

12. 14 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

I, therefore, strongly urge upon the Government to provide a new train by laying a new railway from the district headquarters of Azamgarh to Gusainganj via Atraulia-Basavari-Tanda for the development of these neglected area and in the wider public interest so that the people of these areas may have full advantage of the railway facilities and the Department of Railways may also earn profit.

(iv) Need to provide assistance to the people of Bihar, UP and Nepal affected by earthquake and floods

SHRI MADAN PANDEY (Gorakhpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it has been reported that the havoc created by the earthquake early in the morning of 21 August in the entire North Bihar and most parts of eastern Nepal claimed thousands of lives and caused a heavy loss of property worth crores of rupees. The irony is that these areas were already reeling under floods in rivers due to heavy rains in these parts. There is no doubt about the fact that the Central as well as the State Government paid immediate attention to this frightening situation and the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi accompanied by the Chief Minister of Bihar Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad visited the site of the incident immediately and took prompt action to provide immediate succour. But till now a real assessment of the loss of lives and property has been made and in view of the seriousness of the situation, there is a need to provide more assistance. It may also be pointed out here that the impact of earthquake has been a little less in eastern Uttar Pradesh as compared to the impact of earthquake in these affected areas, but the ferocity of floods completed the circle. The Ghaghara, Rapti, Kauni, Taraina, Gouri rivers in Uttar Pradesh caused damage to residential units in addition to the loss caused in their respective areas. The entire area right from Sahajanawa to Gorakhpur city in Gorakhpur district is looking like an ocean.

Therefore, while drawing the attention of the Government to this frightening situation, I request them immediately to get the actual loss assessed by the experts and provide appropriate earthquake and flood relief to the affected people. I also want that keeping in view the extensive damage caused by the earthquake in our neighbouring country, Nepal, the Government should take initiative to provide adequate relief to the affected people of Nepal through their Government.

[*English*]

(v) Need for comprehensive national policy on Indian languages

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR (Hamirpur) : Ever since independence was attained in 1947, the Union Government has not formulated any coherent and comprehensive National Policy on Languages, their promotion and recognition. While the Sahitya Akademi and the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, have been giving some impetus to the growth of Indian languages and their literature, yet the resistance of the Government to include any more languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution after Sindhi, has deprived many developing languages, like Manipuri, Konkani, Malyali, etc. which are recognised by Sahitya Akademi and other Pahari of Himachal Pradesh and Khasi in Meghalaya as also the seven major tribal languages pressing their claims for recognition by the Sahitya Akademi and inclusion in the 8th Schedule of their due status. The classical languages like Sanskrit, Pali, Persian and a widely spoken languages like Urdu find their future to be uncertain on account of occasional shift on emphasis on language study to other more lucrative subject groups in the educational system. The three language formula has been interpreted in many convenient ways by State Governments. Some resistance to Hindi still continues.

So, it is high time that a well defined coherent and comprehensive National Policy on Indian Languages is formulated by the Union Government in consultation

with State Governments and voluntary Association, championing the cause of regional and classical languages, the State Akademies and taking into confidence the writers and linguists working in these languages well before the launching of the 8th Plan.

I request the Government to take immediate steps for formulating such a policy so as to ensure its implementation during the 8th Plan, keeping in view the stipulation of Article 29 of the constitution of India guaranteeing the preservation and of each distinct languages, script and culture.

(vi) Need for urgent supply of pig iron and hard coke for foundry industry in West Bengal.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluboria) : The oldest Foundry Industry in the District of Howrah, with fifty thousand workers in more than three hundred factories are facing a chronic problem of acute shortage of pig-iron and coke, the principal raw materials, to run the Industry."

This foundry industry is one of the oldest in the country and had world-wide reputation for more than two and a half centuries. But they started facing shortage of raw materials since 1982-83. They use pig iron and coke as their main raw materials. Pig iron is supplied by the Steel Authority of India Ltd. During the last few years, SAIL has reduced the supply. The foundries in West Bengal need about 50,000 Metric tonnes of pig iron per year. But the supply was 39803 MT in 1981-82, 39643 MT in 1982-83, 29450 MT in 1983-84 and 3400 MT in 1984-85, 1720 MT in 1985-86, 1730 MT in 1986-87, 1696 MT in 1987-88 and no supply so far in 1988-89.

The supply of hard coke is also no better. The supply in 1987-88 was only 3000 tonne against the quota of 21,500 tonnes. While there is no supply in the current year.

In spite of repeated appeals, the situation has not improved, West Bengal is on

top in the advancement and growth of small scale industries in the country. The problem of foundry industries will have serious adverse impact on further growth in West Bengal.

I urge upon the Government to supply pig iron and hard coke to the foundries at Howrah immediately.

(vii) Need for extensive dredging of Brahmaputra to make the river navigable throughout their year.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA (Jorhat) : While nothing with pleasure the recent enactment of an amendment declaring the Brahmaputra from Sadiya to Dhubri as a national water-way, it is hoped that early effective steps would be taken to make the river navigable throughout the year by extensive dredging all along its course in Assam inasmuch as, during the period from November to March every year, the river becomes too shallow even for plying of small ferryboats. The gradual rising of the river-bed from Sadiya downward due to very heavy siltage occurring annually during the monsoon because of topographical changes in the wake of the Great Earthquake of 1950, is stated to be the root recurring floods and resultant erosion of its banks since then. It is, therefore, felt that extensive and regular dredging all along the main course of the Brahmaputra would result in considerably lessening the magnitude of flood-level. Such a course will also open up regular water transportation of foodstuff, tea and other commodities to and fro the North East, which presently is served mainly by road transport services at comparatively higher costs. Passenger traffic from one end of the region to the other will also be possible to be resumed, along the national water-way.

The Ministry of Surface Transport is, therefore, urged to arrange for early and extensive dredging of the Brahmaputra and undertake comprehensive exploitation of this great national water-way to ensure varied benefits, primarily to the people of North East region.