

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 sub-merged 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

districts. The Gopalganj district headquarters is also facing the threat of erosion because of Burhi Gandak river which has reached a place only three kms from there. No sufficient relief work has been provided by the Bihar Government. The main reason is that not sufficient amount is there in the relief fund of the State Government.

I would, therefore, like to request the Government that Central assistance may be provided to the people affected by the floods and soil erosion to the above district.

(vii) Demand for reconsidering the decision to shift Muzaffarpur Carpet Weaving Training Centre to Gaya.

SHRI R. S. KHIRHAR (Sitamarhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Central Government is adamant to shift the Muzaffarpur Carpet Weaving Training Centre to Gaya. If this is done, thousands of workers and trainees will be rendered unemployed. Already there is lack of industries in north Bihar with the result that the number of educated and uneducated unemployed is increasing day-by-day.

The Central Government should reconsider its decision in the public interest under such circumstances.

(viii) Demand for setting up of agro-based cottage industries specially in Punjab to create employment opportunities for the rural youth.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Sangrur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in spite of the present political and law and order situation in Punjab, the State has been the major contributor this year also to the Central Foodgrains Stock. It has contributed 65 per cent foodgrains. Last year, 60 lakh tonnes of wheat was procured from Punjab and this year this figure is likely to go up to 70 lakh tonnes.

Agriculture is becoming unremunerative industry in the country. The cost of production is increasing day-by-day. The farmer has

suffered cumulative loss to the tune of Rs. 45,000 crores from 1971 to 1981. Only in Punjab, the net income of a farmer has fallen to only Rs. 54 per hectare from Rs. 426 per hectare between 1971-81.

I would urge the Government to pay timely attention towards this. I would suggest that encouragement should be given for the setting up of cottage industries based on agricultural produce which require less capital and more labour.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for most of the people in Punjab but at present a number of youths are unemployed there. The agriculture has absorbed people to the maximum and the rest are discontent due to unemployment. If encouragement is given for the setting up of cottage industries based on agricultural produce, these youths may be able to earn their livelihood and save the country from the danger of extinction of cottage industries.

I would request the Government to get those industries identified immediately by the scientists and technologists which can be established with agricultural products and make arrangement for imparting training to them so that the unemployed youths could set up cottage industries on their own after undergoing training and earn their livelihood and make the agriculture a remunerative industry.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now Shri Buta Singh—item No 6. We can take up Motion under Rule 388.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (S. BUTA SINGH) : The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is taking up the question whether the Calling Attention will be taken up first, or the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Buta Singh, you can move item No. 6. Calling Attention has been fixed only at 12.30 p.m.