

are published in the papers daily as make one sad. I would urge the Hon. Minister that effective steps should be taken to check this evil immediately.

12.13 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the chair*]

[*English*]

- (iv) Demand for merger of all the four subsidiary General Insurance companies into one Corporation.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Paraji) : Sir, the General Insurance Company with four subsidiary companies, namely, National Insurance Company, New India Insurance Company, Oriental General Insurance Company and United India Insurance Company a total of 47 Regional Offices, 681 Divisional Offices and 2,032 Branch Offices. There is absolutely no need of four subsidiary companies with multiple offices when the entire business can well be entrusted to one Corporation. The agency system in the various general insurance companies has become a finely woven racket, which, instead of popularising the business, promotes the interest of the Inspectors who run the racket by appointing 'Benami' agents. According to General Insurance Company in 1984, an amount of over Rs. 25 crores was paid towards commission for the Agents. This amount can well be saved for the development of rural areas and also to make good the losses in the matter of Crop Insurance, which, in the initial stages is likely to meet rough weather.

I, therefore, urge upon the Hon. Finance Minister to take immediate steps to bring about the merger of all the four subsidiary General Insurance Companies into one and the only one General Insurance Corporation.

- (v) Demand for starting the Automatic Telephone Exchange in the new building at Tellicherry (Kerala).

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore) : Sir, the Tellicherry Telephone Exchange in the North Kerala is one of the largest manually operated Exchanges in South India with nearly 2,000 connections. It

is sad to note that this Exchange which is one of the first to be started by the Britishers along the West Coast is still lagging behind although giant strides have been made by our country in the field of telecommunication.

Once the headquarters of the entire West Coast, even today Tellicherry has a pivotal role in the trade and commerce activities in South India. An Auto-exchange is, therefore, essential for its development.

It is a paradox to note that land for this purpose was acquired some twenty years ago. After a long delay a five story building has now been constructed. However, contrary to all expectations of the people and promises of the department, inordinate delay is again seen in the installation of machinery. This needs looking into especially since the machinery had already been obtained and housed in a separate building by paying Rs. 2000/- per month as rent. Rent is also being paid for the private building in which the Tellicherry exchange is now housed. Hence any further delay will be an extravagance and against public interest.

I, therefore, urge upon the Ministry to take urgent steps to start the Auto-Exchange in the new building immediately since this will be in the better interest of the entire Malabar area.

[*Translation*]

- (vi) Demand for financial assistance to Bihar Government for providing relief to the flood-affected people in North Bihar.

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Burhi Gandak and the Ghagra rivers are in spate due to heavy rains in the north Bihar. Lakhs of people living in Siwan, Gopalganj, eastern and western Champaran of north Bihar have been affected by the floods. I myself visited those places and found that thousands of villages of Kuchaikot, Baikundpur, Majha, Baroli and Gopalganj blocks have been marooned by the flood waters and thousands of houses have been submerged in the river Ganga due to floods and soil erosion. Besides, property, livestock and crops have been washed away. The same condition obtains in all the above-mentioned