills in Pundrauna and Deoria districts. It is a serious issue and we seek your permission for a discussion on this subject under rule 193.

In respect of the natural calamity in Andhra Pradesh, I would like to say that on this issue we all are with the the hon'ble Minister. It is not going to help the farmers if you pass on the responsibility to the Textile Minister and he passes on to Agricultural Minister and then Agricultural Minister will try to again pass it on to you. It is not an ordinary thing because the Government have purchased sugarcane from the farmers and no payment has been made to them even after lapse of three years. I would like to know as to when this payment which is due for more than two years on sugar mills is likely to be made and by when the rest of payments would be made? Whether any time-bound programme is likely to be formulated for it?

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already told that this question does not relate to the main question but for the information of the Members I would like to tell that Rs.900 crores were due on mills in Uttar Pradesh and out of Rs.450 crores have been paid during last two months and the process is on for the payment of the remaining balance.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may please consider this issue to be discussed under rule 193.

MR. SPEAKER : Please give notice for it.

[English]

Drought in Orissa

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*63. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :
SHRI G.M. KUNTURKAR :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that several districts of Orissa have faced a severe drought situation during the current year particularly after the month of June, 1996;

(b) if so, the names of districts adversely affected along with the loss of lives, crops etc. suffered in each district;

(c) whether the Government have provided any Central assistance for these districts to meet the problem during the current year;

(d) if so, the details thereof, district-wise;

(e) whether any request for the enhancement of such assistance has been received; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (f). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). According to reports received from the Government of Orissa, based on the Crop cutting assessments, 13664 villages in 20 districts of the State have sustained crop loss of 50% and above the to inadequate rains. An Annexure indicating the numbers of such villages in the 20 districts is enclosed. In the remaining 8 districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Gajapati, Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Sambalpur & Sundargarh, 8306 villages have sustained crop loss of 50% and above, on the basis of eye estimation. In respect of reported deaths the State Government has been requested to enquire into the matter.

(c) and (d). Government of India have already released its entire Central Share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) of Rs.36.76 crores for 1996-97 including advance release of the 4th instalment of Central share of Rs.9.19 crores. Government of India do not make any district-wise distribution of the CRF allocations. Following the visit of Prime Minister, more funds have been released for poverty alleviation and employment generation purposes.

(e) and (f). Government of Orissa have submitted a Memorandum indicating requirement of Rs.585.80

crores for drought relief measures in various sectors. A Central team has visited the State on 17-20 November, 1996 to assess the requirement of relief, based on

whose report, further Central Assistance, if any, will be considered to be released.

ANNEXURE

S. No.	Name of the District	Total No. of Blocks in the Distt	No. of Blocks affected	Total No. of Gram-panch-yats in the Distt.	No. of Gram-panch-yats Affected	Total No. of Villages in the Distt.	No. of Villages having sustained crop loss of		
							50% to 74%	75% and above	Total
1.	Angul	8	8	180	142+2	1922	351	936	1287
2.	Bolangir	14	14	241	241+3	1783	1088	703	1791
3.	Baragarh	12	11	193	141+1	1208	116	710	826
4.	Cuttack	14	12	262	86	1865	244	83	237
5.	Dhenkanal	8	9	172	142+3	1221	19	328	347
6.	Jajpur	10	9	242	41	1781	24	30	54
7.	Jharsuguda	5	5	60	57+2	356	250	25	275
8.	Kandhamal	12	12	144	52+1	2515	1102	93	1195
9.	Nabarangpur	10	1	148	13	897	48	1	49
10.	Nayagarh	8	8	143	141+2	1694	91	1509	1600
11.	Nauapada	5	5	93	59+1	659	156	68	224
12.	Sonepur	6	6	80	56+3	959	283	390	673
13.	Boudh	3	3	58	51+1	1156	13	1019	1032
14.	Deogarh	3	2	52	15	867	41	-	41
15.	Rayagada	11	6	140	58	2691	305	191	496
16.	Kalahandi	13	12	195	92+1	2201	174	98	272
17.	Keonjhar	13	13	244	168+3	2133	306	95	401
18.	Jagatsinghpur	8	2	181	14	1391	70	7	77
19.	Kendrapara	9	1	205	3	1567	2	1	3
20.	Mayurbhanj	26	26	316	316+1	3827	1678	1016	2694
Total		198	165	3352	1888+24	32693	6361	7303	13664

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Hon. Speaker, Sir, for 30 years, coastal Orissa has been intermittently suffering from drought while another part of Orissa suffers from floods every alternate year. But unfortunately, this year out of 30 districts, according to the memorandum of the State, 26 districts are affected with severe drought and according to the Crop Cutting Report, the Minister has indicated, that out of more than 50,000 villages, there is no crop at all in 26,000 villages. So, if we have a political debate on this, we cannot solve the problem of Orissa. I am born in a drought affected village.

MR. SPEAKER : What is your question?

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : I have just given the infrastructure. The hon. Minister has visited Kalahandi, Bolagir, Bhawanipatna and Mahabra. Another place which has been left out is Padampur sub-division of

Baragarh. All these places intermittently suffer from drought.

But this year the whole State is severely affected by drought. So, for short term the *ad hoc* grant will not solve the problem. The hon. Minister Shri Chaturanan Mishra has visited the State day before yesterday.

MR. SPEAKER : What is your question? The Minister will not answer your question if you go on like that.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, I am not asking more questions. It is the misery which I am highlighting. So, I want to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the amount that the Government of India is going to give and whether the cabinet is going to envisage a long term action plan shortly. It was there during the Congress regime in the districts of Kalahandi, Bolangir

and Koraput. I want to know whether that will be extended to more drought prone areas in the State.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is correct that the situation in Orissa is serious and it will take a dangerous turn by January because at that time, the problem of feeding 50-60 people would arise. We have discussed this issue with the Members of all the political parties. Rs. 216 crore have been provided to State Governments for making necessary arrangements and ensure that there would be no starvation death. It is our utmost concern. We have seen that due to shortage of water people have not taken bath for ten days. We have made arrangements for rig machines with the help of Private sector to provide water in those areas which are facing shortage of drinking water. The State Government has cooperated with us and given assurance of making necessary arrangements. Earlier, the things were not going smooth but now the work has been taken up and I hope that this problem would be tackled properly. I would like to tell the House that terms of reference of the Tenth Finance Commission should be expanded so that problems of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh could be dealt with. For this we required time and I would like to say that Rs.216 crore have been provided in advance to make necessary arrangements. A Central team has visited the area and it is likely to submit its report by tomorrow. We will examine it and try our best to provide sufficient assistance for it. I assure you that there would be no starvation deaths.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question is related to it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot do like this. It is his right to ask the second supplementary, not yours. But please remember that we are going to have a full-fledged discussion on this issue, on the floor of the House. So, you do not have to speak about all the infrastructure that you have in your mind.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : No, Sir, I am not asking anything about the infrastructure. To solve the drinking water problem, the private sector people in the neighbouring States are not willing to cooperate to dig tubewells. So, I want to ask the hon. Minister whether he will take the help of the Ministry of Water Resources which is doing the work of digging deep exploratory tubewells and its organisation which has its headquarters in Ghaziabad to depute more than 1,000 rigs to Orissa so that the drinking water problem can be solved.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the discussion held with the Chief Minister, some of the rigs belong to State Government had about 26 rigs

have been taken from private sector. We will try our best to provide rigs and if the hon. Members could suggest anything in this regard, they are welcome. We all will work collectively and if the need be, we will deploy forces and not let the people die due to starvation.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Kunturkar, Is he absent?

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I have not allowed you. It is not going on record. I have called Shri Chandra Shekhar.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have said that we are going to have a discussion on it. All of you will get a chance.

(Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has taken a very positive attitude towards the problem of Orissa. The Orissa problem is very critical and is going to turn very serious in the coming few months. I think, it is not only that you should give assurances, but as the hon. Minister has said, all the resources of the Government and private organisations should be pooled and a cohesive effort is needed to avoid famine conditions which are already, in a way, operating in Western Orissa. I think, the Government will take immediate steps through the help of the Ministry of Water Resources and if necessary through the Ministry of Defence to have the borewells so that people do not die of water shortage, not water shortage but thirst. It is not only a question of providing food to them but water has become scarce in that State. I have read the statement of the hon. Minister and I praise him for the real appreciation of the situation. But I am sorry to say that I do not see the response commensurate with the statement of the Minister. Will the Minister see that the Cabinet takes the same serious view about Orissa?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Sir, I am discussing this matter in the Cabinet and also with the Prime Minister. As a former Prime Minister, you yourself know that that the Prime Minister had adequate powers and the Minister of Agriculture has smaller powers.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : You have enough powers.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : But I must be very frank with you that it has the advice of the Prime Minister to call a meeting for discussing the Orissa issue specifically. I assure the hon. Member and also the House that whatever is possible, would be done.

You give me suggestions. Rather I can tell that it is a very complicated issue. It relates to the middle classes. They do not go to the fields for work. As you know, the work that is available is under the Employment

* Not Recorded.

Assurance Scheme and all these things. They cannot go to the Fields of others. Similarly, the male members also coming from middle class farmers and others will not like to go to the fields of others to work there. What I am trying to devise is that they can work in their own fields so that at least the male members could get the work. I have asked the Chief Minister to consult the women's organisations to find out what type of handicrafts and other things they can do and I am ready to provide cheap money and marketing facilities also. If the hon. Members can suggest anything - what could be done for the wives of the middle classes also - to help in this hour of famine like situation, then I will be very much obliged to them and I assure prompt action.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is going to declare the drought prone areas of Orissa as 'national calamity' and whether the Government is considering to provide special funds to eradicate the drought situation permanently from the backward districts of Orissa like Bolangir, Kalahandi, Dorpur, Phulwani, Dimapur and Padampur to save the lives of the poor people of these areas.

MR. SPEAKER : Good. It should be pointed like this.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Yes, Sir. It is a fact that drought is a permanent guest of Orissa.

Therefore, something must be done to keep out that guest. I am thinking of some permanent solution since Kalahandi, Bolangir or rather that entire belt is suffering from drought. I do not know for how many decades, but so far as I could recollect, for the last four or five decades... (Interruptions) I am hearing about this national calamity, but there is no Act to declare it as a national calamity. If it is my saying, I have already said it; if it is the Prime Minister's saying, he had already said it. What I am trying to tell you is that within the limits of the Tenth Finance Commission, this question cannot be solved and, therefore, extraordinary measures are to be taken. I assure you that I will do my best to see that this repeated drought does not come there. So, something has to be done for that.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : This question relates to Orissa but it is equally important for Uttar Pradesh. Betel leaf is grown on a large scale in Pali and Mahuwa areas of Lalitpur in Uttar Pradesh. This crop has been destroyed this year. Around 10 lakh people are engaged in this work.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This question specifically relates to Orissa.

[Translation]

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : In reply to this question, the hon. Minister of Agriculture has said that

no specific Act had been enacted to declare an area a natural calamity affected. We have seen recently that Andhra Pradesh has suffered a huge loss due to natural calamity. Our country faces natural calamities every now and then. I would like to know from the Government as to whether there is any plan to make a permanent arrangement to deal with such a situation.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The Minister had already given the answer. He said that he was thinking of some permanent solution for it.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK SHARMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Madhya Pradesh is adjacent to Orissa.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you going outside the scope of this question? This question specially relates to Orissa. Your question is not allowed.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : What has been done or what should be done, it does not make question.

SHRI PAWAN DIWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, questions regarding the Kalahandi area of Orissa are being raised here but starvation and famine are not confined to that particular geographical limit. Oriya speaking people live in Raigarh and Sarangarh districts of Chhatisgarh region which is adjacent to Orissa.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : It is a specific question relating to Orissa.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : In the beginning itself, I had said that the issue was being debated in the House and you could have your say when given a chance to speak.

[English]

Deaths due to Air Pollution

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*64. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL
SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA :

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

(a) whether the Government have studied the recently published report of the Centre for Science Environment's magazine Down to Earth, according to which every year in just six Indian cities 40,000 people are dying due to air pollution, 7500 of them in Delhi;