

memorandum given by some people on starvation deaths to the Human Rights Commission. If it is a fact, I think, it is not very much justified to do so. It should be above politics. Considering the seriousness of the thing, I am sure that irrespective of any *ism* all political parties will rise to the occasions, they will join hands and the state and the Central Governments will work hand in hand be seized of the problem and solve the problem.

Today the Prime Minister is replying to this debate. The other day he has replied on Andhra Pradesh and I must say that he had been able to come down to the help of the people of Andhra Pradesh and the nation by solving the problem in a very good manner. He expect that he will do it today also when he replies to the debate...*(Interruptions)* Shri Dasmuni, please do not disturb.

I am telling that I hope that when he replies today he will solve the problem. Though it is a Congress-ruled State, but as he always says: 'My service is not for Congress or non-Congress States but I serve the people; I am from the grassroot farmer's family', he will give a message so that all the Members from Orissa who participated in the debate, when they go home in the weekend, will go with some package from the hon. Prime Minister...*(Interruptions)* Shri Jena, what are you doing? You are a Minister. Are you facing a problem? You can also get some good package from the hon. Prime Minister.

I wish the hon. Prime Minister all the best and I wish him to speak well on this issue so that we can get some good benefit.

#### THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA):

Hon. Speaker, Sir, since yesterday, several senior Members, the former Prime Minister and the former Chief Minister of Orissa have participated in the discussion on the drought situation in Orissa. Everybody's concern is that the drought situation should be tackled on a war footing and see that nobody should migrate from Orissa to some other State in search of jobs. This is one of the points suggested by the former Prime Minister who represents Orissa State as a Member of Parliament.

Sir, I visited on 14.11.96 three districts. I took the Chief Minister with me. In fact, I wanted to visit the drought prone area a little earlier. My colleague, Shri Srikant Jena had suggested to me to visit the affected areas, but at that time the Chief Minister was not in the State. He had gone outside on some other work. I do not want to say that he had gone unnecessarily. With a prior engagement to contact various global investors, he had chalked out his programme and told me before he left the country that after his arrival, I could visit the State. That is why I postponed my programme. Otherwise, I would have gone still earlier. The Central team had gone after I visited the area. The Minister of Agriculture also visited before my going there.

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA (Puri) : He visited the State afterwards.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I am sorry, he visited afterwards. I visited these districts. Sir, I do not want to cast aspersions on anybody. Money is not the issue. For the purpose of inadequate release of funds, employment opportunities have not been provided or the people searching for employment there are going out of the State, migrating from Orissa to other States for searching jobs. That is one of the points raised by the hon. former Prime Minister.

Sir, I would like to bring it to the notice of this august House that the total resources available to Orissa are about Rs. 461 crore, the amount released is Rs.225.54 crore and total expenditure uptill now is only Rs. 187.67 crore. Under Rural Development alone, after I visited, I declared that about Rs. 50 crore would be immediately released. I do not want to caste aspersions on the State Government, how the funds have been used or diverted to various other programmes.

I had a frank discussion with the Chief Minister. I asked him to tell me what exactly was the assistance they wanted from the Centre. Subsequently, they have submitted a memorandum. A copy of the memorandum is also with me. Their demand is for about Rs. 585 crore. I will give the break-up.

Agriculture Department - Rs. 26.39 crore, Cooperation Department - Rs. 15.95 crore Fisheries Department - Rs. 2.97 crore. Department of Health and Family Welfare Rs.4.97 crore, Housing Department about Rs. 8.77 crore, Panchayati Raj Rs. 371 crore, Rural Development Department which includes drinking and rural works is about Rs. 51.32 crore, Department of Water Resources - Rs.87.23 crore which includes major, medium and minor irrigation as well as lift irrigation Department of Energy -Rs.10 crore, Emergency Feeding Programme - Rs.7.20 crore. All this comes to about Rs.585 crore.

Sir, as I have already mentioned, under Rural Development itself the Orissa State is entitled for about Rs. 461 crore. In the eight effected districts - earlier they were three and subsequently five new districts were formed which is called KBK Special Programme. During my aerial survey, I have come to an opinion that in almost all the three districts in the plain area there are minor irrigation tanks. I would like to share my experience with the hon. Members of this august House that in almost all the low lying areas, there are minor irrigation tanks. Everywhere we can see the green patches. When we were going in the car, I actually got down from the car and went to the paddy field with the Chief Minister and other officers. In the same areas where there is some moisture the formation of the grain is comparatively better than the area where moisture content is less. In most of the low lying areas, minor irrigation tanks were being constructed. Due to the shortage of water, with one watering or two watering

the formation of the grain has not been totally satisfactory. I would like to make this point that if only one wetting or two wetting could be made available, I think, almost all the paddy area can be saved. Sir, I asked the Chief Minister, can we not extract the ground water? Is there any ground water? Is the potential available? What is the opinion of the State Government? Have you conducted any survey? Sir, I was told by the Chief Minister, that barring one or two districts, if we put up tubewells, there is sufficient ground water and we can use that ground water at the time of shortage of rain or you can call it the drought or whatever the situation that may arise. If we take up tubewells on a massive scale, I think we can save money by not spending it on various unproductive works. Even today, if anybody goes on an aerial survey, he could see that crop is good. But when he goes to the field, he would see that it is not so.

The grains have not been formed because of shortage of one or two waterings. This is the real situation which I have observed. I told the Chief Minister: "You appoint an expert, who is a know geologist, and conduct a survey. The Central Government is prepared to provide any amount of money for the tubewells because drought problem is there in these eight districts, earlier, there were three districts, every year." I think, when Shri Chandra Shekhar was the Prime Minister, he also went there. At that time also, there were reports of several deaths. There were so many types of reports and the situation was grave. Shri Chandra Shekhar also made a visit at that time. The Kalahandi issue was also discussed in Parliament.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that we may spend any amount of money on relief measures, but I would say that it is only a temporary measure. Instead of that, if we take up some permanent measures, we can definitely avoid this type of misery to the local people. I do not want to cast any aspersion because our former Prime Minister has come just now.

The Chief Minister was present with me. I myself asked one or two aged ladies whether they were getting any old age pension. Since I do not know the Oriya language, I asked the officers to translate to me what the old lady was saying. She said that she did not get any old age pension. I asked the District Collector what he was doing. He called for the Sarpanch, but the Sarpanch was not traceable. I do not want to narrate anything because one of our Members, who is sitting here, was there on the spot. The Sarpanch was not available and the District Collector was a little bit shaky to give a correct answer. I told him that whatever happened had happened, that he must select the poorest of the poor when he was going to give such benefits like old age pension or subsidised foodgrains or whatever it is. That was the instruction which I gave to him. He told me that as per the quota fixed for Orissa, whatever may be the ceiling, about 248,000 people

have been selected for giving old age pension and if that number is relaxed, that he can extend the benefit to the remaining people. That is how he made the presentation before me. I took the decision to give the relaxation and to provide this benefit to five thousand more people in so far as these seven or eight districts in Orissa were concerned. So, the old people who did not get any old age pension should be identified and this benefit should be extended to them. This was the instruction given to them. On that day, in the presence of the Chief Minister, I declared that we were going to give additional funds to the tune of Rs.50 crore.

I do not want to take much time of this august House. I will only mention about the monies that are available under each category. Under the JRY, the money available is Rs. 162.67 crore; under IAY, it is Rs. 58.20 crore; under MWS, it is Rs. 16.02 crore; under the Employment Assistance Scheme, it is Rs. 111.45 crore; under IRDP, it is 30.21 crore; under DWCRA, it is Rs. 1.28 crore, and under Tool Kits, it is Rs. 1.17 crore. When the money is available and if the people are going out in search of jobs, then it means that these monies are being spent in some other areas. The State Government may be having a problem, but they have not given a clear picture.

The money might have been diverted to various other purposes. Anyway, I do not want to take that excuse now and see that the people suffer. The Government of India is prepared to release funds in order to provide any amount of work. I will give you this much of assurance to all the hon. Members of this House who represent Orissa. I am prepared to provide any amount of money that is required to provide employment and the necessary drinking water to those villages. They are saying that about 26,000 villages are suffering from drought. That is one of the reports of the State Government. I am prepared to provide the money for drinking water, to provide sufficient employment and whether it is a grant, whether it is going to be adjusted in future out of the Plan allocation is not the issue now to be discussed. Let us, as our former Prime Minister has said, tackle it on a water footing. Yes, we are ready. What is the quantum of the share of the Centre and the share of the State? All these things can be discussed later. I am going to give a categorical assurance that we are prepared to provide the necessary funds. There is no need for anybody to go out of the States in search of employment. Whatever may be the amount of employment that is required by the State, let them take up the works and we are prepared to provide the necessary funds. This is all what I would like to say.

I have released about Rs. 37 crore as Calamity Relief Fund. Earlier, under Rural Development, what was the money that was available, what was released and what was not spent, is a different matter which I have just mentioned for the benefit of this august House.

For irrigation, the money that has been provided this year is Rs.800 crores. Out of that, we have released



Rs.46.05 crore to Orissa. The Chief Minister, in his memorandum, has requested for about Rs.87.23 crore. For Orissa, it comes to about Rs.46.5 crore. He can fully utilise that money. There is no problem. That is a separate amount. It does not come under Calamity Relief Fund. It is from the General Budget. What we have provided is Rs.800 crore for major and medium irrigation projects and Rs.100 crore. Out of that, we have released Rs. 46.5 crores as a share to Orissa State.

The other thing is basic minimum service which does not also come under the category of Calamity Relief Fund. He have provided about Rs.2,480 crore. Out of that, Orissa will get Rs. 79.26 crore. We are prepared to release all that money. Let them spend. Under basic minimum services, drinking water, rural roads and all these things, we are prepared to release Rs.2,480 crores as its quota and as its share. Orissa will get about Rs.79 crore additional amount. That also I am prepared to release the full amount. Let it be used for the purpose of generating the necessary employment to those people who are searching for jobs and for employment. But there is no need to go for migration to any other neighbouring States.

We have increased even the foodgrains quota which is fixed at 45,000 MT to 75,000 MT now. So, the question of shortage of funds to tackle this problem will not arise. I am not prepared to say anything right now whether it is Rs.600 crore or Rs.500 crore or whether it is 100 per cent Central Government grant. Let us discuss this issue and the guidelines and the norms that we have fixed to tackle this drought and the flood damages and how the fund should be shared among the States and the Centre.

All these guidelines are there. But I cannot give you an assurance exclusively for Orissa that all the money that is going to be given is fully a grant. I cannot say that now. Under Irrigation, all the money that is going to be released - Rs. 92.10 crore - is a grant. About Basic Minimum Service, the sum of Rs.79.26 crore is fully a grant. The money that has been released under the Calamity Relief Fund - Rs.37 crore - is fully a grant. So, what I mean to say is that apart from the money that is available under various categories of rural development, more than Rs.100 or 160 crore, the money that has been given now under irrigation, under Basic Minimum Service and the Calamity Relief Fund - all this money is available right now. The State Government should come up to the expectation of the people and see that necessary action is taken either to provide drinking water or to provide the employment opportunities to the rural masses who are suffering.

In addition to that, almost all those blocks which have not been provided with Employment Assurance Schemes have been taken up and for each block, we are going to release Rs.20 lakh under Employment Assurance Scheme. The Notification has already been issued for those districts. He has said about 26 districts apart from eight districts. Out of 30 districts, 26 districts

this time have received scanty rainfall. This is what the Chief Minister told me. Almost all the blocks which have not been covered under the Employment Guarantee Scheme have been covered and the G.O. has been issued. We have also instructed to release Rs.20 lakh per block under the Employment Guarantee Scheme.

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : Will the hon. Prime Minister kindly clarify whether it is "almost all the the locks "or" all the blocks"? Those are 314 blocks.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : All the remaining blocks. I will give the details. In fact, I do not want to read everything. The Employment Assurance Scheme should be extended to all the eight blocks in Bolangir and Sonapur districts which are not covered with this Scheme. Rupees 20 lakh per block will be released to each block for starting the work. For Orissa, as a whole, 40 more blocks will be added taking the total to 290 blocks during the year before 30th and the balance blocks, if any, which have not been covered under the famine-affected districts, we wanted to cover them. We wanted to cover almost all the blocks in the whole country by 1997-98 and those blocks which come under the affected districts will be covered this year itself.

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : Sir, I will just take one minute.

MR. SPEAKER : We are already encroaching upon the time of the Private Members' Business.

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : This is an important issue. The hon. Agriculture Minister has already stated that the State Government's Food for Work Programme is going to be basically based on the Employment Assurance Scheme. There are only 24 blocks which are remaining. Yesterday I had beseeched the hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister to in turn beseech the Prime Minister that sence. There are only 24 blocks which are remaining. All these 24 blocks being covered under the drought affected 26 districts, why does not the hon. Prime Minister commit on the floor of the House itself today that there 24 blocks will also be covered under EAS. If he could do it today itself, it will be much better for us.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : What I suggested to the Chief Minister was that all those blocks which come under the purview of those affected districts should be covered. As our hon. Member has suggested, if 24 blocks are remaining, I am prepared to consider that and I will see that those blocks are also going to be covered...(Interruptions).

SHRI JAG MOHAN (New Delhi) : I would like to put one line question to the hon. Prime Minister ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We are already late. Unless you want to suspend the Private Members' time, it will not be possible. That is not fair.

(Interruptions)

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I would like to mention two or three other points. The Lower Indira Irrigation Project and the lower Suktel project are major irrigation projects where there are some problems. Some people want that the project should be taken up and some other people are opposing it because of land submersion. I told the Chief Minister to submit these two projects and we are going to incorporate them in the Ninth Five Year Plan.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Bolangir) : The Chief Minister has already submitted this project.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : We are constantly in touch with the State Government. In fact, day before yesterday, I asked my Cabinet Secretary to contact the Chief Secretary and ask him to submit those two projects. I am telling you that there is no need for me to suppress any information. They are now preparing all necessary data. I have already assured that these two projects are going to be included in the Ninth Five Year Plan which is going to be finalised in the next two or three months. I have told that already and here also I am going to make a commitment on the floor of the House. This is going to solve major problem and naturally some area is going to be submerged. We have to rehabilitate them. Necessary funds are going to be provided for rehabilitation and resettlement. That is altogether a different matter. The hon. former Prime Minister has suggested about the permanent solution. I have taken this decision because permanent solution as suggested by the former hon. Prime Minister that this is one of the areas where we can find out permanent solution by taking up these two projects as suggested by the State Government. There are other two things suggested by the local people. There is one Medium Zonk Irrigation Project which is expected to irrigate about ten thousand hectares of land should be completed. That is under execution. It is an incomplete project. We are continuing to provide money for this.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Yesterday I heard the former Prime Minister as well as yourself this afternoon. One thing that is in between the lines is that there is sufficient fund and there are large number of schemes that can take care of this. What is weak is the administrative machinery there which can really implement and execute the schemes. What help can the Central Government give in this emergency to the State Government to have a most effective machinery which can really implement all the schemes in time? Will you kindly consider this proposal of having some Special Commissioners for this type of job particularly the people who have done work at the time of Maharashtra famine and they did commendable work, they may have that experience, so that these things do not go by slow implementation?

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I do not want to interfere with the State administration.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : This is sort of a suggestion.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I am not willing to interfere with the State administration to appoint a BDO or to appoint a Gram Sevak. There are vacancies. I do not want to go into details on every aspect as to how many posts of doctors have not been filled up. I am not going to make an issue on all these things. These are all matters which the State Government has to look into.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Hon'ble Prime Minister sir, 180 people have died there but the State Government is saying that these deaths have taken place due to diarrhoea. I would like to know as to what scheme has been formulated for the welfare of the people?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : We have already taken nine minutes of the Private Members' business. I am not going to allow, Mr. Rawat, Prime Minister, can you now kindly conclude?

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : In fact, every Chief Minister has been demanding that more powers should be given to the States based on the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. In one of the meetings that we held with all the Chief Ministers, a Sub-Committee has been constituted to give the recommendations. Yesterday, our former Chief Minister also mentioned about giving free, full scope to them so that they could manage themselves. You were expressing that, I do not think money is the issue.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK (Aska) : That is not the issue at all.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I will just mention one thing. Our former Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao ji has released Rs. 8.10 crore for starting what is called free feeding centres. We call it *Ganji Kendras* in our area to feed the mass who are suffering in those districts. He had released Rs. 8.10 crore in December 1994 and the money that is being spent under that category is hardly Rs.4.5 crore. He had released it out of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. I can narrate so many other things. I do not want to go into details about all those things.

MR. SPEAKER : I do not think, Sir, there is any time for you to narrate all this.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO (Berhampur) : Sir, there are two points involved here. Briefly, one is the drought situation that has overtaken the State this year and the other is the permanent commitment of the Prime Minister to this particular area containing eight districts - now three districts originally which is called KBK. Now, this will not be finished or even tackled effectively by the State Government alone. It has to receive large doses of help, assistance and attention from the Prime Minister himself. This is what I tried to raise yesterday.

If he is good enough to give me that commitment about this KBK - with happened to be the most backward area in the country - then I think my request will be met.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : This is not fair for Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao to say this. He promised KBK Rs.4,000 and odd crore...*(Interruptions)* I am very sorry ...*(Interruptions)*... May be 10 year or 20 years but it must come under the plan.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : He has done for the people and not for himself...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : He has done nothing for the people...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Patnaikji, it is enough. Please.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK : Whatever money you give, it must be monitored. Do not tell me that you are not going to interfere in the State's affairs. Half the money will go to their pockets...*(Interruptions)* Even Rajiv Gandhi said that 80 per cent of this money goes to the pockets of *dalals*...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : It is not the question of eight districts alone. The question is of giving priority to those areas which are suffering from this drought. It is not because of Orissa. Let me be very frank on this issue. Nobody should mistake me that I am attributing certain motive behind this. The purpose of providing Rs. 800 crore for irrigation this year for the first time is to take care of some of those projects which are pending for the last several years. About those lingering projects, nobody bothers.

This is the first time that we took a decision to provide Rs. 800 crore for irrigation in the Central Government's Budget. My intention is to provide more money for irrigation. This is definitely going to help the areas, where the scanty rainfall is there and every State has got such areas.

I would like to assure the hon. former Prime Minister that Rs. 92.10 crore provided this year will be enhanced. This grant is 100 per cent from the Government of India. There is no question of the State Government's commitment on that. We are going to see that the necessary funds are going to be provided to tackle this problem.

In this regard I have told the Chief Minister to engage an expert who has got sufficient knowledge about the assessment of the ground water, Geologist and conduct survey in all these areas. If the tubewells are going to be taken in a large scale, wherever underground water is available, then it is definitely going to solve the problem of those people who are suffering due to scanty rainfall. Whether it is rain-shadow areas or dark areas, I do not want to enter into all these things. The Government of India is prepared to find out some permanent solution for this area. About the scheme of KBK that is being formulated by the former Prime Minister, I am not bothered as to how much money is

released. I am not going into the details of all these things. We want that some permanent relief is given to the drought-prone areas. We have taken a decision in this regard. You have said yesterday that in Cauvery, there is no water; in Ganga there is a lot of water and in Brahmaputra, there is a lot of water. I constituted an Expert Committee to go into the point whether we can transfer the water from the surplus basin to the deficit basin. I have given all the guidelines as to what are all the areas they should go into.

SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA (Rohtak) : A lot of work has been done by Dr. K.L. Rao.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : That is only on peninsular valley scheme. I had put a question to the former Water Resources Minister Shri Shukla. I am already in touch with Department because I am equally anxious about the irrigation. I know my commitment to the farmers and to the cause of irrigation. I do not want to go into those details. I have already constituted a Committee to find out the feasibility. It should be economically feasible and it should be technically feasible. How best we can make use of the surplus water from the surplus basin to the deficit basin will be examined. As soon as the report comes, I will come before the House for final allocation before implementing it...*(Interruptions)* Shri G.V.K. Rao, because of ill-health, has declined. Shri Hanumantha Rao has been made the Chairman. We have to generate the money also. Money can be generated if we all collectively work together. That is all I can say. For the massive tubewells programme, exclusively we are going to fund it from the Centre.

MR. SPEAKER : I have to take the consensus of the House. We have already taken 15 minutes of the Private Members Business. Is it the consensus of the House that time be extended for this discussion?

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : It is a national calamity. We want only ten minutes more on this.

MR. SPEAKER : It is the Private Member's time. I am just taking the sense of the House. I am not going to block it.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : You may please extend it by ten minutes.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : There is no need for ten minutes. I only say to all the Members representing Orissa to please have this in their minds. It is not a question of mixing politics because it is a Congress-ruled State. There is no such question. In a jocular way the Whip of the Congress Party has mentioned that.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : I said that your answer should be such that satisfies us.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Whatever money that is necessary to tackle this problem, we are prepared to provide it from the Government of India. Whether it is a hundred per cent grant or whether it is going to be

adjusted in the Plan, all these things are not relevant now. Let us with all seriousness tackle the problem in these eight districts. For that, necessary funds will be released. This is the assurance I am giving. If you want, I am prepared to again call a separate meeting and discuss.

SHRI PINAKI MISHRA : It is not eight districts, it is 26 districts. It is only because of Kalahandi, Koraput and Bolangir have got publicity that these districts have been highlighted.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : The Chief Minister's report says out of 30 districts, 26 districts are affected. In 26 districts, 2600 villages are affected. That is what he has mentioned in his report. That report contains all the details. I have also indicated the money required. Money is not the issue. We are going to provide the money. Let the State Government start the work with all seriousness.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Bolangir) : I have to make only one request, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : We are breaking our own rules every time.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : We are getting rice at Rs. 2 a kilo in 160 blocks. But in 64 blocks it is still pending. They are not getting rice at Rs. 2 a kilo. In my district of Bolangir we are getting for irrigation purpose only six per cent.

MR. SPEAKER : Is it within the drought-prone area? We are talking about the drought areas. We are not talking about the entire State today.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : This is a drought-prone area. You have not included these 64 blocks.

MR. SPEAKER : Please do not bring in the entire issue of the State. We are on a particular issue of drought.

You cannot talk about the whole of Orissa.

*(Interruptions)*

15.50 hrs.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER : The House shall now take up Private Member's Business.

Shrimati Sheela Gautam.

15.50¼ hrs.

#### MOTION RE: FIRST REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM (Aligarh) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do agree with the First

Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 27th November, 1996."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That this House do agree with the First Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 27th November, 1996."

*The motion was adopted.*

15.51 hrs.

*(Mr. Deputy-Speaker in the Chair)*

*[English]*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please go back to your seats.

*(Interruptions)*

15.51¼ hrs.

#### OBSERVATION BY THE DEPUTY-SPEAKER RE: ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Hon. Members, as you are aware, the last two-and-a-half hours on a Friday are allotted for the transaction of the Private Members' Business. These two-and-a-half hours are utilised for consideration of Bills and Resolutions on the alternate weeks. Thus, a very limited time is available for transaction of Private Members' Business of each category. A very large number of Members give notices of Bills and Resolutions. On the basis of the ballot, only four Bills and three Resolutions respectively are selected for consideration by the House on a sitting earmarked for the transaction of a particular type of business. According to the recommendations of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions, two hours are allotted by the House to a Bill or a Resolution. However, it has been observed that this time limit of two hours is not normally adhered to and the time has to be extended by the House in almost every case. This practice of extending time not only deprives those Members who are next in order of priority in the List of Business for a day but also results in disposal of a fewer number of Bills and Resolutions. For instance, during the Tenth Lok Sabha, out of a total of 405 Private Members' Bills introduced, only 20 Bills could reach the consideration stage. The figures in respect of Private Members' Resolutions are also not very encouraging, as out of a total of 98 admitted Resolutions, only 15 Resolutions could be discussed by the House.

Rule 296 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha provides that the time