

- (vii) Need to assess the damage caused by floods in Brahmaputra and its tributaries in Assam and draw up short/long term schemes to rehabilitate the affected people.

SHRI ABDUL HAMID (Dhubri) : Five consecutive devastating floods in river Brahmaputra and its tributaries have caused havoc in Assam. Several villages were washed away due to erosion, thousands of villages were badly damaged, crops worth crores of rupees were destroyed, thousands of domestic animals perished, thousands and thousands of people were rendered homeless and took shelter in temporary camps or embankments. The Government of India sanctioned 27 crores of rupees to meet the expenditure on relief operations. But the minorities who suffered most as they generally live in low lying flood prone areas did not get the benefit. During the rescue operations, the areas inhabited by the minorities were very much neglected as a result of which many lives could not be saved. It is, therefore, prayed to the Central Government to be kind enough to constitute a high powered Central Committee to assess the actual damages caused to the victims and to draw up and implement short and long term scheme for rehabilitation of the affected people.

- (viii) Need to declare birth day of Netaji, Subhash Chander Bose as a 'National Holiday'

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : The Great Revolutionery **SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE**, is known as 'NETAJI' the pride of INDIA. He with his INA fought the British to earn Independence for India. He was President of INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS twice. He was born on 23rd January, 1897 at Cuttack. He was conferred the honour 'NETAJI' by THE FATHER of the NATION, **GANDHIJI**. It is the longstanding demand of the people at India that his birthday be declared as National Holiday. I would request Government to consider this just demand of the people to honour this great son of the soil.

12.23 hrs.

RAILWAY CLAIMS TRIBUNAL BILL AND METRO RAILWAYS (CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS) AMENDMENT BILL CONTD.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will now take up Items Nos. 12 and 13 together as per the List of Business, that is further discussion of the motion moved by the Railway Minister, on the Railway Claims Tribunal Bill and also Metro Railways (Construction of Works) Amendment Bill. Now, Mr. Tanti, is to continue his speech. I think he is not here. Then Mr. Narain Choubey is also not here. Then, Mr. Piyus Tiraky to speak.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY (Alipurduars) : Sir, the Railway Minister has brought forward a Bill for the establishment of Railway Claims Tribunal for speedy adjudication of claims. Sir, it looks to be good but I do not think it will serve any better. There are already so many cases pending before the Claims Commissioner. The claimants are moving here and there and knocking at the doors of all without any use because of litigations. The same thing is happening in regard to the payment also. They will have to spend much more than what they will get as compensation.

Sir, the Tribunal will consist of one Chairman, one Vice-Chairman and 33 Members, if I rightly remember, and the powers and position and the service conditions of the Chairman and Members of the Claims Tribunal are defined in the Bill itself. But, Sir, the Bill says that there will be a Tribunal which works in 19 Benches in different parts of the country. I do not know what is the financial impact of it; whether in all these 19 Benches the Chairman will be present or a delegated Member of that Tribunal will go there or some other person will be posted in these 19 Benches. The Minister has not so far elaborated it. He speaks of the period of appeal as 19 days. And this Claims Tribunal is not equally constituted as the civil court. So, the Claims Tribunal tries to place all the proceedings and findings before the civil court. The claims Tribunal's judgement