

[Shri Zainul Basher]

important role in respect of communication in linking big cities of the country and the cities of Western region of Uttar Pradesh with the cities near Varanasi. The said exchange gives priority to the calls of Varanasi city only.

It has been proposed to set up an electronic telephone exchange in Ghazipur city. Only after the completion of the said exchange, Ghazipur can get self-dialling service for Varanasi and other big cities. This exchange should be set up as early as possible. There should be direct link between Ghazipur and Varanasi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Mau, Azamgarh, Ballia and Gorakhpur.

No serious effort is being made for the expansion of telephone services in the Varanasi region. There is a proposal for setting up telephone exchanges at a number of places. But it has not been cleared. It has come to my knowledge that there is a shortage of spare parts, cables and instruments in that region, with the result that the Department is not able to take up the proposed new work and other works, like repair, etc., although they want to undertake this work.

I would, therefore, request the Minister of communications to pay immediate attention to the above-mentioned problems and bring comprehensive improvements in the telephone system in the Varanasi region of eastern Uttar Pradesh.

(viii) **Need to electrify railway line between Bangalore and Jolarpet**

** DR. V. VENKATESH (Kolar) : The railway route between Bangalore and Madras is a very high density line. Several thousands of persons travel on this route everyday. But, unfortunately, this route has not been electrified so far. The portion of the route which is in Tamil Nadu has been electrified long ago. This route is between Madras and Jolarpet. The other portion of the route i.e. between Jolarpet and Bangalore has

been given step-motherly treatment. In spite of long pending demand, no progress has been made to electrify this part of the railway line. Electrification of this line will be a boon to the people of Bangalore, Bangarpet and Jolarpet as all of them are very popular places. It will also help the employees of BGML, BHEL and the merchant community of Kolar District.

I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to take steps for the electrification of the railway route between Bangalore and Jolarpet immediately.

12.20 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE :
DISAPPROVAL OF COAL MINES
NATIONALISATION LAWS
(AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1986
AND
COAL MINES NATIONALISATION
LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL
1986—*Contd.*

[*Translation*]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, yesterday, during the course of discussion on the Coal Mines Nationalisation Laws (Amendment) Bill I was saying that the bureaucrats had deliberately left some loopholes in this Bill so that they might be in a position to show some favour to these private companies and thereby these companies might also be able to have monetary gains from the Government. Such loopholes have been left not only in this Bill but in every legislation. Due to this, the proprietors of the private companies take up the matters with the courts and obtain decrees against the Government from there. In the process, they claim a handsome amount from the Government. This happens everywhere. Therefore, the Government should remain particularly cautious in this regard. These bureaucrats manage to leave loopholes in each and

** The Speech was originally delivered in Kannada.

every legislation enacted by the Government from time to time. Unless these are studied thoroughly, the private owners will continue to obtain decrees against the Government and claim large amounts of money from them as compensation and you will not be able to contain this trend. Therefore, the hon. Minister should pay special attention in this respect.

The Government had first nationalised coal mines in 1972. Subsequently, another legislation was enacted in 1973 and finally the Coal Mines Nationalisation (Amendment) Act was fully enforced in 1976. But the Government had asked these companies to look after the management of these companies during the period 1972 to 1976 and for that the companies are now demanding money, a part of which they have already received as expenses. The Government have provided them loans equal to the amount they are demanding for that period and with that money the companies could be run because they had no money with them. In this way all these companies were run with the Government money. They have also become entitled to claim compensation for the stock that had piled up there. The reason was that the Government had not interpreted the word 'mines' in the legislation as to which of the items will be included in it and how other provisions will be made. They are taking advantage of this lacuna and are demanding compensation. That is why you have brought this amending Bill. You say that it has already been provided in the definition that the stocks with the mines companies should be included in it. But now you are realizing that all these provisions were included in the compensation that you had fixed at that time. However, the Government was involved in litigation for 13 years and had to spend money unnecessarily. At least the Government should recover the money so spent from the Secretary or the Officer for whose mistake or as a result of the loophole left by whom they have to suffer such a heavy loss. He must be penalised. Had there not been a loophole in the Act, the Government would not

have dragged itself in litigation in the Supreme Court and spent lakhs of rupees unnecessarily. It is squarely the mistake of those officers as a result of which the Government had to suffer such a huge loss. The Government should categorically state as to what they are going to do in this matter and what action they are contemplating against those officers who left a lacuna in the legislation deliberately and caused loss of revenue to the Government. This matter needs special attention. If you could get the matter investigated thoroughly, you would find that these bureaucrats remain in league with the owners of the private companies and after retirement join these companies as top executives on high salaries. So, naturally, they are considerate to the owners of those private companies rather than to the Government. The Government should be careful in this respect.

Now, I want to draw your attention towards the Statement of Objects and Reasons of this Bill which says :

[English]

"With the commencement of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Act, 1976 on 29.4.1976 carrying on of coal mining operation or leasing for mining coal by any private party were prohibited."

[Translation]

When you have totally prohibited carrying on of coal mining operation or leasing for mining coal by any private party through the legislation of 1976, then I would like to know how people are mining the coal illegally under the very shelter of the Coal India and Bharat Cooking Coal, the companies running under the Government control? According to my information, they have mined lakhs of tonnes of coal and are indulging in its smuggling and illegal selling at various places. Some people call them 'Mafia' and some others know them by

[Shri Giridhari LAL Vyas]

some other name but they are running their business all right.

These people are indulging in these activities under the very nose of the Government and are, thus, earning crores of rupees. The Central Government are merely watching them and are not taking any action against them. On an earlier occasion, you had said that Mafia gangs were active in West Bengal and Bihar. They are indulging in this illegal mining and smuggling of goods worth crores of rupees. Can't the Central Government even now take any action against them? Is the present machinery of the Government, the protection force, on which crores of rupees are being spent not capable enough to apprehend such persons and take legal actions against them? I fail to understand—why you do not make such a provision. They are extracting huge quantities of coal illegally and are smuggling it to various places. Earlier also, I had said that the black gold was smuggled to Bangladesh, Nepal and other countries. Have you evolved some new arrangement to curb this smuggling?

I would like to draw your attention to one more point. It says :—

[English]

Thus, Section 4 (2) of the Coking Coal Act and section 3 (2) of the Coal Mines Act became redundant and were omitted with effect from 29.4.1976.

[Translation]

You have made these legislations redundant and after that added saving clause to it.

[English]

With a saving clause to protect action, if any, taken under the existing provisions.

[Translation]

It means that you have put this saving clause in order to save your big officials

and to cover up their misdeeds of 1976 and thereabout. It is evidently clear how the officials cheat you and serve their own ends. Your officials have managed to get an Act passed by the Parliament to protect themselves in the same way as the President of Bangladesh and the President of Pakistan got a legislation enacted by their respective Parliaments to protect themselves. Having included this clause, you cannot take any action against them. So, you are trying to save those officials. Today every country of the world is after this Black Gold but here this Department had to suffer a loss of Rs. 700 crores. India is the only country which had to suffer such a huge loss. There cannot be a worse mismanagement than this. You must make efforts to offset this loss so that we can lead the country towards prosperity. By doing so, we can generate more power and set up more industries and can thus make the country prosperous. Persons responsible for this loss should also be dealt with severely and an enquiry should be ordered into it. So, there is an urgent need to pay attention to all these aspects.

I have seen that many big official like Chairmen and Directors of Public Sector Undertakings are involved in it. They live like princes of olden times and indulge in lavish spending and mismanagement. If the persons who come under the definition of a public servant and all the public workers start adopting lifestyles of Princes and misusing the public funds there cannot be a thing worse than this. Therefore, there is a need to look into all these aspects.

Similarly, part (c) of the Objects and Reasons says :

[English]

“(c) Section 25 of both the Acts was amended so as to clarify that any amount in excess of payment over receipts in the statement of accounts prepared by the Coal companies shall be deemed to be the amount advanced by the Central Government or the Custodian.”

[Translation]

You should also try to go into the spirit behind it. These companies are the custodians of the money advanced by you. You have made a provision in it under which if the officials of any of the companies have done anything wrong or if they have misappropriated the public funds, the same can be regularised or the money so misappropriated can be treated as an advance and no action need be taken against such officials, but I feel that this is a serious lacuna in the Bill. You must give it a thought.

The hon. Minister is a very learned person, has a good knowledge of law and also understands other things well and if an effort is made to save the officials under his leadership by keeping the lacuna, such as the saving clause, then it is bound to result in mismanagement. We have every hope that he will not let such lacuna to creep into the system.

Likewise, part (d) says :

[English]

“(d) Section 26 of both the Acts was also amended to empower the Commissioner of Payments to make apportionment of the amount among the various owners on the basis of the highest annual production in the relevant coal mines during the last 3 years immediately preceding the appointed day.”

[Translation]

You are equipping the Commissioner with such sweeping powers such as making huge payments to the mine owners. The submission that I want to make in this regard is that your officials might have conducted some enquiry at the time of nationalisation of mines as to how much compensation was to be made to the owners. Now you are empowering the Commissioner to make an enquiry regarding the amount of compensation to be paid to the mine owners. I think it would be very ridiculous. Empowering

the Commissioner again will result in further ambiguities. On the one hand, you endeavour to remove ambiguity from the existing Act and on the other you are allowing more ambiguities to creep in. You should pay special attention to it, otherwise it will result in more losses to the Government to Coal India and its subsidiary companies which are under the Central Government and are already running in loss. I do hope that the hon. Minister will give it a serious thought and will take necessary steps in this direction.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) :
Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is not much to speak on this Bill. The hon. Minister is a distinguished writer and a scholar. I would like to quote from his own article. There is a famous saying, “Evil association must bring its impress”. If one enters a coal cell, one is bound to turn blackish. But, in the present case, the money invested in the coal industry belongs to the poor people. If someone squander it, it obviously pinches us. The hon. Minister has himself admitted that it has incurred heavy losses. I shall read out the summary of the Article written by the hon. Minister. The Members sitting in this House should hang their heads on reading how these companies are run, who manages them and what drove them to bring forward this Bill. The hon. Minister should tell us for how long this litigation in this case was dragged and how much money was spent by the Government to defend themselves? Why this Bill has been brought forward so late? You can say that the Bill had to be brought forward in the wake of the Supreme Court Judgement but before that the Government might have gone to the High Court or they might have filed a civil suit. The Government at least should tell how much expenses were incurred on this litigation. The Government should come out with a figure as to how much money which is taken from the poor peoples’ pockets was spent in this process before this Bill was introduced. Think

[Shri Mool Chand Daga]

for a moment how much was the price of coal ten years ago and by how much it has increased today. The price differential will certainly pinch you a lot, the price has been raised seven times. That article says :—

[English]

“In the last 13 years of nationalisation, we have invested about Rs. 6000 crores of public funds in the coal sector. Although the investment has increased more than 100 fold, production has barely doubled—going up from 77 mt. to 154 mt. At the same time, the wage rate has increased from Rs. 16 per day to approximately Rs. 98 per day or about Rs. 2400 per month. On the other hand, the output per manshift (OMS) in the underground mines has not only not increased but has actually gone down from 0.54 tonne to 0.52 tonnes during this period.”

[Translation]

The article is written by Shri Sathe. Now he will tell us how much are the cumulative losses after investment. You yourself have stated this in your statement. The price of coal as on 1.4.1974 was Rs. 37.50 per tonne whereas the price as on January 9, 1986 stood Rs. 210 per tonne. You yourself can notice the difference between Rs. 37 and Rs. 210. What has been the quantum of loss? The loss of production during one year is Rs. 1300 crores. It goes to the credit of Shri Sathe that he has done some plain speaking. We say that ‘mafia gangs’ are active there. What is that ‘mafia’ and can not you eliminate such gangs in Bihar? The Government has proved to be a total failure. There are leaders in mafia gangs and they are also participate in trade union activity (*Interruptions*)... It has become their profession to earn money in this way.....(*Interruptions*) What type of donations they take? They run collieries in a way as if there is no Government and the members from both

the sides support them in raising the prices of coal. But he has put the facts very plainly.

[English]

“Coal production would have been still higher but for the inhibiting factors—like wild-cat strikes, activity of the mafia of politicians and gangsters, lack of interest and cooperation on the part of the State Governments which continue to plague the coal industry particularly in the Bihar and West Bengal coalfield.”

[Translation]

What do these facts point to? Sometimes we support the labourers and sometimes we say that machinery is not available. The Government have invested Rs. 6000 crores and the total losses are to the tune of Rs. 1300 crores. The situation compels anybody to think why it is so? The production is not one of profit earning. The R.B.I. got an enquiry conducted into the matter through the C.B.I. but the guilty person managed to leave the country. Will Shri Sathe tell us the names of the persons whom he got convicted and the method by means of which these gangsters could be convicted? He should give us the figure as to how many persons have been put behind the bars. Hon. Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh has ordered raids on Income Tax Officers. Has there been any raids conducted on these people or has some enquiries been ordered against them? Every time, the same reply is given, that the enquiry is going on. Enquiry has been completed all right, but what has been the outcome? We are fed up with the enquiries because that person still managed to flee the country. I cannot name him before I give a due notice for it. Now if I say some thing, Shri Kashyap will tell me the rule that.

[English]

You cannot say about any person who is not present in the House.

[Translation]

I cannot reveal his name. They are such high ranked officers. God only knows whether they are Indians or from an enemy country. They want to destroy our country and till now nothing has been done in this matter. I want to tell you :

[English]

“Since nationalisation in 1972, coaking coal price have increased by 700 per cent and non-coaking coal by 900 per cent.”

[Translation]

Is this the way any department should function ? If Shri Sathe could employ me and give me some powers, I would tell him what could have been done. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are ringing the bell. Let me tell you :

[English]

“Massive dose of investment of coal industry did not result in commensurate increase in production. Productivity in coal mines in India is comparatively low even with that in most of developing countries. There is vast unutilised capacity as well as surplus labour.

[Translation]

One can visualise the Indian character in the State of affairs in which the coal mines are.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : I have read the article by Shri Tiwari also.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : That you must have read. I have also read it. It is the duty of a leader to expose such things. If the present situation continues and if there are no returns even after such a heavy investment and a commodity like coal becomes so costly, what will be our fate ? Coal does not reach some places

and non-availability of coal causes shortage in generation of electricity which in turn hampers transportation also at some places. There is theft of electricity also. The people, the Union Cabinet and we the Members of Parliament can wash our hands off by saying that it is a State Subject and that it will run like that. We should all sit together and think over it. This is not the duty of the State alone but of 76 crore people of this country out of which 40 crores are poor. You have shouldered this responsibility but who will carry it out ? What I want to say is that many enquiries have been conducted but I do not know who have been punished. Mr. Chairman, Sir, besides the increase in coal prices, administrative cost also increases. The participation of labour in the management is not genuine as the members of mafia gangs manage to enter as representatives of the workers in the management. I do not want to go into the deeds in which they indulge because it will be more painful. The hon. Minister may please inform us as to who will make payment of the litigation cost in respect of coal mines for which you are going to make a provision. Some lacuna has been left in the Bill at the drafting stage. I have been emphasizing time and again that it should be referred to a committee which should scrutinize the legislation before it is introduced in the House, otherwise some lacuna is bound to remain in it. Mr. Chairman is ringing the bell repeatedly to push through the Bill hurriedly. On an earlier occasion also, a Bill was pushed through hurriedly, but later on, the Government had to beat a hasty retreat. So, will you please tell us what had been the cost of litigation ? We do not have the file, otherwise we would have checked the amount paid. I have not read the judgement also and, therefore, I would like to know who is responsible for it. When this Bill relating to coal was introduced, we were told that its scope was very limited. One thing that I want to say is that it is all right that you can transfer the employees anywhere you like but you must consider the representation of an employer whether you accept it or reject it. The amendment that I have given is also related to

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this. The second amendment which I have given is to incorporate the words 'interest', 'title' and 'complete ownership', etc. so that there is no lacuna left in the Bill. If you find them worthwhile, you can add them, though you know better being an experienced hand.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are repeatedly asking me to take my seat. I want to obey you but I am of the view that certain changes should be made in it and strict and honest officers should be deployed there. It should also be ensured that they do not fall prey to corruption otherwise this effort will be of no avail.

[English]

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour) : Sir, after nationalisation of Coal, the way Coal Industry has been run by the Government perhaps gives us a classic example of how to mismanage an industry thereby giving the Public Sector a bad name. When the Coal-mines were nationalised, one of the objects was to see that the coal prices are not arbitrarily raised ; that workers are paid properly because they were being very much exploited in the coal-mines and also to see that the mining is not being done in an un-planned fashion so that much of the coal deposits of the country remain in a position that they cannot be mined afterwards, which is what the private coal-mine owners were doing previously. While the workers' wages have increased, I do not know to what extent the amount Rs. 98 which Mr. Sathe says that a worker gets per day; how much goes to the workers ; how much goes to the persons contractors and all that they engage and who brings the workers and has some kind of a feudal sway over the workers.

Sir, there is a mafia in the coal belt. They not only deal with the coal after it has been mined ; they not only see to it that illegal mining goes on but they also have a share of the workers' wages. Unfortunately, the Government, although they are fully aware of these evils which are going on in the coalmines, have done

nothing to tackle them. They have also not planned the mining operations in such a way that the mines do not become unusable or the coal deposits remain in a position so that they cannot be mined any more—which is what the previous private owners of the mines were doing. In fact, Government is giving quotas on coalmines for production to fulfil which the mine-managers are indulging in depra-dation of coalmines. They are even taking away the pillars which hold the mine-roof thereby making it impossible to go in far further mining in various other horizons where mining is possible in the uderground mines or making it more expensive. And the Government has no way of checking that, no way of planning and seeing that this kind of mining is not done. This is very harmful to the country, to national interests. But unfortunately the Government has no mind to protect the national interests, they have no plans to do it.

I had occasion to visit a mine which is an opencast mine near Ramgarh in Bihar in January, 1984. I will tell you about it. That will show how the Government plans mining. This mine was planned with Russian help so that mining is done in such a fashion that less of coal is lost in the process of mining. It is a very good mine which has been opened. But I saw huge stacks of coal lying there and I asked them, "Why do you have such big stacks of coal here ?" They said, "We have got one million tonnes of coal stocks here". I asked them, "Why ?" and they said, "The railway line which was to come here two years ago has not come yet and, therefore, the coal cannot be transported by railway ; only a few lorries can come and the road is very bad; the lorries come and take some coal, but most of the coal which is being mined here is stacked". All the equipment are there and people have been engaged ; they, go on mining. They said that one day the whole thing might go up in flames. This is what the engi-neers told me ; "The whole thing may catch fire and go up in flames and there is nothing we can do about it". So, this is a

total lack of coordination in planning in the Government. Whether it is the fault of the Coal Department or of the Railways, it is the fault of the Government that national resources are put in such a jeopardy and wasted. The coal has been mined two years ago, but it is still lying in the ithead...

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : Which place is that ?

SHRI AMAL DATTA : I can give you. It starts with 'Raj'. It is near Ramgarh, about 20 kms. from Ramgarh. I do not know whether the railway line has come now. This was the position in January, 1984. This is the way how coordination between the Railways and the Coal Department takes place. Both are government undertakings, after all and they must be able to have coordination between them. What happens is this. The thermal power stations are all crying that they are sent something in the name of coal where 20 per cent or 30 per cent is not coal at all, it is broken stones, it is even chunks of stone. How does this happen ? Because they do not have proper screening mechanism in the coalmines. Before they load the coal destined for power stations, it is their duty, as anywhere else in the world, the coalmines would have sifted the coal, screened the coal, in such a fashion as to take out the stones, big lumps and all foreign material. I am not saying that you wash it. The washeries which they should have established, have not yet been established. That is one big lacuna in their planning and implementation. Nevertheless, this could have been done by simply putting a screening mechanism there in the pitheads before loading the coal on for power stations. Now, what is happening ? The Thermal Power Stations are paying for not only coal, but for 20% of stone also. They are paying freight for it and the Railways which are hardput to carry coal—they do not have enough capacity—are carrying 20% of foreign material along with coal.

You will be surprised to know that

most of the loading points in the collieries have no way of weighing how much coal they are loading on rakes. They have no way of weighing. When I asked them as to what is the cost, they said it may be 10 lakhs, it may be 15 lakhs. That is what a weighing machine is going to cost. They don't instal even that. They go on guess work. They charge the price and the railways charge freight to the ultimate consignee on the basis of that guess work. How much goes there, nobody knows. How much is pilfered on the way, nobody knows. It is only when a consignee says that practically nothing has come, or a wagon has come half empty, they appoint somebody to see how much has been the declared weight—declared weight is nothing, it is a guess work—and how much has actually reached.

You will also be surprised to know that when these collieries put the coal in dump, they have no mechanism to protect them. In a coal belt when one moves around, one will find that people are at liberty to take away the coal whenever they like. Moreover, the coal which is supplied to the power stations, or for that matter to other Government undertakings, is the worst quality of coal. Whereas, the private entrepreneurs who buy coal, who send their own people and bribe the colliery managers, ultimately get the best coal. Is it for subsidising private industry that the coal industry has been nationalised ? Is it to see that the public sector gets the worst coal ?

What is the effect of sending all these stones to the Thermal Power Stations ? Not only they are paying more price for coal, the boilers get damaged, the work stops, electricity generation stops and people suffer. It is all because these people for their own advantage will not put the screening mechanism and will not weigh. This is only one aspect. I cannot elaborate on all the evils of the coal industry today. This is only one aspect on which I have some personal knowledge and I am speaking on that basis.

I have visited some coal mines which

[Shri Amal Datta]

are underground mines. I was surprised to see that not one manager, goes down to see what is happening. Not only I have seen, but I have enquired from the labourers there and outside from the unions. The management people never go down to see what is happening in the bits. They never go down. Why is this state of affairs allowed by the Government? Can they not put a check to see whether people are going there? What is their job? The job of an Assistant Manager is to go there.

Even before nationalisation I had been there. Private owners at least used to make sure that managers also go down there to see what kind of work is going on. Now nothing is being done to monitor the work of the management.

Then I come to mechanisation. They all talk about mechanisation and production. They have done some mechanisation in the open cast queries. I am more interested in the deeper underground mining. They have brought a machine which is called a long-wall machine. It is supposed to be self-operating on a hydraulic system. It is about 60' long machine, moves on hydraulic pressure and cuts the coal. You will be surprised to know that so many machines have been purchased and installed, but none of them work. None of these machines work because they have not understood the working—whether it will work in this country or not, what is suitable for this country. They have cared too hoots for that. Whatever has been offered, I suppose some people who have been making some arrangements got whatever kick back they could get and they have got that kind of a machine. They have not even seen whether our engineers are well versed in the working of this machine. So, the mechanisation has failed not because of workers recalcitrance, but because of the management's dishonesty and the Government's indifference.

13.00 hrs.

Sir, do you know how the workers are

being cheated? There is an occupational disease called pneumoconiosis from which the miners suffer from. Coal particles go into the lungs of the miners and cause this occupational disease. If it is recognised as an occupational disease then that person has to be given compensation. Now all the hospitals will always say it is not pneumoconiosis but it is tuberculosis and that is not an occupational disease. That is how thousands of workers are allowed to die without compensation by cheating them in this fashion. Government should be ashamed that this is happening on the Government's directive.

13 01 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch
till Fourteen of the Clock.*

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at
Five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.*

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*Translation*]

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD (Bhagalpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, congratulations. We wish you a happy married life.

[*English*]

What a wonderful difference we find in you after your coming back.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I thank all the Members.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : Our custom is not only to thank, but we should also be provided with sweets.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I request all my friends to come to the Reception on 3rd December at 25 Tuglaq Road.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIIRAGI (Mandsaur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you may speak here as much as you like, thereafter you may not be able to speak.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar) : Mr. Bairagi, why are you weighing everything on the basis of your own experience.

14.06 hrs.

DISCUSSION RE. SITUATION
ARISING OUT OF FLOODS AND
DROUGHT IN VARIOUS PARTS
OF THE COUNTRY

[*English*]

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad) : Sir, I rise to raise a debate on the natural calamities under Rule 193.

This is not the first time that we have been discussing this subject. In each Session, for the last few years, this subject has been coming up for discussion. Today, we feel that the spectre of famine and drought is haunting this country. In several States, including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, etc., either there had been severe floods or drought conditions are prevailing there now. The calamity of floods and droughts sometimes so intermingles that in the same State that too in the same part of the State, there are floods and parallel to that, there is a drought condition. This has happened in Andhra Pradesh and this is so in other parts of the country.

We have to live with this problem even after 40 years of our Independence and it seems to me that we have not been able to control floods and other natural calamities and we are subject to the

vicarities of monsoon, thus suffering colossal loss in human life as well as in property. While on the one hand, we are constructing projects and several other works, on the other, there is a process of destruction requiring reconstruction. So, this process of construction, destruction and reconstruction is going on for the last 40 years intermittently.

Now, who is responsible for all this ? I will come to this question later when I am going to discuss the long term measures which are required to control floods and drought situation in the country. But I would like to dwell at length on the natural calamity which occurred in my own State, Andhra Pradesh. Our State has witnessed the worst floods in August. In the recorded history of 133 years, of river Godavari there was never such a big calamity in which there was not only loss of human life—about 170 people died—but several cattle also perished and quite a large number of persons were injured. And loss to property was colossal. As far as irrigation sector is concerned, the embankments, the drainage system, the whole irrigation system had gone out of gear during these floods. Sir, the damage was so colossal that the floods which were witnessed in Godavari which had come to be known as the River of Sorrow, was so much that it over-flowed to the level of about 22 feet above the crest level of the old Dowaleswaram Anicut. The flood discharged was about 35 lakh cusecs, and all our embankments on Godavari were designed only for 30 lakh cusecs. In the length of about 500 kms., the embankments over-flowed at several places breaching at several places.

Now, Sir, with this being the calamity, what is the assessment that had been made by the Central team and what is the assistance given by the Central Government ? Sir, we are grateful the timely help which was rendered by the Prime Minister when he visited on the 11th of August and had three hour aerial survey of the flood affected area and