

work unitedly. If at all we do so we can console ourselves that we have performed our duties.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now the hon. Prime Minister is intervening in the discussion.

[Translation]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have heard the speeches of the hon. Members during the discussion. I have also glanced through the proceedings to come across of the speeches during which I was not present in the House Shri Nitish Kumar, the Minister of Agriculture will reply to the debate. I rise to say few things.

What has happened in Gujarat is simply inexplicable in words. There has been an increase in the incidence of natural calamities for the last few years. Some areas were hit by drought, some by floods. There was a super cyclone in Orissa, land sliding in Uttaranchal as a result of earthquake. I am not naming the states separately because I am afraid that it may snowball into a controversy. This is not a time of raising any controversy. When an all party meeting was held to review the situation of Gujarat the way all the parties extended cooperation in a cordial manner and expressed their views, I felt that the treason of standing united during the time of natural calamities, national crisis, will be followed in the case of Gujarat also. While concluding the discussion, on that day I had hoped that the cooperative and cordial atmosphere, witnessed in that meeting, would be reflected in the House also but it did not happen. An effort was made to place the Government in the dock. Thank God, no one blamed that the earthquake occurred due to this Government. I do not want to prolong this controversy. Elections are around the corner. There can be room for a little bit of politics. When we were in the opposition, we also used to play a little bit of politics, but not during the hour of crisis. This is a natural calamity. We should all come forward unitedly. I have seen the feeling of assisting Gujarat and it is still there throughout the country. All the State Governments, have extended assistance. I do not want to name them because yesterday one of my friends said that a particular State has given Rupees five crores, but its name was not taken. Now, I have a list with me. There are a number of states who have given rupees five crores each I think that I should lay on the table of the House a list of those States*.

*He laid on the table a copy (Hindi and English versions) of the details of assistance received from various State Governments and foreign countries for the victims of recent earthquake in Gujarat.

All the States should know that no State was lagged behind in providing assistance. Although different States are ruled by different parties but in the Gujarat tragedy, more or less, all are united. This was the feeling. Unfortunately, this feeling is no being seen at Central level. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Everyone has supported all the efforts for the rehabilitation and relief. ...*(Interruptions)* Coming from the Prime Minister such a thing, Mr. Prime Minister, will give a very bad impression. We are all united. Everybody has said it. All of us, those who have heard here, will agree with me. I do not know what report you have got. What we have said is that more should be done for Gujarat. It should be unitedly done for Gujarat. The nation is one today. We have said that the disaster management should be such, as what we had seen earlier on other occasions should not be repeated. That is only we have said. Therefore, what the Prime Minister is saying that we are divided is not correct. We are not divided on Gujarat situation. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: We are helping you ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, what is this? The hon. Prime Minister is on his legs.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The whole nation will listen that we have not done anything...*(Interruptions)* Where ever good work is done we have supported you...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: What ever good work is done is quite appreciable but you should also admit your weaknesses...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The Prime Minister has twice said in this House. ...*(Interruptions)* Please do not do that. We have all supported. We have said more should be done. Everybody was here. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Somnath Chatterjee, please.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): We are all for Gujarat...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : What is this?

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker Sir allegations have been showered on us.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I have given a suggestion that there should not be any discrimination. It is upto you to agree or disagree.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: No discrimination was done it is a baseless allegation from the first day of the earthquake it is being alleged that there was discrimination. This matter was raised in the all Party meeting also. In that meeting the Chief Minister of Gujarat was also present we had invited him to the meeting with the purpose of clarifying any doubts or allegations. That is why his presence was must. He had also clarified that such allegations are not true. But if these allegations are true, he can write to me pointing out where and with whom such a discrimination has been done. Can any one discriminate under such circumstances? Saying that is an insult to the whole of Gujarat. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): Sir, all the leaders present here have said that they will help in the relief work being carried out by the Government and other institutions and that is the need of the hour. It is our responsibility. If people still make complaints before any leader and that complaint is brought to the notice of the Government then is it not the duty of the Government to enquire into the genuineness of that complaint? If that complaint is genuine, then, remedial steps should be taken and if it is a false one then, the Government should find it out. Nothing more than this has been said here...(Interruptions) Mr. Prime Minister, kindly excuse me for interrupting you for a short while. It has repeatedly been said that our leader, in such a crisis, has expressed her sympathy everywhere during her visit to Gujarat as you did in case of Latur. Nothing more than that has been said...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Sir, the hon'ble Prime Minister has rightly mentioned that when this issue was raised in the all party meeting, Shri Keshubhai Patel, Chief Minister of Gujarat immediately said that if any one had discriminated like this then he had committed a sin. He assured that if any specific case is reported to him then he will take action against the guilty. He said this in the all party meeting. Notwithstanding that, all the allegations made are general in nature. Yesterday, I heard Shivraj Ji. He told that complaints have been received about such and such places where discrimination has been done and also named some villages for that purpose. But later he said that these complaints were not against the Government. He has said so.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Yes Sir.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: When the complaint was not against the Government then it was expected from him to tell as to whom the complaint was about. But he did not make it clear. If someone goes through the newspapers of today, he will sense that the Government has discriminated while he himself had told yesterday that their allegation was not against the Government. But what has been said yesterday about the Government of Gujarat is baseless and false.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I have said it earlier also and I once again reiterate that complaints are not against the Government there. But the people who went there for distributing the relief material, are not the representatives of the Government. They are going there on behalf of other agencies and are saying like that. Who had gone there. It has come to our notice. It has come to the notice of our leaders and we bring those facts to your notice? We are not making complaints against the Government. I hand over this paper to you, you can act there on. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a member to member discussion. This is a general discussion.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The Prime Minister is making a provocative statement. This does not behave of the Prime Minister...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Sir, we are speaking on behalf of the Government. The Central Government and the Government of Gujarat are working jointly since 26th, the very first day of earthquake. The leader of the opposition,

therefore, did not make any mention about the persons against whom these allegations have been made.

When I listened to Shivraj Ji I got some satisfaction. According to him their complaint was not against the Government. He has reiterated it today as well. Among all the speakers, only he has said explicitly that his complaint is not against the Government...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Your Chief Minister has said. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? Please take your seat. This should not be from Member to Member.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Shrimati Sonia Gandhi did not say but Shri Keshubhai Patel has said. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, he is not yielding. Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: It is Shri Keshubhai Patel's statement. You cannot insult the Opposition for nothing. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: He is playing politics. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: It is the complaint of the people of Gujarat that discrimination has been done. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Sir, I would submit to the Hon'ble Members that if they go there...*(Interruptions)* I have gone there several times...*(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

Sir, many Government Officers and staff whose family members have died worked with me throughout the day. When, in the evening I enquired about their families, they told me that they had lost everything. They accompanied me continuously for six days in the same clothes and here people are talking like this. This is gross injustice. ...*(Interruptions)* This is injustice with the Government...*(Interruptions)* I would not like to say anything more than this...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Shri Lal K. Advani, you are wrongly briefing the hon. Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Our Leader has said that we treat the people of Gujarat like heroes and the hon. Prime Minister said...*(Interruptions)* What is this?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, please take your seat. What is this?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: How many times I have to ask you to sit down.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I believe that all the members of his party agree with the explanation of Shri Patil and they will act and behave accordingly...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, I myself visited Gujarat and observed the situation there. It has been said about me that I had come back after making an aerial survey without making a halt over there...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Not now, You can speak later on.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Prime Minister is on his legs.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are not allowing him to speak. This is not the way. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev, please take your seat. Shri Mahale, please go to your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mahale, please go to your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mahale, where is your seat? Please go to your seat first.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Bansal, what is this?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, he has been wrongly briefed. He has been misled. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Athawale, please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKER MAHALE (Malegaon): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Prime Minister should observe restraint in his speech.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No running commentary please.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Remove the Chief Minister.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: What has happened to the Prime Minister today. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I had said so...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansal, what is this? Please take your seat. On every point you want to seek a clarification.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansal, please take your seat. You can you seek a clarification on every point?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansal, this is too much. You must have some patience. What is this? You are not allowing the Leader of the House also to speak. You have already spoken for more than twenty minutes.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: While the discussion was about to conclude, one of the members said that 441 tents were received from other countries, where are those tents?... (Interruptions) What does this man; it was alleged that... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No running commentary please. What is this?

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to make it clear that all the tents received were placed under the charge of the District Collector of Kutch and those tents have been kept in the schools so that the schools can run... (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question is what kind of atmosphere we want to create in the country and in the House. As I have said that all the parties have extended help to the Government on a large scale. There was a competition of the sorts among the States as to who will extend help first and all the sections of the public have generously contributed the 'Prime Minister's Relief Fund'. More than 200 crore rupees have been collected so far. Such a huge amount has never been collected before because people are afflicted with the tragedy of Gujarat in real sense and people want to share the grief of the people of Gujarat. Death of people on such a large scale, devastation, collapsing of houses and many such examples were given during this debate. Such incidents were narrated, which send ones heart rendered indeed. If wrath of the nature was witnessed on the one hand the generosity of mankind was also witnessed on the other. The Government of Gujarat became active from the very day the earthquake hit and it took many steps. Keshu Bhai addressed the people of Gujarat. Doordarshan was not functioning so he made that address on Akashwani. He went and sat in the Police Control Room. One of the members asked as to why the meeting at Delhi was called at 3 PM when the earthquake hit at 5 AM or 6 AM or 8 AM why did you take so many hours to hold the meeting? Mr. Speaker, Sir, Crisis Management Committee is there. Responsible persons are its members. When the news of earthquake was received, each and every member was to be informed. Time was also consumed to know about the intensity of earthquake, the nature of calamity, that is why the meeting was called at 3 PM. Upto 12 noon everybody was busy in the celebrations of the Republic Day. Now we are being placed into the dock in this House and are being asked

as to why the meeting was called at 3 PM, why not prior to that? What should I reply? The meeting of the Cabinet was held in the evening on the same day. The Government of Gujarat became active. The Chief Secretary of the Government of Gujarat visited Bhuj the same day. Advaniji rushed to Gujarat immediately after the Republic Day parade was over. He was one of those members who visited there immediately. Even then, allegations are being levelled. It is not fair. It hurts. This type of politics should not be there. You would be glad to know that the entire world has made its contribution for the help of the victims at this hour of tragedy. I have the names of these countries with me.

As one of the hon'ble members has mentioned that there was no space for the planes to land. There was no space for landing of the planes. Planes full of relief materials were pouring in. I also want to place on the table of the House the list of those countries who helped us during this calamity. Humanity got afflicted, Humanity became worried. The spirit to save Gujarat, to help Gujarat at this hour of tragedy spread immediately throughout the country but some people did not give up playing politics. If some discrimination was being done, it could have been mentioned once, but repeating it frequently in each and every speech is not good. Are you aware of its consequences? Your speeches have been published in foreign countries that discrimination is being done with the muslims and harijans. The foreign newspapers have published them under their headlines. The country has been insulted at the cost of drawing political mileage. What is the need to repeat this. The Chief Minister of Gujarat told at the all party meeting that such incidents may be brought before him if they occur. They have brought the names of the villages in writing these have been brought by Patel Sahib just now. We will find it out and bring the truth before you and would place you in the dock. You have blamed Gujarat Government. You have tried to make advantage of this national crisis from political point of view. It is a matter of great sorrow...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? Please maintain order in the House.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI: We expect you to speak as the Prime Minister and not as a Party leader...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I don't want to go into detail. Politics was also played during the time of Orissa crisis.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Are you trying to gain my sympathy and support by speaking like this?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Don't you find my speech pleasing. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am asking a question to Mr. Patil. If Patil Sahib...

[*English*]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, he is speaking here as the Prime Minister and not as the leader of BJP...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Hon'ble Prime Minister was not present here, nobody has said so.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Patil Sahib, if you had not taken part in the debate and had not given this clarification...(*Interruptions*) This propagation was done in a planned manner that in Gujarat Muslims and Harijans are being...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: No, it is not so. This speech is on record, is on tape and is in writing. You may watch on TV. He has not said so. We people are sitting here, that is why you are saying so. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI A.C. JOS (Trichur): Sir, he has been wrongly briefed. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? Is this the way to ask the question?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am not permitting anybody.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (Khajuraho): Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sir, we were expecting that you would speak openly.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chaturvedi, what is this.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAVIN RASTRAPAL (Patan): It was tinkered in the media before. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to prolong this debate any further but I have expressed my feelings, which were within me. The people will make a decision. The final decision is to be made by the public. By-elections were held recently for some legislative assemblies and their results have come forth. Public is speaking...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except the Prime Minister's speech.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, an all party meeting was held wherein certain useful suggestions were made. Smt. Sonia Gandhi had given a suggestion that there should be a standing Committee and there should be a permanent machinery to deal with the natural calamity. There should be a National Disaster Management Authority. Not only at the time of Orissa, this thing has come to our notice this time also that whenever a grave natural calamity hits the country, the preparations are not made to the required extent to deal with the situation. In fact, we have not seen this matter from that point of view. Though, Latur had warned us when a sudden earthquake had hit the country. What shall we do? Hundreds of people got buried under the debris. How can that debris be removed, where are the machines, how can stones and cement be cut? People are buried and they are crying. They can not be taken out of this tragedy. The rescuers are shedding floods of tears. Trained persons are required for this job. The same thing happened at the time of plane-hijacking also. The calamities come like that whether they happen on land or in the air. Therefore this has been decided. In fact, consideration on this suggestion has been started after the cyclone of Orissa that there should be a permanent authority and we would set up a permanent Committee of this type. Separate groups have been made for that. They would give their recommendations in this regard.

Centre does not make any discrimination. We have provided less in Orissa, now we are providing more in Gujarat. ...(Interruptions) This is not fair.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: At that time we come to you with great expectations, but you said: "Where is the money?"

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: You were given Rs. 130 crores. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: At that time you did not have funds, may be you had it later on. Now the door was opened, an order was given to Reserve Bank. ...(Interruptions). They are also the people of India. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: The finance Commission's report has been received...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Whatever you have done for Gujarat is right and we have supported it.

[English]

We said "In future, think of other states and apply the same standards please."

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: That is good.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We are saying the same thing and you have come here in an angry mood...(Interruptions) we are saying only this and nothing else!!

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: From where this anger has arisen today...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Prime Minister says where is the money.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, we have permitted HUDCO to issue taxfree bonds worth Rs. 1500 crores for the restructuring of Gujarat. Restructuring of Gujarat has to be done. We have to take up construction amidst destruction. Money will not be a constraint, but if I say so, it will lead to the question as to why such a statement was not made in respect of West Bengal.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We will definitely ask why should it not be asked. ...(*Interruptions*)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Prime Minister, you are Prime Minister of the whole country and you have to take care of all of us...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no partiality at the centre.

SHRI SONNATH CHATTERJEE: We came to you asking for money and your minister has delivered a speech against it. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Please do not bring the politics of West Bengal here...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You are doing politics today...(*Interruptions*). Today, you are speaking in the tune of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the BJP. Mr. Prime Minister we had respect for you. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Center has no discrimination in its mind. ...(*Interruptions*). The Government has been doing well for the last two and two and half years. Centre had very good relations with the States during this period. You can enquire from the Chief Ministers of your respective States.

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We look at Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee a little differently, but you are coming down today. You know how much we respect you personally.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I saw in Bhuj that a hospital was completely destroyed. We have proposed that the centre is ready to rebuild that hospital afresh.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You start constructing, we support it.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: The money received in the Prime Minister's Relief Fund will, thus be utilised properly.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We support it completely.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: No, I am going to tell many more such things.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: If some money is left over from there, kindly send it here also.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, such calamities confront our lives, to test us. It seems as if the nature has decided to test us. We can overcome the nature but it is very necessary to fight the ugliness underlying our mind. Politics will take its own course, there will be elections. The Governments will go on changing. But when the entire world is rushing to with all sorts of help we can understand the worldwide impact of this tragedy.

The need of the hour is that the whole country should face this challenge Unitedly. I believe that after this discussion, an atmosphere will be created where allegations and counter allegations will come to an end and an atmosphere of hard work will start and we will rebuild Gujarat. Different types of Packages have been provided. There is a separate package for Kutch and the Gujarat Government has made a separate declaration for industries. We are also concerned about the other districts which are not part of Kutch and which were also affected by the earthquake. We are providing all sorts of assistance as desired by the Gujarat Government and I will request all hon. Members that now onward we should start thinking creatively.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have allowed me to speak on a very important issue. It is difficult to say as to when a natural disaster, a tragedy of this magnitude had struck earlier, such as this earthquake in Gujarat. It is also difficult to forecast as to when and in which form such disaster might strike. A natural disaster can strike sometimes in the form of floods, sometimes in the form of landslide, sometimes in the form of drought and sometimes in the form of earthquake like the one that struck some parts of Gujarat.

It is necessary to ponder over the shortcomings and grey areas where we failed in the preparation, required to face such situations arising after a natural disaster. No one can avoid natural disasters but it is necessary to think over the preparations the programmes, the safety measures, which are necessary as a precautions before natural disasters strike.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we should rise above party politics and seek solutions to the problems caused by floods, earthquake, landslide, drought in various parts of the country in a united manner. Therefore, I request that such measures should be taken at the national and State level so that we should be ready at the times of such natural disasters. We should be ready for dealing with the losses, loss of human lives at that moment. If we had

[Shri Joachim Baxla]

preparations before hand for dealing with such a calamity, many people could have been rescued who were stuck up inside the rubble. Therefore, we need to think in this direction.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I express my grief particularly for the families who have lost their members in this quake tragedy in Gujarat. We must praise the Govt. bureaucracy and NGO's and voluntary organizations who have under taken relief work on war footing.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, unfortunately the media has not mentioned about the students members at village panchayat level, Taluka and district level. In my opinion the existing system in Gujarat needs to be strengthened and made more effective like the system in West Bengal where developmental works are done from grassroot level through Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and District Council.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have received full co-operation of our countrymen at the time of such calamities. At this time also when earthquake has hit Gujarat, people of all category, be they poor or rich, have come forward for help and they have made their contributions. I applaude them for their such type of generosity. This is something to be appreciated. To our satisfaction we have also got some aid and assistance from abroad. This is a welcome step.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, now the reconstruction in Gujarat is to be done by us. Those who are mentally disturbed there, they also require medical care and rehabilitation. It is also our responsibility to take care of those children who have lost their parents. We are duty bound to look after and rehabilitate those persons who have survived from this tragedy, be they from any class, caste, creed or age, school-goers, college-goers and mentally imbalanced persons. They need our special attention.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request every hon. Members of this House and all the people of this country that by their actions they should convey this clear message to the people of Gujarat that at this moment of crisis the whole of the country stands by them. Whole of the country is with them and shares their sorrows. I also appeal to help the earthquake affected people. The persons, whose houses have collapsed in earthquake, should be provided accommodation. Accommodation should be provided to one and all without any discrimination. We have to provide food to each and every sufferer of the earthquake. We should accept the earthquake of Gujarat as a challenge and provide immediate relief to the victims of the tragedy only then we will be able to face it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Baxla, please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, whatever relief material we have received, we should distribute it properly. The Government of Gujarat should do its duty of distributing the relief material fairly. Some drawbacks have been noticed in distribution of relief material. The Government of Gujarat should remove those drawbacks. Some of our colleagues on opposite benches have pointed out. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Haribhai Chaudhary.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY (Banaskantha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, my constituency, Banaskantha is the neighbouring district of Kutch where this earthquake has played havoc.

18.00 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

All the Members of Parliament have mentioned about the earthquake that hit the region on 26th January at 8.45 am. This earthquake has affected 7900 villages of 182 Talukas coming under 21 districts of Gujarat. On 26th January, we were in the Headquarters of Palampur for hoisting the flag, as the Minister-in-charge is supposed to be present at District headquarter on this day. We received an information from control room of the Chief Minister that a devastating earthquake has hit the region. All the Officers present there were informed about it. Immediately after getting the information about the earthquake at 12 noon, we organised camps in Radhanpur and Santalpur Talukas of my constituency which are in neighbourhood of Rapar district and started treatment of earthquake victims coming from Rapar and Bhachau. Gujarat State Transport did the most commendable job. They provided free transport services to the victims of earthquake. Transport services were provided via Santalpur and Radhanpur towns under my constituency despite the collapse of Surajbari bridge. In this camp, we provided treatment to more than eight thousand persons

* Not recorded.