

HALF-AN HOUR DISCUSSION

[*Translation*]

Funds for National Rural Employment Programme

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the subject of today's Half-An-Hour Discussion is very important. The Hon. Planning Minister had replied to the question, but he is absent today and the Hon. Minister of Rural Development is present here.

You had decided to spend Rs. 1,600 crores on this programme and the expenditure was to be shared in the ratio of 50 : 50 by the Centre and the States. The only objective of this programme was to provide employment to the marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. 75 per cent of the funds will be reserved for the above two categories and the remaining 25 per cent of the funds will be given on the basis of poverty. The Hon. Minister has formulated a very good scheme, but I would like to know from him whether evaluation of this scheme has been done properly. I want to say on the floor of the House that 50 per cent of money being spent on this programme is pocketed by the officers. I shall ask a question of the Hon. Minister. It has been stated in one of its objectives that 10 per cent of the total funds will be spent on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 10 per cent on social forestry and 5 per cent on the strengthening of the machinery. You have fixed these criteria and the objective behind it was to provide employment to the poor people in the country and to build the infrastructure and other community assets. You kindly let us know whether you have personally visited any district of the country and seen what community assets have been created under the National Rural Employment Programme and the annual plan prepared on that basis for which 50 per cent of the funds is given by the Centre and 50 per cent by the States. Can you give details in this regard or not ?

I would like to know whether the ten per cent amount provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes out of a total amount of Rs. 1,600 crores was spent on them, and if so, what assets were created therefrom for them and on what items that money was spent.

You have said that ten per cent of the funds would be spent on social forestry. Was that amount spent for that purpose and what national and community assets were created therefrom ?

You have also said that 75 per cent of the funds will be spent on agricultural labourers and marginal farmers and the remaining 25 per cent of the funds on the poor to lift them above the poverty line. Kindly let me know the basis on which these figures were arrived at and the names of the States for which they were kept at 25 per cent. Were the figures received from each of the districts separately and on the basis of that the funds were allocated or you allocated funds to every State ?

With regard to Uttar Pradesh you have said that this allocation is made to each district. Do you allocate funds to the Jalaun and Pali districts of Rajasthan or to the districts of Madhya Pradesh or you allocate funds to their respective States ? In the case of Uttar Pradesh, the funds are allocated to each district, whereas in our case, it is given to the State.

Another question of mine is whether the plan for the year 1985 of the Seventh Five Year Plan has been received by you, as these plans were supposed to reach you by the 10th of April ? Have you received that plan complete in all respects as to how they will spend the funds ?

Now, you kindly tell me, as you have said in reply to Kumari Mamta Banerjee's question that these entire funds are spent. Her question was—

[English]

NREP is a very important scheme to implement the 20-Point Programme, but in West Bengal, the poorer people are not getting the facility from this NREP Scheme. All the money is going to the CPI (M) Party and its Cadre funds. So, I would like to know from the Minister whether the Central Government would enquire into the actual amount allocated to the State of West Bengal and how much of the fund has been allowed by the West Bengal Government for the NREP Scheme during the last two years.

[Translation]

This was the question. You kindly reply to this question, as to what action you have taken against the State which has such an allegation it and where the situation has deteriorated to such an extent.

Rajasthan is an economically backward State. It cannot contribute its 50 per cent share. The Hon. Planning Minister, Shri K. R. Narayanan had replied that —

[English]

It is under consideration.....(Interruption).

PROF. N. G. RANGA : They do not want to spare any money.

SHRI MOOL DHAND DAGA : No, no, they have already given a reply. If you had taken the trouble of going through the record, you would not have put this question. But you have not. So, what I want to say now is that there was a question and the answer given was "This matter is under consideration".

[Translation]

The Rajasthan Government has expressed its inability to provide these funds within 5 years and have demanded that 75 per cent of it may be shared by the Centre and

the remaining 25 per cent by them. I am quoting figures from your reports. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the main objective of the NREP programme was to develop an infra-structure in the villages of the country and improve the health of, and to provide better diet to, the poor people. Have you ever made an assessment whether the lot of farm workers belonging to Scheduled Castes and Tribes has improved? What is your assessment as to the amount of calories they consume? Is it 2,400 calories or 21,00 or 1,800 calories? This was your scheme and are you ready today with the facts and figures. You have stated as follows :—

[English]

1980-1981 : money given by the Central Government was Rs. 34.32 crores, the money spent in the first year was only Rs. 28.05 crores. 1981-82 : money given was Rs. 15.6 Crores and the money utilised was only Rs. 16.62 crores. 1982-83 : money given by the Central Government was Rs. 13.34 crores, money utilised was Rs. 9.35 crores. 1983-84 : money given was Rs. 13.98 crores and the utilisation was Rs. 10.40 crores. 1984-85 : money given was Rs. 19.8 crores whereas money utilised was Rs. 10.60 crores. If you add these, the amount for the whole plan is Rs. 1,600 crores. But how much of this has been spent?

[Translation]

The purpose of the money taken from the States was to create 3,000 to 4,000 million man days and I would like to know whether any target under the NREP programme has been achieved according to the criteria fixed thereunder or not. No survey has been carried out about NREP and it is not known which State is spending how much? Do you have the figures which may point out to the amount which could not be spent?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Daga, please try to be brief because

[Shri Mool Chand Daga]

the Minister wants to reply, and then some Members may also like to put questions.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : All right, Sir, let him give the reply, I do not mind. I have finished. I am putting the specific questions I am not going into details. Otherwise, this is a subject which requires to be gone into in detail. What was the total money which was spent? It was Rs. 1,620 crores. From where do the figures come? You say Rs. 1,620 crores were spent. And what is the break-up? The break-up is Rs. 980 crores from the Central Government and Rs. 640 crores from the State Governments. This is the break-up.

[Translation]

I would also like to know the authority which will be responsible to maintain these assets. A school has been constructed and if after some time it falls during the monsoon or the roof starts leaking, then who will look after its maintenance? It is a very good subject. Many able and efficient Ministers are sitting here. I feel that if this work is done honestly and sincerely, the country can develop and bring about revolution in its six lakh villages. You have said a good thing that the district rural agencies would work there. Will you be pleased to state the time by which the targets will be achieved through these agencies. The demands of Rajasthan may be looked into. I do not say anything about Haryana and Punjab as the *per capita* income is very high there ..(Interruptions). I has also been said that no work would be given on contract. I can say with authority that many works are being given on contract. If has been written in black and white that these works are not given in contract. This has also been decided by you. There are many institutions which give contributions in charity. You tell us the amount and the names of the States which have got funds from voluntary organisations and

also the names of States where these organisations have given funds for NREP. What are your experiences during the sixth Plan and what would be your schemes for the Seventh Five Year Plan? May I know the steps taken and proposed to be taken in order to make it more effective during the Seventh Plan so that the property and funds do not go waste and it become a people's movement? Have you ever given thought to it? I have undertaken a study in Gujarat in this respect and come to know that only 25 per cent funds are utilised and Prof. Ranga says that it is not a fact. The National Sample Survey has undertaken a study and they say that this much fund is utilized ... (Interruptions) Will you be pleased to reply to these questions? If I am allowed some time beyond this I would ask more questions.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : For the first Member you have to reply individually.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : Sir, I am told that I have to reply individually to the first Member.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Shri Daga has drawn the attention of the House to a very important matter. Recently, during the last week, while discussing the demands of the Ministry, my learned colleague Shri Chandulal Chandrakar has thrown light on various issues, but today this matter has come up once again as a result of an answer to a question.

Some doubts arose in the mind of Shri Daga and they do arise continuously. I would try to remove those doubts and as requested by him will give clarifications on those points which had remained untouched on that day.

You have asked about the types of assets created under NREP and a

detailed statement in that regard. I would like to inform him that so far as the NREP programme is concerned, its objectives are very clear and the people of the country had been clearly told about them beforehand.

[*English*]

The National Rural Employment Programme was launched with three-fold objective. The first was generating additional employment opportunity in the rural areas to the extent of 300 to 400 million mandays. The second was creation of durable community assets, and the third was improvement in the nutrition level of the workers through increased income and part payment of wages in the form of foodgrains. These were three objectives with which the NREP was drawn. The Hon. Member wants to know the second aspect of it as to what happened to the assets so far created in the country as a result of the implementation of NREP in the country. Under the NREP the generation of employment was over 300 million mandays as stipulated when the programme was launched and also it was felt necessary to tackle the problem of the rural landless specially pertaining to the employment in a more direct manner. The category of persons who are getting the benefit under NREP was not available because there has not been any comprehensive evaluation of the programme. I agree with the Hon. Member on the one count that there are two grey areas—one is monitoring and the other is evaluation of the programme. These are the two grey areas in which we have placed our full trust in all the State Governments that they will be implementing the NREP, IRDP and RLEGP programmes in the best interest of the people for whom these programmes are chalked out. But now there is a need felt that there should be more close monitoring not only at the State level and the district level, but also from the Central Government we must evolve a certain method by which we can get the real feedback from the operational fields. The allocation of funds to the States

and the Union Territories under the NREP is done on the basis of the criteria giving, as he has himself said, 75 per cent weightage to the number of agricultural workers and marginal farmers, and 25 per cent weightage to the incidence of poverty. The Working Group on the special programme for the rural development for the Seventh Plan has recommended for giving 50 per cent weightage to the number of agricultural labourers and 50 per cent weightage to the incidence of poverty. Now, this is the revised approach. More emphasis is being laid on the poverty element. The Hon. Member also wanted to know how these things are implemented.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA :

You will excuse me. I wanted to know one thing. About the community assets. So, you kindly tell me how many school buildings, wells have been constructed; how many kilometrage roads have been laid. Community centres and Panchayat Ghar in what number constructed? What about sewerage, drainage and surface drainage? These are community assets.

Second thing which I wanted to know is about the nutritional value. So many people were getting so many calories of food. How much are they getting now? But you are giving me the same old reply.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : That was also one of the points made by the Hon. Member. You wanted that more emphasis should be laid on the poverty element than on the marginal farmers and small farmers.

Now, a large number of assets have been created under the programme since 1981. They include social forestry works in 4.5 lakh hectares and plantation of 49.54 crore trees, construction of 0.52 lakh number of village tanks, minor irrigation works benefiting 9.13 lakh hectares, soil conservation works in 4.99 lakh hectares, 0.49 lakh number off drinking water sources, 4.35 kms of road both constructed and

[Shri Buta Singh]

well as improved and 2.06 lakh number of works in the category of schools, balwadis buildings, panchayat ghars, community centres etc.

For the benefit of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, we have done something, which the Hon. Member wanted to know separately. 4.40 lakh number of works were taken up for the benefit of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, a large number of which relates to the construction of houses for the member of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so that, they can be provided with better living conditions. The rural roads find an important place in the programme since it constitutes the vital aspect of rural economic infrastructure. The construction items like panchayat ghars, balwadis are also being taken up. Special emphasis is being given to the social forestry in view of the ecological requirements and from the current year, i.e. 1985-86 the percentage of funds for this earmarked sector has been raised from 10% to 20%. 10% of the funds earmarked for the works benefiting Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes though expenditure in this case has been 15% on an average from the report available.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Suppose you take any State, what are the figures for each district? You please give me those figures. I want to know how many schools have been constructed, how many wells have been dug. In U.P., for each district, a separate amount has been mentioned. It is happening in your district. I want to say that this is a very good suggestion. They are implementing it. You are getting loan. You are getting 50% share, directly to a particular district.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : It will be too much on my part to say what is the amount and figure for each tehsil and district. But I can give the figures

for Rajasthan States as a whole. The area covered in Rajasthan under the NREP from 1980-81 to 1981-85 is 30,971 hectares in which the trees planted are 277.57 lakh and drinking water wells are 2,196.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : What I want is in my district of Pali...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister will lay it on the Table of the House and you can refer to it.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Not only that I will write to the State Government to send a detailed report about each district in Rajasthan. *(Interruptions)* I will request the State Government to send a detailed report on the implementation of the NREP programme in each district to the Hon. Member and a Copy to me. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Sir, the Hon. Minister has said that 10 per cent of the total amount will be spent for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes people for having some community assets. Then you have said that 10 per cent will be spent for social forestry. What is this 10 per cent utilised for? How many scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have been benefited by putting wells, by putting a road, etc. We do not see any road there.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, precisely I will send a detailed picture of Rajasthan to Shri Daga Ji and then let him go to his district and measure the things. If he does not find them to be correct then he can come back and tell me and I will take it up with the State Government. *(Interruptions)* At the moment it will be possible for me to give detailed picture of each district.

Sir, he also said that in Uttar Pradesh it is being given district-wise whereas at other places it is being given to the State. Under NREP the allocation of funds is sent to the State

but under RLEGP projects are prepared district-wise. Uttar Pradesh submitted the scheme under RLEGP. Under NREP the allocation of funds is given to a State and not to a district.

(*Interruptions*)

Sir, the hon. Member wants to have the criteria changed for Rajasthan. I am sorry it is not possible. It is for the Planning Commission because this criterion is laid for the whole country. I have my friend here who has been fighting valiantly for having a separate plan for desert areas but it is for the Planning Commission to accord priorities. NREP being a national plan to be executed at a national level, there can not be a special treatment for a particular State. I have full sympathy with Dagaji. The conditions in Rajasthan are far difficult than most of the other States but at this moment it is the Planning Commission which can revise the norms.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to know whether the Rural Development Department will take up with the Planning Department the basis of sharing of funds for the NREP programme which at present is 50 : 50 so as to change it to 90 : 10 for the Centre and the State respectively. We have been fighting continuously for provision of funds in this proportion for the Desert Development Programme because in Rajasthan eleven districts are under desert and some are hilly or Adivasi areas. Will you request the Planning Commission in this regard ?

Besides, the basis of 75 per cent for marginal farmers and 25 per cent for landless labourers on the basis of incidence of poverty which has now been increased to 50 percent resulting in solution of the problem to a great extent, but the question arises that the definition of marginal farmers in the desert areas and in other States is the same. In the areas which are fully irrigated also, the same definition applies. Everywhere it is the same

definition, whether it is desert area or U.P. or Bihar for that matter. The means of irrigation in our desert area is wells which are 100 to 150 feet deep while in other States they are just 25, 30 or 50 feet deep. Besides canals are also a means of irrigation in those areas. I, therefore, request you to examine the definition of marginal and small farmers—which is the same everywhere—in the context of desert areas because as compared to other areas the production is one third or one fourth in desert areas and secondly, in the case of dry farming also there is difference between the conditions in Rajasthan and other areas as famines are a regular feature in this state under these circumstances the Rajasthan Government has suggested that in the desert areas the limit of land for Marginal farmer and Small farmer be fixed at 75 Bighas and 150 Bighas respectively. Would you examine it and take a decision ?

Thirdly, in respect of the NREP programmes, I would like to say that very good assets are being created and the works are proving very useful and the 'Panchayats' are doing very commendable work. Shri Daga said that only 25 per cent of the funds are being utilised, but I know that at some places even upto 90 per cent amount is being utilised and some 'Panchayats' are spending even more than that. The village 'Panchayat' constructs school buildings. I would like to know in this regard, that though there is provision for constructing primary schools under the NREP, there is no such provision for the construction of buildings for middle or secondary schools and whether during the Seventh Five Year Plan, apart from the primary school buildings, construction of middle school and higher secondary school buildings will also be undertaken ?

[*English*]

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Bangalore) : Sir, I would like to put only two or three questions and seek clarifications on that.

[Shri Chintamani Jena]

As far as implementation of the NREP scheme is concerned, I would like to know whether the amounts allotted under this scheme to the States are being passed on to the districts and blocks, and whether the programmes are being executed by the voluntary agencies. If so, how many voluntary agencies have worked in each of the States in the 6th Plan to execute the NREP schemes.

Though the intentions are very good, very pious, and the Government of India has allotted so much money, but what is actually happening in the field? In Orissa, for example, almost all the works are implemented through village committees. In the name of village committees, some middle men are making profits. How are these village committees constituted? They take two or three persons of their own, get some fake signatures and produce it before the B.D.O. and the BDO accepts it and thus in the name of a village committee, only one man is doing the work in the name of his brother, father or others and thus he takes up all the works within the gram panchayat as also the neighbouring gram panchayats. Thus, only one or two persons are benefited from the profits which are derived from the execution of these works. The provision is for implementation of this programme through village committees, and the procedure is that people of a particular village will assemble, they will elect or select one man as head of the village committee, he will go to the block and get the work order and implement it and after implementation, he will produce the account before that village committee. That is the procedure, but it has never been followed anywhere in the State.

As was pointed out by Shri Dnga, the contemplated permanent property under this programme is not being created. In some cases, permanent assets have been created, after a school building is constructed, or a bridge is constructed, who will maintain it? The

Union Government will give the responsibility to the State Government concerned, but the States like Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and others, have no adequate funds and because of constraint of resources, these permanent assets cannot be maintained and after 5-10 years, the entire thing will collapse.

What is the intention of the Government and what is the procedure for maintaining the permanent assets? About creation of assets, may I know if there is any special allocation to be made in the 7th Plan to the States for this? What happens is this. Suppose a bridge has been constructed, a causeway has been constructed or a school building has been constructed or a road is constructed in a particular year and if there is a high flood, the entire thing will be washed away. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether some arrangements could be made so that these States which are chronically flood-affected will be given much more funds to maintain these things. These are the questions I want the hon. Finance Minister to reply to.

Translation

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almorah): Mr. Speaker Sir, first of all I would complain to the hon. Minister that Uttar Pradesh is not getting its due share under the NREP. Keeping in view the population, poverty and the density of population, very little funds are being given to Uttar Pradesh. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Schemes of the States, for the year 1985-86, has been submitted to him and if so, the amount of funds he is going to allocate to Uttar Pradesh.

You give only one kg of foodgrains for one man-day. As there is bumper crop of wheat this year and the price has gone down considerably, labour is not available on such a low wage as the minimum wages are very much less and, therefore, there is enough

margin for the Panchayat people and other officers to indulge in making fake muster rolls and such other malpractices. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to at least increase the amount of foodgrains if not the rate of wages, so that in the same ratio on which foodgrains are provided at subsidized rates, the wages may also increase. We have a large stock of wheat with us and do you propose to increase the amount for labourers.

Shri Jain has raise a point about the need to make effort, for creation of permanent and durable assets. During the last four or five years we have been emphasizing the need for village roads and now they have been constructed in sufficient number. Now there is need to spend more funds on the infrastructure in rural areas like the village school building and hospital etc. Do you propose to increase the amount of material assistance to such districts where at present this assistance is only 40 to 50 per cent? In reply to my question about foodgrains you had said that in 1984-85, 49,536 tonnes of wheat had been allocated to Uttar Pradesh while only 36,000 tonnes were lifted and only 25,000 tonnes were distributed. What is the use of this. You are providing foodgrains for the Poverty Eradication Programme, but the States are not properly distributing them. Would you kindly make an arrangement for having at least monthly monitoring regarding this and keep a watch as to what was the share of the State, how much was lifted and how much of it was distributed to the workers and the people at the lower level? What mechanism are you going to create for this purpose?

The DRDA has become a mess. People from different departments come and sit there. MLAs and MPs have been appointed as its members but at times they do not even know about its meetings. The officers decide in their absence. The DRDA has now become a very big agency. Lot of funds are being used through it and it is the basis for the poverty Eradica-

tion Programme. Do you propose to appoint a people's representative as its chairman and increase the ratio of public representation in that proportion? Would you consider this suggestion?

We do not know anything as to what happens to the funds allocated for the development of infrastructure or for service charges pertaining to N.R.E.P. We have set apart of certain percentage for development of infrastructure and service charges. But I think it is being misused on a very large scale at the district level. There is need to check it and the amount should be spent for the purpose for which it is meant.

It is our fortune as well as misfortune that the Agriculture Ministry is a very big Ministry in itself. The Department of Rural Development has a great responsibility and keeping in view its heavy responsibility, there should be a separate Ministry for Rural Development. It is not possible for the Minister to keep full information regarding the working of this Ministry. You were asking something from Chandulal Chandrakarji, so I am pointing it out. There should be close monitoring to have proper knowledge about it as also about the utilization of the funds that you are allocating for this purpose.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : How did you come to know that we are talking about it?

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : From your reply to the questions asked by Shri Daga and Jain Saheb, it appeared to me that you were talking about it. Now every person and particularly every person in the village is concerned with this scheme. Outwardly it may look that it is a small work, but besides this, there are many other important works and programmes affecting the life of every person. It is very difficult to know about the practical difficulties with regard to N.R.E.P, R.L.E.G.P. and I.R.D.P. It

[Shri Harish Rawat]

is possible only when there is close monitoring at the Ministry level and upto Central level. You have said in your reply that you are proposing to have a close monitoring in this respect. I want that the monitoring system should be streamlined.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : You are a seasoned politician. You are also aware of the issue of the Centre-State relations. Even then if you put a question regarding this, then you know what the result will be. Taking all these into consideration we have to be very cautious and I have said this after very careful thought. Now Dagaji says that the Central Government should maintain the primary schools which have been constructed. Does he mean to say that the Central Government should take over the responsibility of the State Government and keep the newly created assets under their direct control. So, this is a very delicate matter.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : I do not mean to say this. The difficulty is that we have to reply to the people how many persons have been brought above the poverty line as a result of all these programmes. At that time it become national property and the national Government have to reply. The work of implementations is the responsibility of the States. Such huge sums are being given, but no result is forthcoming. You are also handicapped in this matter but whom should we ask about it ?

[English]

SHRI BUTA SINGH : This is a grey area.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : You should find out some solution in consultation with the Chief Ministers of States and others

I would like to put a last question regarding social forestry. I am not

putting this in question form but would like to draw your attention towards it. There are many schemes going on in the field of social forestry. Some schemes are running with the help of the world bank and the State Governments have their own schemes. It has been seen that when there are many schemes going on in the same field, there might be great scope for diversion of funds to other schemes. It happens at the State level. So when you have increased allocation of funds in this sector which is a welcome step, then at least you should see to it that when you allocate funds to the N.R.E.P. Sector, the states should not divert their contribution to be made in it. There is need to keep a watch in this respect.

In the end, I would like to bring one more point to the notice of the hon. Minister. At present the schemes which D.R.D.A. receives are not routed through the Development Blocks. At least, there should be clear guidelines in this respect that unless the scheme is routed through the block, the D.R.D.A. would not release funds and the schemes initiated at the department level should also be routed through the Blocks, so that there is a monitoring agency at the lowest level. May I know what you are going to do in this respect ?

[English]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : It should be passed from Gram Sabha level if any programme is to be effective.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, the hon. Minister will reply.

[Translation]

SHRI BUTA SINGH : As I have said in reply to Shri Daga, the suggestions given by Shri Viridhi Chander Jain are very good and I have full sympathy with him.

The norms which have been issued under N.R.E.P. are not meant for any

one State or any area of a State whether it is a desert area or a hilly area. It is not possible for us to change the norms. You have suggested that the Centre should share 90 per cent and the State 10 per cent of the cost of the project.

English

I have taken note, I will discuss with the Planning Commission.

[*Translation*]

Similarly you have said about the definition of the marginal farmer and the small farmer. The conditions are different there in comparison to therein other states. There is no doubt about it. Particularly, the expenditure on digging a well in a desert area of Rajasthan will be a thousand times more in comparison to the digging of a well in the plains of Punjab and Haryana. Even then it is not certain if water will be available or not or what type of water will be available. I am grateful to him that he has drawn our attention to the work done under the N.R.E.P.

He has said one thing about the primary school. There is no restriction from our side that only primary school should be constructed under it. It is the discretion of the State Government to construct primary school, middle school or secondary school with that fund. If the hon. Members desired we would write to the State Governments that it is the suggestion of the hon. Members that middle schools and secondary schools should also be constructed under it.

[*English*]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : My point is, there are some areas, which are permanent drought-hit areas. There also something to be done.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : And Jeenaji talks about permanent drought flood-affected areas.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Yes, our Rayalaseema is also the same thing.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : About Shri Jeenās queries, I will mention.

He asked about the voluntary agencies. As a matter of fact, the whole NREP is supposed to be an affair of Gram Panchayats which in itself is a voluntary agency. The principle of people's participation in the NREP is, the programme guidelines emphasise on the full involvement of the rural population in the implementation of the programme which is meant for their own benefit.

[*Translation*]

Just now about Panchayats Shri Virdhi Chander Jain has said that they should also be fully involved in this task.

[*English*]

The work to be taken up under the programme should be on the basis of felt needs of the people to be ascertained by holding a meeting in each Gram Sabha. I do not think that there can be a better participation of the voluntary organisations at the village level than the Gram Sabhas who know each and every individual of the village.

The people's representatives such as the hon. Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly are also represented in the D.R.D.As which are responsible for planning, co-ordinating and monitoring the programme at the district level and for formulating the annual action plan for the districts. Similarly the execution of works is to be done through the Panchayati Raj institutions which are again people's elected bodies and voluntary organisations. It is expected that the involvement of the Panchayat bodies will result in mobilisation of the local resources which can be utilised to improve the excess resources and the material content,

[Shri Buta Singh]

A very important question asked by the hon. Members is about the maintenance part of it. And Shri Rawat also questioned the five percent charges, which on administrative grounds the States are taking. They are also taken out of NREP allocations. This is for the administrative expenses at the block, district and panchayat levels.

Maintenance part is very important. I agree with the hon. Members that the State Governments should not be happy only at the creation of assets. They should also take up the maintenance aspect of it. This should not be taken as if this programme is somebody else's programme, about which they are not responsible. If it is not maintained, it gets dilapidated. I am trying to impress upon the Minister Incharge in each State that instead of *kucha* roads or temporary constructions, as far as possible *pucca* constructions should be made so that maintenance becomes very easy for the State Government. But here again I have to tell the hon. Members that maintenance cannot be taken up by the central agencies because the country is so vast. As I was the Minister of Transport, I know that even the maintenance of national highways is the charge and duty of the State Governments. Again I will write to the State Governments and convey the anxiety expressed by the hon. Members.

Shri Rawat wanted to know the allocation made to Uttar Pradesh under the NREP in UP the funds allocated were Rs. 3922 lakhs in the first and second half year of 1984-85. In this foodgrains are also given. About foodgrains I want to make one point. Some

of the States have a tendency to give to the public distribution system the foodgrains which are allocated under this Programme and they are not distributed to the workers who are engaged in this kind of activity. I am sorry to comment that in Uttar Pradesh full utilisation of foodgrains could not take place. But I will be writing to the hon. Chief Minister and the Minister concerned that in case they want more foodgrains, Govt. of India would have no problem. At the moment, we are in an easy position and we can give as much foodgrains as they want.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : My only grouse was that they were getting less than what was due to them.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Do you think any State Government will leave anything which is due to them? As a matter of fact, taking the overall picture, the entire economy and the resources available at our disposal, we are trying to secure as much as we can from the Planning Commission. But I can assure the hon. Members that this scheme is so useful that it will be continued with all the vigour at our command even in the Seventh Five Year Plan. This is what I can say at the moment.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House now stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11 A.M.

18.35 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till
Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday,
May 14, 1985/Valsakha 24,
1907 (Saka)*