

Yashpal Singh, Shri

Zainal Abedin, Shri

Yazdani, Dr. Golam

Zainul Basher, Shri

Yogesh, Shri Yogehswar Prasad

Noes: Nil

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: **Subject to correction, the result of the division is:

Ayes: 347

Noes: Nil

The Motion was adopted.

The motion is carried by a majority of the total membership of the House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.

The Bill, as amended, is passed by the requisite majority, in accordance with the provisions of Article 368 of the Constitution.

16.16 hrs.

[English]

DISCUSSION RE: SITUATION ARISING OUT OF NATURAL CALAMITIES WITH PARTICULAR REFERNCE TO DROUGHT, FLOODS AND CYCLONE

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up discussion under Rule 193 regarding situation arising out of the natural calamities with particular reference to drought, floods and cyclone for which two hours are available.

As agreed to in the Business Advisory

Committee on 23rd November, 1987, the initiator of the discussion will be given 20 minutes and other Members 10 minutes each. The smaller groups with two members will be given the option to participate in this discussion or in the discussion on rise in prices of essential commodities which is to be held on Thursday, the 26th November, 1987.

I shall impress upon the Members to strictly adhere to the time allowed. Any Member who exceeds the time will not be allowed to go on record.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Guwahati): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to raise a discussion under Rule 193 on the situation arising out of the natural calamities, with particular reference to drought, floods and cyclone. Though the discussion encompasses natural calamities with particular reference to drought, floods and cyclone, I will confine myself to floods alone for two reasons.

16.19 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH RATH *in the Chair*]

Firstly, the time at my disposal will not permit me to discuss all the natural calamities and secondly, I feel that cyclone and drought may be discussed by those members who have first hand information on these natural calamities.

** The following Members also recorded their votes for AYES:

Sarvashree Gurudas Kamat, Radhakanta Digal, U.H. Patel, Prabhu Lal Rawat, G.G Swell Mohan Lal Jhikram G.S. Basavaraju Dal Chander Jain M.Y. Ghorpade, Dr Datta Samant, Shri Ram Pujan Patel, Shri V.S. Krishna Iyer, Shri C. Janga Reddy and Shrimati Usha Rani Tomar.

Every year, Assam is ravaged by floods and this time we had the unprecedented floods both in its dimension and in its numbers. Within a short span of couple of months, we had five floods one after another and the dimension was something which is difficult to describe. Even today, after the flood waters had receded more than two months back, there are still areas where people have not been able to go back.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, some order should be maintained in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please!

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Even today, after more than two months have elapsed since the last flood, there are areas where people have not been able to go back to their old homes. People have not been able to shift. During the floods, there were areas where was impossible even to drop food as the entire area was totally submerged.

I will give certain figures for the benefit of the hon. Minister, who already has these figures at his disposal. But I think I must share this information with the House itself. In a population of hardly two crores in Assam, the five floods have affected a population of 52.12 lakhs. That means more than one-fourth of the population was affected by the floods. An area of 12,932 square miles was inundated; 309653 houses were damaged; livestock numbering about one lakh was lost; 7011 villages were affected and you can imagine the plight of our farmers when the total crop area damaged was to the extent of 5.69 lakh hectares. 95 human lives were also lost during these floods. Till the third flood, we had 87 relief camps. I could not get hold of the figures relating to the last two floods. So this figure of camps is only upto the third flood.

The entire burden of the Brahmaputra floods has to be borne by the State of Assam. As you know, Brahmaputra is the mightiest of all the rivers in this country and in fact while all the other rivers in this

country are addressed in the feminine gender such as 'Ganga Ma', Brahmaputra is considered to be the putra, the son of Brahma. The Brahmaputra passes primarily through the State of Assam unlike the Ganga's which passes through a number of States, and that is the reason why the entire fury of the river has to be faced by the relatively under-developed State of Assam. Every year, not only does this create tremendous problems, hardships and loss of lives and properties, what is more, the incentive for the agriculturist and the farmer to go in for better farming methods is also totally lost. Though the farmers know that they can use all types of new and novel methods, they also know that they are completely dependent upon nature because at some point of time or the other, their crops are going to be affected floods. This is the reason why in spite of the fact that Assam has great potentiality for agricultural development there has virtually been no development in the agriculture front. And we cannot really expect any breakthrough in the agricultural front, unless we solve this problem on a war footing.

Government of Assam had asked for Rs.385.15 crores. That was the demand for the first three floods. I do not know whether the Government of Assam's requisition for the last two floods has come. But the amount will be more. You can very well appreciate that the sum we asked for is very reasonable. For flood control measures we asked Rs.119 crores, for agriculture Rs.12.12 crores, for food and supplies Rs.13.03 crores and for gracious relief, Rs.19.40 crores. Sir, I do not want to go into all these details. The hon. Minister and this House know that Assam was cut off during these floods for a number of days. Excepting air communications, there were no ground communications either by railways or even by trucks or motors, with the result that the prices of all commodities shot up. The House can very well imagine the plight of the people in Assam when onions were sold at Rs. 40 per kilo in Assam at a particular point of time. I think, one of the precious commodities that some of my friends use to take to Assam at that

[Shri Dinesh Goswami]

point of time in their boxes was not valuables but onions.

We have to face another kind of a problem—of course not a new problem—but a problem equally big in its dimensions. And that is the problem of erosion.

When the flood water recedes, it leaves the problem of erosion. We have lost one of the very important commercial towns in erosion—Dibrugarh. Today, the entire Majuli, which is the biggest riverine island in the world with an area of 1,250 sq kms is facing real turmoil, because every year the area is becoming less and less because of erosion. In my own constituency, a very important town may not be a very big town but a commercial centre of importance, Palasbari was completely destroyed by erosion. People went and built their homes and hearths in a near area, started new trading centre, but that area—recently I went there—is facing another onslaught of erosion. The area of Mukalmua is facing erosion; and this has caused a new problem in the State of Assam. The Government of Assam in view of the enormity of the problem, apart from the amount that they asked for from the Central Government, has suggested certain specific measures. According to the five-point programme submitted to the Government of India, it has been suggested to the Central Government that there should be a specific grant for total treating of Brahmaputra. It should not be that every time the flood comes we come with a begging bowl to the Central Government. We asked for a particular hundred crore or a few hundred crores of rupees; and out of that, a few crores are given to us and then we wait for the next flood; in this way, the people have to live with this problem for ever.

When we are approaching the 21st century, when science has conquered so many obstacles to feel people that this is something with which we have to put up, I think it is a shame to our national progress;

and I believe that some very serious steps will have to be taken to which I will come later.

The Government of Assam has asked for a specific grant for total treating of Brahmaputra we have asked for raising the annual allocation for the floods controls works because Brahmaputra Board itself in its Master Plan have said that the amounts which are today available to the State of Assam for flood control works are not sufficient; the flood problem cannot be solved permanently or adequately. I don't think that the flood problem can be permanently solved; it can be minimised and it cannot be minimised unless some multipurpose projects are taken up. I will draw the attention of the House to multipurpose projects which have been drawn up by the Brahmaputra Board. We have also asked for an amount of Rs.400 crores for the next 15 years for the flood control and 100 per cent as loan assistance because the problem is that the amount that you give—when it comes for the relief that amount is deducted from our plan resources with the result that development suffers. Therefore, for short term measures, though certain amount is given to the State for ad hoc relief measures, that helps the poor men at that particular point of time, but, in the ultimate analysis, the development of the State suffers. Unfortunately, I must say that the response of the Central Government to our request has been very inadequate. The Central assistance minus the margin money that has been given to Assam is only Rs.57.25 crores against the demand of Rs.385 crores. Large parts of embankments have been washed away; roads have been washed away. In fact, the only High Way which connects the Lower Assam and the Upper Assam was virtually out of connection for a long time. For all that we have asked for Rs.119 crores and we have been given a pittance of Rs.27 crores for agriculture, a very limited amount of Rs.4 crores have been given; virtually, no amount has been given for medical and gratuitous relief to the flood affected people.

It is no use every year talking about this

problem. What do we do regarding this problem in a permanent way. We urged upon the Central Government for a number of years that Brahmaputra is a river which cannot be tackled by the Assam Government alone. We were happy that the Brahmaputra Board was constituted by an act of Parliament because of the pressure of the people of Assam. The Brahmaputra Board Act of 1980 was passed and the Brahmaputra Board come into existence. The provisions of the Brahmaputra Board Act indicate that the Brahmaputra Board is called upon to tackle this problem. I will read out the provision of Section 12 of the Brahmaputra Board Act which deals with the Master Plan for the control of floods, etc. in the Brahmaputra Valley.

Section 12 says:

"12. Master Plan for the control of floods, etc., in the Brahmaputra Valley--(1) Subject to the other provisions of this Act and the rules, the Board shall carry out surveys and investigations in the Brahmaputra Valley and prepare a Master Plan for the control of floods and bank erosion and improvement of drainage in the Brahmaputra Valley."

I have come to know that a Master Plan has now been drawn. Project reports of two multi-purpose projects are now lying with different Ministries of the Government of India for clearance.

Section 13 says:

"13. Other functions of the Board-(1)
The Board shall also-

- (a) prepare detailed reports and estimates in respect of the dams and other projects proposed in the Master Plan as approved by the Central Government...
- (c) construct, with the approval of the Central Government, multi-

purpose dams and works connected therewith proposed in the Master Plan as approved by the Central Government and maintain and operate such dams and works."

Now, we have been told that the Brahmaputra Board has drawn up a Master Plan, and two very important projects have been suggested, one is the Sabansiri projects and the other is the Dihang Project. A study, a few years back by experts led to this conclusion that out of the total full flow of silt that the different rivers in this country carry, 50 per cent is carried by Brahmaputra alone; with the result that the Brahmaputra contributes to 50 per cent of the silt and the bed of Brahmaputra continues to rise every year. And every year, the intensity and the level of flood have been more.

It is in bed an irony of fate that at a time when we were suffering from deluge, from excess water, the rest of the country was suffering from scarcity of water that shows that there is something wrong with the water resources management of our country.

AN HON. MEMBER: Planning of the country.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: There is no integrated water resources project or plan.

Now, the project report drawn up by the Brahmaputra Board shows that if the Dihang Project is brought into existence, it will account for 40 per cent of the silt of the river Brahmaputra, that is, 40 per cent of the silt water of the Brahmaputra can be tackled, and the resultant problem of flood perhaps to a large extent also will be tackled. The other, Sabansiri project accounts for 7 per cent of the silt and it is the view of the experts that even if Sabansiri project is carried through in the lower part of Assam, to a great extent, the problem of flood will be tackled.

Apart from it, Sabansiri and the Dihang Projects have tremendous power potential.

[Shri Dinesh Goswami]

Sabansiri has got 4800 MW and Dihang has got a power potential of 20,000 MW. And this power potential will benefit all the North Eastern States. If this Sabansiri and Dihang Projects are constructed, if these multi-projects are constructed, we will have the problem of floods tackled and those two projects will be able to give power to all the Eastern States, if not beyond, even to Uttar Pradesh, because our requirement of power is much less.

Also, it has been found out that if we take into account the various facts and figures regarding the submerged area affected, or population affected, these two are extremely interesting and attractive projects. I will give for the benefit of this House comparative figures of the Sabansiri project as drawn up by the Brahmaputra Board as well as the figures of some of the multi-purpose projects, those are in existence now. For example, Sardar Sarobar project, the area submerged is 370 sq. km. whereas in Sabansiri the area submerged will be 193 sq. km. The population affected by Sardar Sarobar will be 41,600, in Bhakra Nangal it is 36,000 in Narmada Sagar it is 80,000, in Beas it is 80,000 but in Sabansiri it will be only 7,500. The population affected per sq.km. merged area is for Sardar Sarobar 112, for Brahma it is 213, for Beas it is 307, and for Sabansiri it is 38 only.

The population affected per MW installed electricity capacity is, for Sardar Sarobar 23, for Bhakra it is 34, for Sabansiri it is only 1.56. The calculation that has been made by the Brahmaputra Board shows that at the prices of 1984, electricity will be available at less than 21 paise per unit which is the cheapest in India.

Therefore, if you take into account the area submerged, the population affected per MW installed or the price of the electricity. It is the most attractive project. Of course, Dihang is slightly an ambitious project because it requires about Rs.8,000 crores, whereas the Sabansiri project requires only about Rs.3,068 crores, We have pleaded with the Central Government, we have written to the Prime

Minister, we have written to the Agriculture Minister for early implementation of the project. Now there is one point that this project will require the concurrence of the Arunachal Government. I believe that after all Arunachal is a part of this country and Arunachal Government is run by a party which is also running the Central Government. Therefore, I would plead with this House that though it may not be possible for the time being because of the financial constraint to take up the Dihang project, the Government of India in discussion with the Arunachal Government, should immediately go in for the Subansiri Project.

So far as erosion is concerned, an experimental scheme was taken up in one part of Assam to find out whether the experiment in that can be applied successfully in the other parts. Now, this experiment has again been successful in an area known as Gumi. Now, our Minister for Flood Control has written to the Government of India that in those areas where there is severe erosion, because it is successful, the same method should be applied. He has received a letter from the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, who wrote sometime back, that if actually the Gumi experiment becomes successful, then the same method will be applied in the other areas and he particularly mentioned two areas Mukalmua and Moriaholla. But unfortunately, we have been that these letters and recommendations really remain on the archives of the Government. I have pleaded with this Government because I have seen hundreds of families becoming destitute. Once they have to leave their hearths and homes they lose everything they have. Hundreds of families have already lost and another thousand; will lose unless you do something. I pleaded with the Government that you take some measures. After all in Assam, we have a legitimate complaint. I do not want to introduce politics. After all, drought is a very serious problem, we do not deny it. But whatever may be the reason--one can complain of political motivation. In the matter of Government's approach to drought and floods everybody has talked

about drought, but when Assam was ravaged by floods after floods, nobody talked about floods. Unfortunately, let me point out here that on the important message of the Independence Day, i.e. 15th August, when Assam was suffering from floods, not a single words regarding floods was mentioned in the message. The people's reaction to this was, is it that we are not a part of this country? I do not want of inject any politics, but I feel that this feeling which is there in the minds of the peoples should be communicated. If you want integration in this country, then you must give a feeling of oneness to people of all parts of this country and in a moment of hardship, people become sensitive to these matters. It may be intentional or unintentional. An unintentional omission may even create conflict.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): When the Central Minister made a Statement, we all felt unhappy about it. Why do you think that we have excluded Assam?

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: I do not like to go into the details.

Therefore, I am only conveying in a very temperate language the feeling of the people. I have not tried to introduce politics because let us not play politics on human problems. Therefore, I would urge that instead of a routine reply to which we have become accustomed year after year, you give some positive response to the proposals which I have made.

Brahmaputra Board for example--such an important Board was topless for quite sometime, there was no Chairman; there was no Vice-Chairman.

I do not want to take much of time of the House because a number of other Members would like to speak. I only submit that there should be more allocation for permanent as well as short term measures because mere allocation at the time of the floods does not really help the States as the amount goes out of the State Planning process. Therefore, apart

from relief, a permanent measure should be taken.

One of the shortcomings of the Brahmaputra Board has been that it has drawn up two projects--Subansiri and Dihang and if these projects are to be taken in hand it will take 13 to 14 years for these projects to see the full light of the day. People cannot wait for 13 to 14 years for alienation if then miseries. But no short-term measure has been taken by the Brahmaputra Board. I wrote to the Prime Minister. He has kindly written to me back that so far as erosion is concerned, he has written to the Brahmaputra Board to look into it. I will urge upon the hon. Minister to ask the Brahmaputra Board to immediately draw up the projects to see that short-term measures are taken to alleviate the sufferings of the people. They are suggesting from time to time about a number of project but nothing has been done. Therefore, my concrete suggestion will be that for permanent measures, if it is not possible today immediately to respond regarding Dihang, at least let us have Sabansiri project implemented. There should be immediate short-term measures taken by the Brahmaputra Board by way of embankment or otherwise to deal with the problem. My second suggestion will be that specific fund for total treating of Brahmaputra should be created. My third suggestion is that this should be by way of 100% loan assistance because Assam cannot bear the burden. If Assam is to bear the burden as a grant, then obviously in the plan we show more money, but money is pumped out of the total plan resources. For Heaven's sake, take immediate steps for the safety of the people in the erosion affected areas. If we take immediate steps, some of these areas we will be able to save. Therefore, I hope, the hon. Minister will respond to the suggestions I have made and he will not give the reply in a routine manner in this House but will reply in a more positive and concrete manner.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda): This is the third time this year that we are discussing floods and droughts, I except

[Shri M. Raguma Reddy]

the same stereo-typed reply from the hon. Minister.

This time the drought is different from them of previous years. This time 265 districts in 21 States have come in the grip of severe drought and 118 districts in 9 States have come in the grip of floods. The area affected is nearly 454.20 lakh hectares and the population affected is more than 29 crores.

Whatever may be the case, severe drought and floods have become a natural phenomenon. I do not know whether the God is cursing the nature or the nature is cursing the human beings. There should be a permanent solution to the problem. Every year, States are asking for some money and you are giving a paltry sum. In fact, States have become beggars before the Government of India. They have to beg. And you give some money. You show the ceiling and your Bible is the Eighth Finance Commission. You say that the ceiling is Rs.1046 crores and you cannot go beyond that. That limited amount you have to give to all the affected States. This year, States have requested for Rs.17,800 crores and you have given only Rs. 820 crores. Last year also, States had asked for Rs. 4072 crores and you gave only Rs. 669 crores. This is the situation. The planners should think about this problem and try to find a solution. After all, this subject does not pertain only to the Agriculture Ministry but it pertains to all the Departments. Of course, you may say it is the collective responsibility of the Cabinet. My learned friend, who preceded me, talked about the Brahmaputra Board. The subject pertains to the water Resources Ministry. That Minister is not here. There should have been the planning Minister and the Finance Minister also present here. If they are not here, I do not mind if the hon. Minister can communicate our feelings to the Minister for Water Resources and to the other Ministers concerned. The feeling here is that whenever there is a drought, it is only the Agriculture Ministry which is concerned with it. Agriculture Ministry can talk about seeds, fertilizers, pesticides or some

package measures or contingency plans but they cannot give a guarantee on the floor of the House regarding permanent measures and permanent solutions.

Coming to the Eighth Finance Commission, why don't they change the rules? What for are these rules there? For whom are those ruled there? When all the States are suffering, when one-third of the population is suffering then why they are sticking to the Eighth Finance Commission? What are they actually giving? They give only plan advance. Five per cent of the Plan advance they are giving to the States and that two 50 per cent form the State budget and 50 per cent they are giving. That is given only as an advance. They are giving it as a loan and not as a mercy. It is not a grant. They are not following the Eighth Finance Commission's Report. The Report says that if there is drought consecutively for 4-5 years, it should be hundred per cent grant...(Interruptions).

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): Nowhere it is written in the Finance Commission's Report. Without reading the Report don't speak. If you go through the Report, nowhere it is mentioned like that.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: If I remember correctly, it is on page 70, clause 33 or something like that. There it is mentioned that if it is a permanent one, it should be a 100 per cent grant.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA: Nowhere it is written.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: You can correct me if I am wrong. I am saying this subject to correction. There is no controversy Makwana Ji. Sir, I want the Minister to consider that when there is a continuous drought for 5-6 years, it should be considered as a hundred per cent grant, and if it is for 3-4 years, then it should be considered as 75 per cent grant and 25 per cent loan. This should be there.

There are many suggestions which I have been giving since beginning. When our hon. Minister was the Speaker, when he was in occupation of this seat, Dr. K.L. Rao had proposed one scheme--Ganga-Cauvery. If that is not possible, why don't they take up this Mahanadi-Godavari-Krishna and Cauvery scheme. That is a peninsular one. That has not been taken up so far. There are many permanent projects. The prime input for agriculture is water. Where there is no water, you cannot do anything. We have plenty of water. Just now we are suffering from floods in Assam and in other North-Eastern part of India, but in South India, people are suffering for want of water. Even in Andhra Pradesh also, I say bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that seven districts have suffered due to the cyclones and floods but the other districts are suffering for want of water. This is the phenomenon. So, there should be a permanent solution. There should be some concrete measures taken. After all, they have given Rs.69 crores to Andhra Pradesh. They may say that it is over and above whatever they have given. I think Mr. Makwana is ready to say that the State has not spent all the amount. He will say that. Many times he has repeated the same thing. I am not going to enter into any sort of controversy...(Interruptions).

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA: When I speak, I speak with authority. I never bluff like you.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: I am not bluffing you. What I am saying is that we want a permanent solution to the problem whether it is in Rajasthan or Gujarat or Haryana or Punjab. Even in Punjab and Haryana, where 85 per cent of the area is under irrigation, where there are many permanent irrigation projects, drought situation is there.

Coming to the food production, I do not know how they are going to meet this crisis. This year they may not be able to feel the crisis but next year they will see the result. This year they have got the buffer stock, even the farmers in the villages have some stock in their houses which they will

be eating this year. But what about the next year? Where from will they get the stocks for the next year? They say that the production will be 150 million tonnes this year. The hon. Minister may say how much they are going to get out of this. Will it be 30 million tonnes during the *Kharif* season or will it be 40 million tonnes during the *Kharif* season? You may get 70 or 75 million tonnes during the rabi season. But are you going to reach the target of 164 million tonnes fixed for the current financial year? How are you going to reach 175 million tonnes by the end of 1990? Where from will you get this quantity?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G.S. DHILLON): We will do it.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: Presently, how much more area are you going to bring under irrigation? Is it 60 million hectares? Are you planning for 65 million or 70 million hectares? What are the sources? How are you going to develop them? Can you tell us whether it is going to be done with the help of ground water source, tanks irrigation or major project irrigation? I want to know whether you have any planning in this matter. I want to know whether the Government of India are thinking for national project with the help of the State Government. Due to the continuous drought situation in the country, the developmental plan has been affected. We are giving something like 50 % for your budget for taking up developmental programmes in the country. But how the State Governments run? I would request that you should think of a permanent plan by constructing more number of projects. Actually in Andhra Pradesh, in Nagarjuna Sagar the normal water level use to be 905 ft. Today it is 540 ft. There is about 50 ft. less of water level. They are not able to cope up with this low level. There are nearly six lakh hectares to be irrigated by Nagarjuna Sagar. Now they have down only in 2 lakh hectares during this *kharif* season. During rabi season, we promised that we would be irrigating about 3 lakh hectares.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: For permanent measure, it is your memorandum: It is not going to be permanent.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: Whatever may be my permanent memoranda, but here I am speaking on behalf of the country. Though I belong to Andhra Pradesh, I speak here on behalf of the Indian farmers. I reflect the feelings of the Indians. Do not confine me to Andhra Pradesh. I am a Member of this House. But whatever may be the case, there should be some permanent measures. In Andhra Pradesh, there are many projects which are pending. Not only in Andhra Pradesh, it is pending in Karnataka also and wherever water is available you should make use of the water. We should make permanent projects. Then only we can solve the problem.

Sir, I want to refer to one important subject, that is, Energy. The hon. Minister for Energy is not here. Sir, all the hydel projects have suffered in Andhra Pradesh. The projects like Srikakulam, Nagarjuna Project have suffered because of paucity of water in Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers. Even in Godavari water level has come down. We want many thermal projects, many nuclear power projects. Andhra Pradesh is suffering due to shortage of power. About 30% to 40% power shortage is there in Andhra Pradesh. Agriculture will be affected seriously due to power shortage. Sir, I would request through you the Government, let the Government of India come forward and give power to Andhra Pradesh from other neighbouring States.

Sir, in regard to monitoring of the scheme, I would like to bring to your kind notice one thing. Sir, your team of personnel came to Andhra Pradesh to assess the situation. Where was the necessity for the Central Minister to come there and make some political speeches and interfere with the local administration and the state Government? When the elected representatives are there in the State, when the State Government is there, you sent your Minister of State for Industry,

Mr. Arunachalam. He has created nuisance there. He has created some political problems. He has made some statements which hurt the feelings of the Andhra Pradesh people. So, in future, I would request the hon. Minister not to send any Minister for politicalisation of the issue. It is the issue of the farmers. It is an issue of the Indian population. It is an issue of the Indian population. It is an issue of our State, Not only Andhra Pradesh or Karnataka, whatever may be the State, you should trust the people who are working there, who are also elected like you and they have formed their own Government there.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA: Are you speaking with the permission of your Chief Minister? Because your Chief Minister made a statement that nobody was visiting Andhra Pradesh. That was the statement made by your Chief Minister.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: No. The visit is different from that of supervising the operations of the State Government. We welcome the visit of hon. Minister. But we do not want you to supervise the work there. There is the elected Government. There are officials. There is an elected body. They will take care of their problems.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: You welcome us to your State. Your Chief Minister welcomes us. But he does not welcome us when we go for monitoring.

[Translation]

SHRI MANOJ PANDEY (Bettiah): Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot of information has already been made available to this august House regarding the natural calamity that has befallen the country this year. Through you, Sir, I want to raise in a few words some points concerning North Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Floods hit North Bihar every year. Shri Raghuma Reddy has spoken about the drought which has hit successively for 4 to 5 years. In the same way, North Bihar and

Eastern Uttar Pradesh have been hit by floods successively for almost 10 years and we have not able to find a permanent solution to this problem. The Central Government does give Central assistance to the State Governments as a short-term measure but it does not have a long-term effect. If the money that we spend every year on floods and drought reliefs as short-term measure is spent on long-term measures, I think, we will be successful in finding a permanent solution of the problem.

About Ganga-Cauveri project, Shri Raghuma Reddy has said that the cost of the project which initially was Rs.13 thousand crores has now risen to Rs.44 thousand crores. Due to non-availability of funds, we put off the entire project every five years. What I mean to say is that we are putting off the long term measures merely due to shortage of funds but we continue to spend the same amount of funds on short-term measures. After all, for how long shall we be able to satisfy ourselves through such measures? All that I want to say is that earlier we did not have 13 thousand crores rupees and today we do not have 44 thousand crores rupees and ten years hence when the project cost will escalate to Rs. One lakh crores, we shall not be having that much amount. But in this process, how many times we have spent Rs. 13 thousand crores in the last 40 years? Had we paid attention to it. I think, today we would have been in a position to complete the Ganga-Cauveri project. We just put off the execution of the project by saying where from so much money will come. But if we consider over the benefit that this project is going to give to a number of States we will find that with the money already spent on short term measures during the last 40 years, we would have been able to complete even bigger projects than Ganga-Cauveri. Under the short-term measures, we start digging a well after the fire breaks out, and by the time the well is dug, the devastation caused by fire can be easily imagined. Where have we reached by digging wells and taking out water in this manner? Our problems continue to remain as before. The floods cause damage worth crores of

rupees every year and we continue to look towards the Governments of Nepal. It is the responsibility of the Nepalese Government to find a permanent solution to the problem. Discussion has taken place time and again in this august House to the effect that it is upto the Nepalese Government to find a solution to our problems related to floods. The Central Government did take up the matter with the Government of Nepal in the past, but it has yielded no result. I know that no immediate solution can be found in this regard between the two Governments. It requires a lot of time. But the way the floods cause sufferings every year, what reply can we give to the people? Should we say that the Government of Nepal is not agreeing to our proposal and, therefore, we are not able to find a permanent solution to this problem?

We construct roads and culverts every year under NREP and R.L.E.G.P. We consider that our responsibility ends once the roads or culverts are constructed. We do not bother that on the one hand, we construct them and on the other, they are washed away by the floods. The next year, the same road and the culverts are constructed again. Thus, money is spent on the same road and the same culvert every year. Every year, the Centre gives assistance and margin money to the State Governments and every year these funds are spent on the same roads and culverts. We should go in for a permanent solution instead. If provision for money cannot be made in the Seventh Plan, the same can be done in the Eighth Plan. The Government will have to do something in this regard. Eastern Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Assam are affected by floods every year. The river Brahmaputra overflows every year. As all the rivers are full, they start overflowing whenever the water level rises and the land gets eroded. Obviously villages and settlements will get destroyed. Every year people from Nepal get washed away by floods and their corpses reach our territory. Last year at least 1500 dead bodies of Nepalis came floating in the rivers in our areas. Because they were citizens of Nepal, no records are kept in our country.

[Shri Manoj Pandey]

Therefore, I want to request that first you must pay attention in findings a permanent solution. If you divert the water of river Ganga to Cauveri, during floods you can release excess water of Ganga into the Cauveri, which at that time has very less water. On the one hand, this will reduce the horror of floods in the Gangetic area and on the other hand, Cauveri will get sufficient water due to this arrangement. In this way you can get double benefit out of a single scheme. The most important point is that the rivers of North overflow every year.

17.04 hrs.

[SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI *in the
Chair*]

We should finalise our talks with the Government of Nepal at the earliest. We should make special efforts in this direction. It is possible that the Government of Nepal may not agree. I can give one political reason for it. On the basis of the information which we have received from across the borders, I want to inform the hon. Minister that Government of Nepal has set up several projects in collaboration with Chinese Government to contain the overflow of water and for constructing reservoirs. The flow of water is stopped until the reservoirs get filled up and then the water is released. In this way excess water flows into our country and submerges the border areas. Thus, such schemes of the Government of Nepal are ruinous for us. I will give a striking example of it. The Nepal Government is fully aware of the washing away of thousands of its citizens in our country in the floods which occurred last year. Nepal never informed us about it. This is the kind of politics going on in this region and there is need to consider it with international angle. In this way, we should think of tackling the problem of floods in our area and if we are being affected by floods occurring in other areas, then it is essential to pay attention to them as well.

The Government of Bihar has suffered considerable losses this year on account of floods. Whenever floods come, Central assistance is granted for relief purposes. Efforts are made to provide relief to every victim but relief work is never done properly because of misuse of funds. The scale of irregularities committed in this regard is increasing every year. If Central Governments extends assistance on the basis of margin-money for some item in the flood areas then that amount should be utilised for that purpose only. Unfortunately, there are some states which misuse these funds. Funds are diversified. Therefore it is essential to deliberate on this subject. I want to urge the hon. Minister through you that he should direct the State Governments that whatever funds are provided for relief should be spent for that purpose only and it is very essential to ensure that funds are not utilised for any other purpose. Otherwise funds will continue to be misused as it is happening every year. The hon. Minister has referred to several States in this connection in the House. I would like to refer about Bihar. Bihar suffered losses this year for which Central assistance of about Rs.600 crores was demanded. Our margin money is about Rs.35 crores and Rs.35 crores have already been spent. Rs.100 crores were required immediately. But unfortunately, we have received only Rs.62 crores so far. As per my information 26 districts of Bihar are affected by floods completely. The State Government has requested for additional funds for this purpose. I want to submit that arrangements should be made for granting additional sums as Central assistance so that people can feel relieved from the horror of floods.

SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA (Motihari): Madam Chairman, hon. Shri Dinesh Goswami has given the opportunity to the House to hold a discussion on natural calamities like floods and drought through a special mention.

I want to inform you that even before the present drought another unprecedented drought had occurred which had affected threefourth population

of the country. Apart from droughts, Bengal Bihar, Assam and Meghalaya have faced devastating floods by which our entire economic system has gone haywire. Just now Shri Goswami submitted that devastating floods occurred in Assam but no one is bothered about it and Central Government is also not concerned. He has referred to the Brahmaputra project in this connection. As regards the devastating floods which damaged the national highways and which disrupted the traffic in the upper and lower regions of Assam, we fully sympathise with him. It is true that these areas are always affected by devastating floods. Bengal was also flooded but it was Bihar which faced fury of unprecedented floods this year. I have been engaged in social work for the last 32-35 years and I get a lot of opportunity to tour villages. But the magnitude of floods this year and also last year was such that the entire area was submerged and it seems that 3 crores people out of the total population of about 7 crores in these areas were affected. It led to a considerable loss of life and property. The Hon. Prime Minister visited those areas and we are happy that he took a serious view of both these problems. A subcommittee of the Cabinet was set up at the Central level and the situation was assessed every week and all possible assistance was extended. The Members of the Cabinet also went there. It is a matter of happiness that both the Ministers of Agriculture are present here. But I think that along with the hon. Minister of Agriculture, the hon. Minister of Irrigation should also have been present. Our region was also affected by drought and cyclonic storms to which I will refer later. A large population was affected by these calamities. I think the hon. Minister of Supplies should have been present here as well because these natural calamities have led to prices of the commodities going sky high in the whole country. Hence he should also be involved with the issue. Everyday it is announced that prices will be brought down but I don't think that it has happened so far. The people living in the capital, in the metropolitan cities and in other urban areas are able to get two square meals a day but as regards the conditions prevailing in the villages, I

would like to inform you about them by reciting a couplet and it is as follows:

"Kare khanabadoshi ki khida khud khansama ne, Ki har shabpe nay manzil, naya dana, naya pani".

This is the condition of these people but the Government is not bothered. They are roaming about like nomads. Their houses have been destroyed and I think if we get the statistics regarding Bihar, we will find that not only cattle but also several human lives have been lost. The Gandak area in Bihar is very fertile and this has been proved after testing the soil. But today the situation is deplorable. Near famine conditions exist in Bihar. I want to ask as to why such calamities occur even after forty years of independence. Apart from the floods and droughts which occur regularly, cyclones also hit the region at times. A devastating cyclonic storm struck our area recently and its speed was greater than that of an aeroplane. Thousands of houses were destroyed (*Interruptions*)...

Mr. Chairman, Sir, please give me time. The situation in that area is critical.

I want to submit one more point. During the year 1986-87, Rs. 4762 crores were required to meet the problem of floods and drought but the Centre has sanctioned only Rs.609 for the whole country. Will this amount be sufficient for providing adequate relief to the flood and the drought affected areas of the entire country? It will not suffice. Floods occur in the month of August. Government should make all arrangements for boats before the floods come but it does not do so as a result of which the situation becomes critical. The assistance of the army is taken, supply boats are pressed into service and food packets are air dropped. Why do not you find a permanent solution to the problem? You should find a solution.

The Kosi river valley project was formulated for Bihar. The Kosi river is called the river of sorrow of Bihar. It is like a river in China which used to bring sorrow there. A dam was constructed to control floods. But what is the situation today. I think the

[Shrimati Prabhawati Gupta]

embankments have become quite old and no longer serve their purpose. The level there has been reduced. No steps were ever taken to repair them. This Government has not taken any measures in this direction. The people of these area have been left to get drowned. What do you want to do in this respect? How will you solve this problem? Considerable sums for relief purposes are granted but why does not the Government utilise these funds to repair the embankments? In these embankments gaps have been left in our area. We have been raising the issue for the last 25 years in the Bihar Assembly and we have been doing the same here also but the embankments have not been repaired. Why the gaps have been left in this way? I want to submit one more point. Our Champaran area is very fertile. It is situated in the foothills of Nepal. These areas can become the granary of the nation. But the floods which occur here these days are unprecedented. When I went to my constituency, thousands of people came to visit me and said that although these areas are flood prone, the floods which have occurred this year were on a scale as was never witnessed before. What is the reason for the occurrence of such devastating floods today? Why does Government spend crores for setting up dams and stalling the natural flow of rivers? I want to submit that till the Gandak project is completed, the areas of Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur and Khagaria will continue to be flooded resulting in devastation all over these areas.

I would like to urge the Central Government that it should ensure the completion of Gandak Drainage Scheme. The Gandak Drainage Scheme is still pending. This scheme would require an investment of Rs.150 crores. I am confident that the World Bank may also sanction funds for this Scheme. If funds are not available in lumpsum, a scheme in different phases may be formulated and by completing the scheme in phases, the problems should be solved. If the problem is not solved, the floods will continue to

recur there and one day entire land would be submerged.

Secondly, I would like to submit that the scheme concerning West Kosi Canal and East Kosi Canal is still pending. This scheme should be got implemented through Nepal Government.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude, Madam. You have already exhausted your time.

[Translation]

SHRI P.NAMGYAL (Ladakh): As a several hon. Members are yet to speak on the subject discussion on it should continue tomorrow also.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur): It is very essential.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have been very liberal.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA: Madam Chairman, I would like to submit to you that the people of district Purnea and Khagaria are in great difficulty. The people of Samastipur are also facing difficulty. Entire Bihar is being submerged in water. I would like to submit to the House today that the Central Government should take effective steps there. Measures should be taken to save us and protect our lives. You should not leave us at the mercy of the God. You should not let us turn homeless. This river which originates from Nepal, inundates the entire area. The Central Government should hold talks with the Nepal Government to control the water of these rivers and should construct the reservoirs in those areas. Crores of rupees are spent by the Government in these areas for providing relief. Can you not complete these projects? These projects should be got completed.

Now I would like to speak about cyclones. On 19th of October, a very serious cyclone hit the Champaran area. We used to hear that cyclone hit Madras or Andhra Pradesh, regions but on 17th of this month I visited each and every village in my area and saw that the houses of the people have been destroyed and huts have completely vanished. Two hundred people have been injured and 6 or 7 people have died. You can imagine the severity of the cyclone just by the fact that a jeep which was running on the national highway, turned topsy turvy and was thrown away by the storm in the fields nearby. The assistance which has been provided by the Government is inadequate. The area which has been affected by cyclone is a backward area inhabited by the poor and Harijan farmers and the landless labourers. The State Government should be directed to supply free rations for at least two months and to write off their at least a sum of Rs.10,000 to each family should be sanctioned to them to reconstruct their houses and huts. A sum of hundred rupees would not be sufficient. *(Interruptions)*

I am stating the miserable condition which I saw there myself. I demand that permanent measures be taken there. *(Interruptions)*

Gandak Drainage Scheme should be implemented, otherwise the economy of Bihar would crumble. Prospects of Rabi crop are also not good. The position of power supply is far from satisfactory. Tube wells are out of order. Electricity should be supplied to them so that there could be proper irrigation of the fields. Transmitters should be operated so that people could yet some relief. Gandak Drainage Scheme and Kosi Canal Project should be sanctioned immediately. With these words I conclude and hope that the suggestions which I have given would be considered by the Central Government.

[English]

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS (Mavelikara): Madam Chairman, once upon a time there was an Emperor called Nero. He was singing on his fiddle when Rome was burn-

ing. Like that there is a Badshah for our country. According to the reports the expenditure for the purpose of going to CHOGM—when this country was in the grip of drought and everyone was crying here just like the lady Member who cried just earlier—our Government spent Rs.15 crores for attending CHOGM. There were two Air India flights. One flight was decorated with bed room and dining room. *(Interruptions)* All this has come in the Press. If this is what is happening....

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar): These are unrealistic allegations. There is no base for them. These allegation should not form part of the record.

(Interruptions)

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): In the same way you are saying these things in an irrelevant manner.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I gave it in writing to the hon. Speaker.

No reply is given. After seeing a news-item, I had given an adjournment motion on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't made personal allegation. You continue on drought and floods.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I want to know. During the drought situation in this country, money is looted by these people. That is what I am bringing to your notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You speak on drought and floods. No personal allegation.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: No, I am not speaking anything personal. I gave in writing. This was also raised in the Rajya Sabha. I have made a submission on the basis of the report which have come in the Press.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar): What is the authenticity of that report?

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: It is very much relevant. If you are spending money in the name of drought, you are answerable to this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thomas, why don't you speak on the subject?

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: Madam, I am speaking on the subject.

I am pointing out the misuse of the money and politicalising the issue of drought by the persons who are in power in this country.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska): How is it connected?

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: It is an allegation. He cannot be allowed.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: How can it be expunged?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN I will go through the records. You continue your speech.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I have been interrupted by my friends.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no; I will see that they don't interrupt.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: The point is that there is misuse of money at this juncture by this Government for irrelevant things. Always we have a ritual here. People come here crying and beating their chests and asking the Central Government: Pay money, pay money and all that. What is happening to the Ganga-Cauvery project? Have you had any perspective of that? Have you taken any steps to implement that project? What is the position of this country? In my State, Kerala, the per capital income is only Rs. 127. In Bihar, it is Rs. 97. What is the world average?

When we compare this with other countries, What is the position of our country? What is the rate of increase in these things? In my country, the per capital income rose only by .06 per cent during the last year. What is the meaning of this? Where does the money go? Is India a poor country? No, it is not a poor country. It has got enough resources.

If these are properly managed and used, the people of this country can have a decent living provided they have any vision and attempt to do that. Instead of that, what I feel is that the administrators--the people in power--are misusing the power and also misusing the funds of our country.

I also find that they are politicalising the issue of drought. What happened in Nagaland? There was no drought in Nagaland. The situation was quite different there. A new-sitem has been published in the Indian Express saying that on the basis of a letter sent by the Government of India, the Nagaland Government prepares a memorandum and gives it just before the election. It has been asked in the newspaper whether it is a drought relief or a political relief. If there is no drought and money is channelised there just before the election for getting the votes, it is only misuse of funds.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH: Certainly you must be sorry for the results of Nagaland election.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: We pity you. This is only political frustration and nothing else.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister will reply while giving his reply. Why do you interpret like that?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why do you interfere?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Yadav, please resume your seat. The Minister will reply... *(Interruptions)*... He wants to say something.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: Has Nagaland Government got no right to submit the memorandum?
(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thomas, please proceed.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I want answers from the Minister on the points which I have raised because Nagaland was not having a drought. For what purpose the money was given to Nagaland? Please explain it.

(Interruptions)

You are politicising the issue. The Minister went round the States and made statements. You have to put a brake on that.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G. S. DHILLON: Madam, I will not take a note of such irrelevant matters being introduced in the debate. What has the Nagaland elections to do with it? What has this travel business to do with it? I will not reply to you unless you are relevant.

(Interruptions)

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: I can show you the Press Report.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: Indian Express is the gospel for the Opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him continue, do not interfere.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: My point is that when the country is in the grip of drought no earnest attempt has been made by the Government to meet the situation permanently. The Hon. Minister should bring to the notice of the House the measures taken by them in this regard.

Whether they have extended any assistance? How much money has been taken from the World Bank and in turn distributed to various states. Seeing that this country is in the grip of drought, can they promise to help us? I am afraid that if such a situation continues, we may have to face the experience of Ethiopia and other African countries. What happened in Orissa, Kalahandi? About 400 people died as they could not get drinking water. And what was the experience of my State?

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore): I strongly object to it. How do you know it?

(Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER: Kalahandi is in my State. That is not correct.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why do you interrupt him?

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: Sir, because of the absence of drinking water people are dying. And that is witnessed by us. There is no explanation for it.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whatever you want to say you can say it later on. Don't interrupt him.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: When the present State Government, the Left Democratic Government came to power, it spent Rs.66 crores for the purpose of making water available to people. Do you know how much does my State contribute to the Central exchequer by the export of Pepper, ginger, tea, coffee etc? About 14 per cent of the total revenue of foreign exchange comes from my State. But in return what benefit are you giving? I am not asking for anybody's mercy. Give us our due share. But it has not been given by the Central Government. Instead they are spending this money for the various other purposes, which I have just now explained. They spend money for CHOGM and for

[Shri Thampan Thomas]

fighting in Sri Lanka. About Rs.20 crores per day they are spending for fighting in Sri Lanka. I strongly object to it. When the people in our own country are crying for water you are spending Rs.20 crores per day in Sri Lanka. Therefore, I submit that this Government is not making any effort towards this end. I would like to have an explanation on this. My State Government has presented a memorandum. The Chief Minister came here and presented the memorandum. It is with him. He can answer to it. I do not want to point out the memorandum here but I want to bring to the notice of the House the manner in which they have acted. They have alienated the non Congress states in extending the benefits. They have taken the share of the people and misused the money. I would like to have an answer to this point. As my hon. friend said we are weeping for the money and only the lip service is done. But what they have done? How much assistance have they given? How much money have they saved by not spending the money unnecessarily? What priority has been given to the drought? 38 per cent of the population is still below the poverty line.

The poor shepherds and other people in Rajasthan have to walk from one place to another and lead a nomadic life in search of water. On the way, both the cattle and men die. That is the situation in Rajasthan. We know the situation in Kalahandi very well. There are pictures all over which depict the situation in these drought affected areas. But we are more concerned with all the other things. Therefore, what I submit is very relevant. What are the priorities of this Government? What is the manner in which the Central Government is going to share the resources with various States?

I know the problems of my State. Earlier, my State had never faced the problem of drought. But, since the last two years, there is drought consecutively. The pattern of cultivation in my State is peculiar

in the sense that once it is affected, it will be affected for ever. For example, take the case of peppervines. Pepper is an item which is exported and the nation gets a lot of money through pepper exports. The price of pepper has gone up from Rs.12 to Rs. 68. But now, there is no pepper crop and it will take at least another five years to get the next crop. What about coconut? Once a coconut tree is damaged, you have to replant the trees and only after seven years, it yields fruit and it will take nearly 10 to 15 years to get the benefits from this crop. I would like to know the manner in which these losses are evaluated. How are these losses reimbursed? Are the methods of evaluation reviewed? Nothing of this sort is done. I submit that the studies made in this regard by the Government of India were not proper. They are unnecessarily politicising all these issues rather than helping the people. We want an explanation from the Minister.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska): The country has faced the worst drought in the living memory. It is severer in terms of its spread and magnitude. Many States including Orissa and at least two Union Territories are hit by the drought in different degrees. About 265 districts are affected by drought.

Our Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the first person in the country to express his concern over the drought. The moment, the Centre realised the gravity of the drought situation, it has taken steps to mobilise resources inside and outside the country and before any report reached from the States and before a final assessment was made available to the Central Government, Rs.80 crores have been given to different States on an *ad hoc* basis. The Prime Minister has visited every nook and corner of the country affected by drought and he discussed with the State Government's minister and officials and also suggested the action to be taken so that the demands of the people could be met. It is but natural that sometimes, states may inflate their demands.

Madam, I want to know one point from the hon. Minister. It is the Central

Government which gives funds to State Governments. But is there any agency to see whether the funds allocated by the Central Government are utilised for the intended purpose and it reaches the persons who are worst affected by the drought? I also suggest that some steps should be taken to assess the intensity of the problem in detail in each State in consultation with the State Ministers as well as officials and provide relief accordingly. I also suggest that action should be taken to give immediate relief to drought affected areas and to take permanent measures to devise ways to stop misutilisation and diversion of funds. States should provide higher assistance to those areas which are affected most, rather than to those areas which are normally affected. Funds, subsidies, foodgrains, agricultural inputs, nutrients, etc. should be supplied through the States, but it must reach the needy people of affected areas and it should not be misutilised. Giving timely succour to those who need it is an important factor. For the information of the hon. Minister, Rs. 50 crores was given by the Centre to the Orissa Government. Orissa is a very badly affected state due to drought. My district--Ganjam--which is an agricultural district is worst affected. I am saying not because it is my district, but I am saying on the basis of the report of the Government. The hon. Prime Minister has also visited that district. It would have been better, if he would have been taken to the other worst drought affected parts of Ganjam district. After that, followup action is not upto the mark. less than Rs. one crore has been given to that district.

There were 13 districts in Orissa. Regarding drinking water also, the money allotted was less than what was allotted during the normal years. The district suffered from drought. Some rabi crop was raised with great difficulty. But later spoile due to rain in Ganjam district if bucket of water is given to the cultivators, they will give a bucket of rice or a bucket of vegetables. The people there are very hardworking. The Prime Minister had also appreciated their hardwork the cultivators are not getting the seeds. The little rabi crop which was raised is washed away

now, after heavy rains and cyclone. So, the people are suffering very much. The Central Government should not give grants *en bloc* to the states. Let them give these funds to such areas where the people are worst hit and let the magnitude or severity of the drought be taken into consideration, failing which, it will be misutilised or diverted to some other purpose, and we cannot solve the problem. The worst affected people will not get the benefit, though the intention of the Centre and the Prime Minister is that, they should get benefit of the funds allotted. All our programmes fail because of defective implementation and diversion of funds. Steps should be taken to stop it. The problem of drinking water should be given high priority. The funds given by the Centre are not spent on time, proper infrastructure is not created and as such the agency which I have suggested should be created.

I want to submit one more thing and that is regarding the guidelines. The Centre only offer guidelines to the State Governments to work out the plans but it is for the states to implement.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara): Why don't you lay the paper on the Table of the House.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH: The agency should be created to examine how best these funds are utilised.

There should be a National Natural Calamity Commission. What we require are permanent measures to fight droughts and floods. We have got river valleys, water basins and perennial rivers in our country. At the meeting of Water Resources, the Prime Minister has said that the rivers should be connected, as also the river valleys and river basins in different States. This work should be given priority. The money that is given to fight drought, should not be spent for constructing unmetalled roads which are easy to construct and quick to be destroyed.

The hon. Minister should also see that priority is given, while fighting droughts, to

[Shri Somnath Rath]

the most important inputs for the success of agricultural operations. India is endowed with powerful perennial rivers. There is also an ocean of water lying hidden underground in the river valleys. It is estimated, with the present technology that is available, that an irrigation potential of 130 million hectares can be developed as follows:

Major and medium schemes	58.5 million hectares
Minor irrigation schemes	55.0 million hectares
Total	113.5 million hectares

With the development of technology, this figure is expected to be 148.5 million hectares; but upto the end of the 6th Plan, only 68 million hectares of irrigation potential could be developed. For the 7th Plan, it is proposed to have another 13 million hectares of irrigation potential. If we go by this speed, I think we will reach our target...

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA: Why don't you mention the amounts allocated in the 1st and 2nd Plans?

SHRI SOMNATH RATH: I am coming to that. We can reach our target, as I said earlier, only by 2,000 A.D. Efforts must be made to develop the irrigation potential at a much more rapid pace; and if necessary, funds should be diverted for this purpose, and priority should be given to this.

The 7th Plan suggests that only the ongoing major and medium irrigation projects should go on; and to some extent, minor projects can be constructed. If that is so, how are we fight droughts and floods?

The water that flow into the ocean causing havoc during floods can be utilized for irrigation purposes; and more resources should be allocated to speed up the development of the irrigation potential. In this connection, I would appeal to the hon. Minister that ongoing projects in Orissa

should be completed, and more money should be given. Steps should be taken for the construction of the Indravati project. Money meant for construction of Harbhangi project has gone up from Rs. 20 crores to Rs. 43 crores. Rs. 4 crores are available, but this amount has not been utilized so far. The Bhagua project is continuing for 25 year now. Only the salaries of employees, are being paid; and nothing has come up. The construction of the main dam has not started. Similarly Biluamara, Kupati and other projects which have been included in the 7th Plan, should be taken up. Government of India should give instructions to the State Governments to implement all these minor irrigation projects at an early date.

Thank you.

SHRI MADAN PANDEY (Gorakhpur): Madam, Chairman, before I say something I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Agriculture for three things. First, I would congratulate them for presenting before us a statement given us the details of the real condition of drought and floods in the country and on the basis of which we have been able to get an opportunity to have a discussion on the situation. Secondly, I would like to congratulate them that despite the most severe famine of the century this year, not even a single person has been allowed to die of hunger. Thirdly, I would congratulate them that they appear to listen to our points very patiently and appear to be in a mood to take a decision on them.

Madam, it appears to me that Shri Goswami had tried to raise the level of present discussion, but some Members of the opposition are trying to lower its level. In stead of bringing in politics in this issue, it would have been better if the Opposition would have given some unanimous suggestions to the Government so that this problem could have been solved permanently.

I would like to submit most humbly to the hon. Minister and the Government that despite 40 years of our independence, if we still depend on nature for our crops, it

is not a matter of pride for us. It is a fact that we have not allowed the people to die of starvation, but today half the country is reeling under the flood and the other half of the country is facing drought. These are two sides of the coin. We had started our efforts 40 years back, but despite 40 years of our efforts we have not been able to solve these problems. If we go through the records of rainfall and the weather for the last 20 or 25 years, we will find that there have been changes in it. I would like to give you the example of district of Gorakhpur. The average rainfall in district Gorakhpur which used to be 60 inches has come down to 36 or 40 inches and that too is uncertain. As I belong to Gorakhpur, I am, therefore, aware of figures of Gorakhpur, but if you go through the figures of rainfall of the entire country, you would find that there has been radical change in the cycle of rainfall throughout the country.

Second point which requires consideration is that except rivers of South India, all our rivers have their origin in foreign countries. As Shri Goswami was saying that about 3/4th part of river Brahmaputra passes through Tibet and when it comes here, it brings untold miseries for the people of Assam and Bangladesh.

Though we can say that Ganga and Yamuna have their origins at Gangotri and Yamunatori respectively which are in our country, but Kosi and Gandak rivers have their origins in Nepal and these rivers create havoc in the North India. We would, therefore, have to find a solution to this problem. I would like to request the hon. Minister to be serious about it. But if even after 40 years of independence, he looks towards nature for help, the problem cannot be solved. We have to change this situation. Big schemes have been formulated. Near Gorakhpur, a reservoir can be constructed in between the portion of land belonging to Nepal between Rapti and Ghaghra. Talks should be held with Nepal Government in this regard. Though talks have been held in this regard earlier also, but these have not been finalised. With the construction of river valley

projects at various places reservoirs would be constructed and the problems of drought and floods would not arise. We should think in this direction.

Immediate relief you have provided. It is all right. Whatever you could afford, you have provided. If possible, some additional help should also be provided. We have got aid from the World Bank and Japan and some other sources. In this period of crisis, whatever help is available to us from any quarter, we should accept it and provide it to the affected people. But these are only interim measures. You should pay your special attention to the long term measures. It is not proper, if we start thinking only when there is flood and drought in the country. I would like to submit most humbly that we should think at that time also when there are no floods and drought in the country.

I would also like to submit to the hon. Minister that many of our Members of this side and the other side have made a mention of Ganga and Cauvery. I am myself not an engineer, but Ganga Cauvery project was formulated by an engineer who has fortunately been Member of this House also. He has given many suggestions in this regard. I want that the Ministry should extract those suggestions from the files and examine them. As we have formed power grid, similarly, if we want to protect the country from the drought and the floods, we would have to form water grid also. The Members may give their suggestions as to what should be its structure. We should seek the opinion of the experts in the field. Even if we spend the entire outlay of one Five Year Plan on this item of work, it would be worthwhile. If we solve the food problem and the problem of the people affected by the drought and the floods, we can afford to wait a little bit for the solution of other problems.

In the end, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that the grants which he has given to the States, needs to be increased. The State to which I belong has 57 districts. Out of them, 55 districts have been officially declared drought affected,

[Shri Madan Pandey]

but remaining two districts have not been declared drought affected which includes my district also. The districts which have not been declared drought affected should also be declared so, because if one place catches fire, adjoining cannot remain unaffected. Therefore, these districts should also be given equal amount of assistance which is being given to other drought affected districts. I hope the suggestions which I have given would be considered by the hon. Minister and the Government and this problem would be solved in the next Five Year Plan.

With these words, I again express my thanks to you.

SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV (Nalanda): Madam Chairman, the subject of today's discussion flood and drought is quite important in so far as the development of the country and its future is concerned. It is

appropriate that the Government should take over this responsibility and we should admit this fact that even after forty years of independence, we have not been able to check the damage being done by the drought and the floods. It is failure of the Government. The floods and the drought cannot be prevented but these are causing huge losses to the country.

[English]

MR CHAIRMAN: You can continue tomorrow.

18.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, November 25, 1987/Agrahayana 4, 1909 (Saka)