

12.15 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

[English]

**Statement made by the Minister of Agriculture in the House on 26th July, 1989 regarding current flood undertaken by Government**

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we are taking up the discussion under Rule 193, regarding the current flood situation in the country. Shri Shantaram Naik to continue his speech.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Panaji): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was on my legs, yesterday. I was speaking about the flood situation in the four States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Arunachal Pradesh.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had said that it is strange that only the Agriculture Ministry should take the burden of floods. In fact, if the problem of floods and drought is perennial, then, why not create a Special Ministry for floods and drought? Unfortunately, that Ministry will have work throughout the year because they have to take follow up action after the floods.

MR. SPEAKER: What will they do?

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Follow up action.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministry is no answer.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: I do agree. Ultimately, what is required is administration. In case there is a Ministry which pays special attention to it, then something can be achieved. Specially in view of the fact that the total geographical area which is prone to floods in the country is almost one-eighth, that is, 40 million hectares and the area which can be protected with reasonable

production—as has been said in the report of the Government—is 32 million hectares, to manage this 32 million hectares—which is manageable—and to protect, some special machinery is required.

I do agree that during the Seventh Five Year Plan the outlay was Rs. 947 crores. It is quite understandable and a reasonable figure one can say. Since 1954 till date, the Government has spent Rs. 2,297 crores on flood management. Considering our financial restraints, this is certainly a reasonable figure, one should say. But the question is of administration; the administration, today, is run by some sort of a code of relief which governs the giving of finances and day to day administrative matters. It is necessary that this code of relief is up-dated because ultimately Tehsildars and Collectors are guided by that code. If that code is up-dated then the problems that may arise at the Tehsil and village level can be adequately met. Further tomorrow if the situation so requires then instead of going by the code of relief we should have legislation enacted by Parliament such as Drought and Flood Relief Act for the purpose of providing each and every detail of food management.

Secondary in our development aspect we have seen that whenever we want to give Rs. 1 to a villager Rs. 5 are spent on the administrative aspect. Now I would like to know what is the assessment with respect to the amount of flood and drought relief? It has to be assessed what amount goes into administration and what amount goes to the affected people. It will certainly be more than 5:1 ratio.

Further I would like to know about the Model Flood Zoning Bill which had been circulated also. Floods and drought are almost regular annual features and, therefore, such a Bill should have been brought before Parliament for the purpose of deciding several concerned matters. Another

aspect concerns scientific predictions in respect of earthquakes, floods, etc. It seems only some assessment about these natural calamities can be made and not the precise prediction. As you know, Sir, an earthquake took place in Russia. We saw on Television the Russians asking Mr. Gorbachov how is that when we are so developed that we could not predict that earthquake. At that time Mr. Gorbachov replied that despite our development and achievement there can be no clear-cut prediction with respect to earthquakes. So is the case in respect of floods and drought. But I find in this Report about forecasts it has been mentioned that during the year 1988 monsoon season a total of 6731 flood forecasts were issued with 95 per cent accuracy. Is it correct? Ninety-five per cent accuracy with respect to these forecasts does not seem to be correct. If that was the case then we would not have suffered that much damage in Andhra and Maharashtra.

Lastly when you give finances to certain States then we have to see how those finances have been utilised by the State Governments because they are issued under certain guidelines. We have got here CAG's report with respect to floods in Andhra Pradesh and there they have observed certain things with respect to 1986 floods; namely, that Rs. 5.38 crores were drawn from the Treasury far in excess of requirements and deposited with banks or other executing agencies although a certificate of utilisation of funds for the relief purposes was recorded. Materials like medicine, cement, steel and bitumen valued at Rs. 9.90 crores were purchased far in excess of relief operations and works. Rupees 1.3 crores were spent on relief in 'mandals' not notified as flood affected. Then contrary to guidelines for utilisation of Central assistance Rs. .92 crores were spent on salaries of work-charged staff and equipment like air-conditioners. Now see air-conditioners worth

Rs. .92 crores were purchased out of flood relief amount. Then improvements to several irrigation works not connected with flood damages were taken up at a cost of Rs. 2.98 crores. Now such observations have been made. They are talking loudly of CAG. The CAG has castigated the Andhra Pradesh Government like anything. As there is not enough time available to my disposal now, I am not quoting. Similar observations are available regarding the utilisation of the drought relief funds by the Andhra Pradesh Government. You have to think, when you are giving money to the Governments headed by regional parties, how they are going to utilise that amount. When you are giving loans under Centrally sponsored schemes, you have to be stricter. They don't have any faith in the democratic set-up. Their present Chief Minister had once said that the 'Centre' does not exist.

[Translation]

Such a statement was made by him. If the Government of Andhra Pradesh, who don't have little faith in democracy, is given any aid, the Central Government should directly supervise its utilisation so that it reaches the poor people.

[English]

The same is the case with the Assam Government. I had said that Assam Government is ... \*\* ... Government. The bureaucracy in that State is bankrupt. They have no money to pay salaries to their employees. Kindly consider all these aspects with respect to giving central assistance to such State Governments.

**SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have been discussing the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture on 26th July, 1989 regarding the current flood situation in the

[Sh. Sharad Dighe]

country and relief measures undertaken by the Government. The hon. Minister has made a fairly correct statement on 26th July regarding the situation arising out of the floods throughout the country. Para 4.1 refers to the extensive damage done in Maharashtra and the loss of life reported so far. Since the statement was made, further information has been available. It shows that the description of the loss of life and property, which has been shown as per the information available on 26th July, 1989, falls short of the present information that is available so far. It was stated in the statement that the loss of life reported so far was 332. Now, it is fairly known that as far as Maharashtra is concerned, 609 bodies have been recovered so far. According to the Press reports, nearly 1,000 people must have died and further bodies would still be recovered as far as the loss of life is concerned. Further extensive damages have been reported. I am sure that when the hon. Minister visited Maharashtra from 29th July, he must have already observed the damage due to calamities which, according to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, runs into hundreds of crores of rupees as far as Maharashtra is concerned.

12.29 hrs.

[PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR *in the Chair*]

Not only the houses have collapsed, but also many lives have been lost. Roads, including highways, have been submerged. The road-links have been cut for several towns and villages in Maharashtra. A large number of fishermen have also lost their lives. The bodies of 16 fishermen were washed ashore in Bombay itself at Colaba, Nariman Point, Chowpatty, Malabar, Worli, Bandra and Zuhu. According to an estimate, several fishermen have lost their lives in spite of the signal that was given by the Government of Maharash-

tra. Several adventurous fishermen had gone inside the sea and have lost their lives. The heavy damage was due to excessively heavy rain in a short time. For example, Raigad district received 24 inches rain in 24 hours and Kandla in Pune received 20 inches of rain in four hours. Therefore, this calamity has come suddenly and as far as Maharashtra is concerned, a lot of damage has been reported and discovered. In this situation, no doubt, there are some acts of heroism also. A police constable, a primary teacher and a headmaster have lost their families but they worked for 18 hours as far as the relief work is concerned. It is not only that lives have been lost, houses have collapsed, roads have been damaged, but several public institutions have also been damaged such as hospitals, telephone exchanges and buildings like bakeries, flour mills, petrol pumps, etc. Electricity was also cut off. For example, in Raigad district, 1843 villages had to go without power and power supply was restored to only 1185 villages. Generally speaking, power shortage was there everywhere in the State. My submission is that extensive damage has been made in Maharashtra. Of course, the Union Government was very prompt in their action. The Minister had also visited the place and aids had been rushed to the State of Maharashtra. But some substantial aid will have to be given to Maharashtra. My further submission is that aid should not merely depend on the loss of life or property here and there. We should not merely say that we have paid Rs. 25000 for one death, Rs. 10000 for loss of property and some thousands for loss of a boat of a fisherman. We must also consider the loss or damage made to the public institutions like hospitals and telephone exchanges. Roads and highways have been damaged vitally. So, public losses which have occurred also have to be reimbursed to the State Government. This aspect should also be taken into consideration while providing aid to the State as far as this calamity is concerned. Therefore, don't merely count the loss of life and

property and pay accordingly. Consider the loss to the public institutions also while rushing aid to Maharashtra State. All this, I am sure, would be done expeditiously and the Minister himself has said in an interview in Maharashtra that the earlier procedure for granting Central assistance to the State hit by natural calamity was time-consuming. Now, the Central team visits the State within a week of getting the assessment report and in turn submits its report to the Union Government and then funds would be sanctioned immediately after the report had been received. So, the old policy for helping the State should not be followed. Advance aid should be given to the States so that they can make timely use of the money. Finally, I would urge upon the Government that a permanent plan should be drawn to meet a similar situation in future as we come across such a situation every now and then. We should start giving aid to the States as soon as the floods are detected. Many hon. Members have made a suggestion and perhaps, it is before the Government's consideration. We must have a permanent machinery and a permanent plan just as the fire fighting machinery. When the button is pressed on, the fire fighting machinery is put in action. Similarly, some such machinery should be created so that prompt relief can be given as soon as the calamity arises. The button can be pressed for giving relief. The aim should be to prevent further damage; the aim should not be only to give relief to the people. That has also to be done, but our aim should be to create permanent machinery so that in such situations, further damage can be avoided, loss of life can be avoided and loss of property can also be minimised as far as such situations are concerned.

From this point of view, I urge upon the Government to think about it and draw up permanent plans to meet such situations. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

\*SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): Mr. Chairman, many parts of the country are in the grip of devastating floods. Every year we face flood and every year heavy loss of life and damage to property occur. It seems the nature is engaged in a furious death dance. This year according to preliminary estimates about 750 people have already died and thousands of hectares of crops have been damaged. In my state of Kerala above more than 70 persons died. The actual toll may be much bigger in the country. Of course, the hon. Minister of Agriculture Shri Bhajan Lalji who is a very competent and efficient minister has already started providing relief to the affected people. I am sure, under his able supervision, we will be able to meet the situation effectively.

We have spent thousands of crores of rupees on flood control so far. But the flood could not be controlled. Large scale damage to life and property takes place every year. According to an estimate as much as five percent of the cultivable land is damaged every year in floods. So, now we have to think about the preventions of floods. The Government should take long term measures to prevent it. There are two important steps which should be taken. First, we must link all the major rivers in the country. When it is done, the flood water in one river can be diverted to another river which is not flooded. Secondly, stringent measures should be taken to stop destruction of forest. Because of the denudation of forest, the soil gets washed down the mountains and silt up the river bed. When the river bed gets silted up, naturally there will be more flood. Therefore, more stringent measures should be taken to stop deforestation.

So far as Kerala is concerned, the devastation has been more intense. The dis-

\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.



[Sh. V.S. Vijayaraghavan]

districts affected are Idukki, Palghat, Vayanad, Pathananthitta, Kottayam etc. There has been widespread damage of crops in Kerala. The total loss is estimated to be more than Rs. 500 crores. The Government of Kerala has demanded Rs. 518 crores to provide relief to the people. While deciding on the assistance to Kerala a very important thing should be borne in mind. In other states while the seasonal crops get damaged, in Kerala it is the cash crops which are mostly damaged. Cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber arecanut etc. take 5 to 7 years to mature and give yield. And thereafter these crops last for 40 to fifty years. When such crops are damaged, the loss is much greater, as it takes many years for these crops to become mature. Therefore, special consideration should be given to this matter.

Then, the study team should be sent immediately and they should be asked to meet the elected representatives of the people in the affected areas. Last year when we faced the most severe drought in the state, the study team was sent, but they were shown round some places by the State officials and were not allowed to meet the representatives of the people. That should not happen. The study team should be given clear direction in this regard. I would thank Sri Solankiji for his visit to many flood affected areas in Kerala. He has seen for himself the devastation that has taken place. Since, the level of assistance will be decided on the basis of the report of the study team, I would request the hon'ble Minister to send the team immediately.

In my district Palghat, 5 persons have died. There is large scale devastation in the Attappady and Nelliampati regions of the district. Nelliampati is a plantation area when because of the flood havoc, many plantation based factories have been closed resulting in the workers losing their jobs. Attappady

and Nelliampati are cut off from the rest of the district due to heavy landslides. Roads have been damaged and the communication system has been disrupted. It has become difficult to take food supplies to these areas. The financial condition of the state Government is very precarious. So liberal assistance should be given to the state.

Palghat lies in the rainshadow area of the western Ghats. Drought and flood occur in the same areas. There is a technology mission functionaries in Palghat. This mission should be asked to study the phenomenon of drought and flood occurring in the same place and suggest measures to control the floods.

I am sure, the Hon. Ministers who is a very competent person, will pay serious attention to the points I have raised.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAIISI (Hyderabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, every year some part or the other of this country is hit by floods causing huge destruction. It would be better if a perennial plan is evolved to check this havoc. It would protect the country from the loss caused by floods and save the money which the Central Government have to provide as flood relief. But there seems to be no solution in sight at present. The recent cyclone caused heavy damage in most part of the country. The State of Andhra Pradesh, which I represent, suffered loss of 144 lives beside loss of property. I would like the Central Government to pay immediate attention to the affected areas and provide relief to the affected people. The capital of this State viz. Hyderabad too suffered a heavy loss. The loss is estimated to be about Rs. 30 crore. Many houses collapsed and a number of people died. The roads were damaged and the entire drainage and water supply system was put out of gear. As a result, the people of Hyderabad have been facing great inconvenience. I would like to inform the hon. Minister that Shri N.T. Rama

Rao has no soft corner for the city of Hyderabad as his party has been defeated in the recent Municipal Corporation elections and that is why he is giving a step-motherly treatment to this city. In my opinion, whatever relief is being provided, it should be given through the Municipal Corporation. Then only the people of that city would be benefited. But if relief assistance is provided through the State Government, the people would be deprived of its benefits. To prove my point, I would like to give you an instance. When houses collapsed due to heavy rain, the collector announced sanction of about Rs. 2 lakh to the people for providing them food. But when the Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation met him, he told him that he was instructed not to go ahead with this measure. You can well imagine the situation when the people, who were on the verge of starvation, were deprived of the relief. Such type of partisan attitude is being adopted by the State Government. I would submit that the areas where roads have been destroyed, drainage system has been damaged, houses have collapsed and the water supply system has completely gone out of gear should be provided relief. If the Central Government wants the relief to reach the affected people, the relief assistance should be given direct to the people of Hyderabad. Otherwise the relief meant for them would go waste. A lot of hue and cry was raised at the time of the presentation of the report of the Auditor General. The same Auditor General wrote that the relief funds provided for distribution to the cyclone and flood victims were not utilised properly, rather they were diverted to other works. When it is on record that the funds were not properly utilised to tackle the threat posed by floods, how can one say that this time, they are going to make proper use of funds? It is in the light of these facts that I am stressing the need to allocate these funds direct to the Municipal Corporation so that they are able to spend the money to normalise the situation in Hyderabad city. Otherwise, the funds

allocated by the Central Government would be spent on other works and the people would be deprived of the relief. With these words I thank you for providing me an opportunity to participate in the discussion.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS (Jahnjharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to bring only 2-3 issues to your notice. Only two-three days back, I met in the library an ex-M.P. belonging to the AGP who said that as the flood situation was being discussed in the House, I should participate in it to apprise the Government and the House of the situation in Assam. I told him that he was the person who ran away from shouldering his responsibility. It was his duty to apprise the Government and the House of the situation in Assam and now he was asking me to plead the case of his State. I told him that if he wanted to plead the case, he should have been present in the House. In short, the problem of floods is a serious problem today whether it is in Assam, north-east region, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka or Andhra Pradesh. As has been stated in the House, we have got the facility of super-computer and we are in a position to easily forecast as to where the rainfall would be deficient and where it would be in excess. But I am unable to understand why that super computer did not forecast floods well in time or gave indication to the effect that such and such areas would receive excess rains. If that super computer is not functioning properly at present, immediate measures should be taken to see that it makes accurate forecast, so that people could take precautionary measures well in time. It would be in the interest of the Central as well as the State Government, as it would save the lives and property of the people.

June 15, 1989 was a historical day for the people of North Bihar because it was on this day that the Hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Shri Bhajan Lal arrived at Patna during their visit to Bihar. The Hon. Prime Minister had declared that

[Dr. G.S. Rajhans]

floods would be brought under control with the help of Technology Mission. This is by no means a small thing. It is a very big project as it would involve expenditure worth crores of rupees. I would like to express gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister on my own behalf and on behalf of the people of North-Bihar, particularly, the people of Mithila, that they realised the gravity of the situation and decided to control the havoc of floods with the help of Technology Mission. My submission in this regard is that measures should be taken at the earliest because people of North Bihar fall victim to the floods every year and they suffer heavy loss beyond description. Floods which struck the Northern region of Bihar two years back, were the most disastrous during the last 150 years. I would like to submit it again in the House that it was only Shri Rajiv Gandhi who came forward to provide relief to the flood affected people and took steps to rehabilitate them. I wrote him letters and he provided as much assistance as was required. But it is mere misfortune of the people of Bihar that they were not benefited by the relief which was provided to that State. When I wrote him complaining that the relief was not reaching the people, he contacted the Chief Secretary immediately and the Chief Secretary wrote a letter to me and conveyed detailed information regarding the relief assistance provided to different blocks in my constituency.

That letter proved very useful to me. I got ten thousand copies of that letter printed and distributed them among the people through the volunteers in the entire area. Then the people caught hold of the B.D.Os, C.Os and other officers and asked them about allocated funds which were provided by the Central Government. You would be surprised to know that under pressure these officers released that amount. I have done a successful experiment and therefore, I would like to request that if any assistance is pro-

vided by the Central Government to the State Government—whether it is Congress ruled State or non-Congress ruled State—the concerned M.P. should be informed about the full details. Similarly, the State Governments should also be instructed to provide details of the assistance to the M.P. of the area and the M.P. should apprise the people about it so that the funds are not swindled or pocketed by vested interests. The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has been launched so that people could be saved from the clutches of these middlemen. I have done an experiment. When I was informed that this much money and foodgrains have been provided for the flood victims in the constituency, I told the people about it. They besieged the officers. It was only under heavy pressure that they brought out goods from their houses which were meant for flood victims. So, I would like to say that people must be educated. I would request that whenever any assistance is provided the people's representative from the area must be informed about it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as regards the problem of floods, I would like to submit that in our country and particularly in the North-Eastern Bihar and North Bihar, there are certain areas, which have to face the fury of floods every year. The land near the river belts i.e. the embankments have caved in and the rivers have become shallow. Unless deep dredging is done in Kamla Balan, Kosi and Gandak rivers, this problem can not be solved. Dredging work has to be done in the Ganga river also because the water of these rivers flow into the Ganga and then flows down into the sea. Dredging work should be undertaken on a permanent basis and it should be a continuing process. Dredging of one river will not serve the purpose. In this regard I would like to say that we should study as to how China has controlled the floods. It is true that there have been floods in China this year and many people died in them. But when I went to China I found that

they have controlled the floods in a systematic manner.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would also like to submit that mostly poor people die due to floods in our country. Therefore, an insurance scheme should be introduced for the flood victims. An insurance scheme has been formulated for the people whose dwellings (Jhonparis) are destroyed in fire. They get a certain amount of money automatically so that they may again construct their dwellings. I would like to request that a similar scheme should be formulated for the flood victims. If a hamlet is washed away or destroyed in flood, financial assistance should automatically be given. Similarly, if the breadwinner of the family dies, money should be given to the family automatically. Provision should be made that if the B.D.O. or Sarpanch of the area issues a certificate to this effect, the family of the deceased should automatically get the money. Such an arrangement should be made by the Government. Those, who have seen the fury of floods, alone know the devastation and havoc it causes. On the one hand crops and other things are destroyed in floods, while on the other snakes also appear. Thousands of snakes come with the floods and many people die of snake bite. There is no arrangement of medicines in the villages to cure the victims of snake bite. Therefore, certain amount of money under the insurance scheme should be given to these people.

12.00 hrs.

Many people die in epidemics caused by floods including Cholera and Jaundice. Many other diseases, which have not been diagnosed, come in the wake of it. They do not get drinking water. Therefore, I would like to request the Government that money should automatically be given to the people who die due to these diseases. I would also like to submit that under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana the Government should construct highrise

buildings in flood prone areas, so that people can take shelter there during the floods. Thousands of people die in the floods because they do not have any shelter. I have myself seen this two years back. As has been stated by Shri Shahabudin just now, assistance can be sought from other countries and international agencies to control floods. But I am sorry to say that Group of Seven countries have provided assistance to Bangladesh for flood relief and not to us. They discriminate and they expect us to compromise our sovereignty. But this will never happen.

Lastly, I would like to submit that precautionary measures should be taken in the flood prone areas. With these words, I thank you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. NAMGYAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the House agree, we can sit through the Lunch as we have a lot of Members to speak on floods.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the sense of the House to continue through the Lunch?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Bhagat Paswan.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN (Roser): Mr. Chairman, Sir, water is elixir. If the officials of the flood control department could make proper use of water, floods would have been a blessing for the country instead of a curse.

[Sh. Ram Bhagat Paswan]

12 states in the country have been ravaged by floods. Rivers in Bihar, Bengal, Assam and Manipur are in spate. The situation in Lakhimpur, Shivsagar, Sonipura, Jorhat and Nowgaon districts of Brahmaputra valley is worst. Gandak, Bagmati and Kamla Balan rivers in Bihar are crossed the danger mark because of continuous rainfall. In Singhia, Bilhaur and Gharsiapura districts in Darbhanga-Samastipur constituency the rivers are overflowing. The rivers in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat have also in Spate due to heavy rains. Floods have caused heavy loss of life and property in these flood affected states. Many houses have collapsed. 21 people have died in Kerala alone besides 4 thousand houses which have been partially damaged and 15 thousand houses which have been destroyed totally. So far as Bihar is concerned, floods have become a permanent feature there. Bihar has to face the fury of floods every year and consequently there are three problems viz. hunger, disease and shelter. Crops in thousands of acres of land are destroyed by the floods and as a result thereof follows the famine. Worst diseases and epidemics like Cholera break out. There is no arrangement for medicines. Apart from this, the houses of the poor collapse or are washed away. They are ruined. These are the permanent problems of North Bihar. We are thankful to the Prime Minister that he visited to the areas which were hit by natural calamities, whether floods or drought. He made efforts to solve their problems and provide succor to them. The people of India are grateful to the Prime Minister for this gesture. I would also like to thank the Minister of Agriculture because he has sent a team of officers to assess the loss in these flood affected areas. Whenever flood or earthquake have hit Bihar, efforts have been made to provide assistance immediately. The people of Bihar wholeheartedly thank Shri Bhajan Lal. Sir, the schemes formulated to check floods are

proving harmful. Had these schemes been formulated judiciously, the destruction caused by floods in Bihar could have been avoided. You can compare the extent of destruction caused by floods before the formulation of these schemes and after that. Under this scheme many new dams and canals have been constructed and many dams have been extended. In Bihar one river is flowing from north to south and the other is flowing from east to west. Dams are being constructed in such a way that the flood waters do not recede for months together whereas earlier it used to recede within three days. The situation in Bihar is very critical. Before launching these schemes only 100 to 200 houses collapsed but now atleast 5000 houses collapse during floods. Earlier one hundred to two hundred people died but now thousands of people die due to floods. One can see thousand of carcasses of animals floating in the rivers whereas earlier there was none. Now the flood water remains for months together. Earlier, it used to recede within four days. About Rs. 22 thousand crore are being spent on flood control scheme. But this scheme has been formulated in such a way that instead of flood control it is causing heavy loss to the country. I would like to submit that houses should be constructed for the flood affected people so that their problems could be solved.

Sir, besides there are three or four schemes which are pending. These schemes relate to flood control. If these schemes are completed, for example, the Kamla Balan dam is extended upto the Kosi river or it two or three rivers are linked with the Ganga, the excess water will be released into it, making the water level safe and floods can be prevented. The dams are deliberately constructed of sub-standard quality with the result that they get breached every year. This is done, so that there is a need to repair them every year and they can pocket the funds. Thus they are playing with the lives of the people. The hon. Minister has been a



well-wisher of the people and a successful Minister also. He can enquire why the Kamla Balan dam and the Kosi dam get breached again and again. I would urge him to conduct a CBI enquiry in this case as even the senior officers are involved in it. This would prevent misuse of funds which are meant for the welfare of the people.

Sir, if a dam is constructed at the source of Kosi, Kamla Balan and Bagmati it would not only help in generating substantial power but also control the floods completely. It will also save crores of rupees that are being spent in the name of flood relief. Today, relief has no meaning for the public but it is the officers who gain by it. Therefore, the responsibility of distributing relief funds should be handed over to the Panchayats. A vigilance Committee should be set up for monitoring. If the funds are given to the officers they swindle it. These are temporary measures, but nevertheless they provide relief to the affected people. The officers who swindle the funds should not be spared if it comes to the knowledge of the Government. I thank you for giving me time to speak and hope that Shri Bhajan Lal will undertake a tour of the flood-affected areas and find an effective solution to their problems.

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am making my submission in connection with the statement made by the hon. Minister on 26th July in this House. It is tragic that 12 states of the country are in grip of devastating floods. We have been debating for the past four years on the issue of floods and trying to find a permanent solution to the problem. The Hon. Prime Minister has also been making categorical announcements in connection with tackling the problem of floods in Bihar but the moot point is that although we hold discussions on this subject every year and expect that some effective measures will be taken in this regard during the coming years, there is no indication of any positive outcome in this

matter; rather this problem has become even more serious. What are the reasons behind this state of affairs? If we look at the allotment of funds made since 1957, we find that more than Rs. 2,000,00 crore have already been spent till date on flood relief. In spite of incurring so much expenditure, we have failed to tackle the flood problem and it has become even more grave.

13.11 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

Is this not the main reason behind our failure to control floods that we have not been able to execute our flood control schemes properly?

Pt. Nehru wanted the water of major rivers to be diverted into canals, so that the farmers are benefited and the floods can be checked. I hail from Gopalganj in Bihar which is a border area. There was a scheme to construct the Saran Canal so that the water of the Gandak river is diverted and supplied to the farmers of that area. The hon. Members from Uttar Pradesh are also present in the House. You will be surprised to know that the Saran Canal was completely dry this year and there was a breach in the dam. The canal which emerges from Balmiki Nagar in Uttar Pradesh is not in a good condition. Pt. Nehru's idea was that small fields in Bihar will be irrigated by this canal and it will increase the agricultural production but today things are quite different. The whole area gets flooded due to the overflow in this canal. You will observe that all the new canal projects taken up in Bihar are serving little purpose because they have become shallow due to silt deposits. If water is released from Uttar Pradesh the Saran canal overflows and the fields get flooded.

According to an old Scientific opinion, the big fishes in the sea and oceans help in desilting them and maintaining their depths.

[Sh. Kali Prasad Pandey]

Therefore, it follows that with the constant depletion of fish in our rivers there is no natural check on silting and rivers have become very shallow. Under these circumstances it is impossible to control floods. The hon. Minister is himself in charge of these works in Bihar and is conversant with the actual situation prevailing there.

My constituency, Gopalganj was affected by severe floods in 1980, 1981 and 1983. The people whose houses were washed away in these floods and were rendered shelterless have not been rehabilitated so far. No schemes have been formulated for their rehabilitation and they are still living on the river banks under the open sky.

The flood affected people are under double pressure. On one hand they face starvation and on other, they are served notices for early repayment of loans. A survey should be conducted to find out the number of people who had taken loan for the purpose of acquiring land and building houses. Under these circumstances, their loans should be written off. If this measure is taken it will definitely help in saving the poor people from starvation.

The Government should provide the required funds for desilting the canals. The condition of bridges in my state is also very miserable. The bridges which should have a life-span of 50 years last only 10 to 12 years. I dare say, that these bridges will collapse in the near future.

This year is being celebrated as the Nehru Centenary Year. The canals which were constructed during Pt. Nehru's time are not serving any useful purpose today. Since 1984, there is little water left in the canals of Bihar. The excess water in the rivers and rivulets of Uttar Pradesh flows unchecked into Bihar with the result, there is flood like

situation in the State throughout the year. I would like that a separate corporation should be set up for the control of floods similar to the one which has been set up for the National Highways under the direct control of hon. Shri Rajesh Pilot. This will ensure proper utilisation of relief funds. Besides, the report of the flood situation should be submitted to the Central Government every month. You are aware that the Centre extends crores of rupees for flood-relief during the time of floods. You should make arrangements to ensure that there is proper utilisation of these funds. I have observed that a few bags of sand are thrown into the canals whereas it is said that one thousand bags have been used for checking the overflow of water. In this way the engineers and contractors pocket the funds.

Arrangements should also be made for the supply of medicines during the floods. Medical centres should be opened in flood affected areas so that the lives of people could be saved.

While reiterating what I have said earlier, I would like to submit that some permanent arrangements to tackle the flood problem should be made for the flood prone areas such as Gopalganj, Eastern and Western Champaran, Darbhanga, Madhubani etc. so that the lives of people residing in these areas could be saved. Alongwith this the hon. Minister should assure the House in his reply that in the near future a permanent solution to flood problem will be found so that the people could be assured that next year they will not have to face the fury of floods.

SHRI RAM RATAN RAM (Hajipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to express my views on the current flood situation in the country, which is under discussion in the House.

The Government definitely deserves our

thanks for the steps it is taken for the smooth operation of relief works to combat the grim flood situation in Assam, Manipur, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala etc. But I would like to say that floods are not a new phenomenon here as we have floods every year which becomes a thing of past in its aftermath. We spend billions of rupees in the name of floods control. But why does not the Government take such measures by which, with a slightly higher expenditure for once only floods could be controlled permanently and lives of the people living in thickly populated areas could be saved. We take these measures every year and spend billions of rupees on them. During the next rains, we again make a hue and cry for flood control measures. Today we are making our all-out efforts to control floods and take relief measures. However in this connection I would like to present before you the picture of flood situation in the states like Assam, Manipur, Andhra Pradesh etc. along with that of Bihar.

I have received a report today itself that the flood situation in North Bihar is very critical. A team comprising of the officials of the Central Water Commission, Ganga Flood Control Board and Pune Flood Control Research Institute is going to visit North Bihar today. The flood waters have entered various areas in North Bihar i.e. Darbhanga, Jhanjharpur and other parts of Bihar and people have started fleeing the areas right now. A proposal for executing the Kosi Project was submitted to the Government and the Government has been doing its best to save North Bihar from the havoc of flood not now but for the last many years with a very heavy expenditure of billions of rupees on the preventive measures. Now we have been able to construct the Kosi embankment with the active cooperation of the Government. Even after the construction of the above embankment breaches do occur. It has created new problems for the people. Earlier, when we had no control new problems for the people. Earlier, when we had no control

over floods, the public in general was prepared to combat the situation of floods. But today they have become dependent on the flood control measures being taken by the Central as well as the State Governments. Today when breaches develop in the embankment or some dam collapses the people have to face a very critical situation. I have received a report to-day itself that North Bihar is also facing the fury of floods. I, therefore, request the Government to take immediate relief measures in Bihar in the same way as they have taken the relief measures and immediate action in other states. If the Government does not remain alert right from now, this year, two crores of people will be affected by floods in Bihar like the previous years. So far as the question of flood control is concerned, it is not a new thing. Every year we spend billions of rupees all along the Kosi and in North Bihar. But I feel that we should find a permanent solution to the problem so that, at least, we could save people and check flood havoc. But what are the reasons that we have not been able to do so? Our bureaucrats send their reports to Government that they have taken appropriate steps to control floods. But in fact the situation is always quite the opposite. There is always a wide difference between their words and actions. But it is the people of that area who have to face the consequences.

In this connection I would like to make a submission about my area, Vaishali. Vaishali is a place of great historical importance. Even today we believe that when there was no democracy any where in the world it was Vaishali which came to be known as the first republic. But today it stands perennially affected by floods. Most of the areas in the district remain encircled by and look like small islands for 4 to 5 months in a year and the people living in these areas cannot go anywhere. I have written dozens of letters to the Government of Bihar for the construction of a pontoon bridge on the river Ganga to the

[Sh. Ram Ratan Ram]

connect the areas on the two sides of the river. It will provide some relief to these people. One such bridge is lying unused and gathering dust in North Bihar. It can be brought from that place and used in Raghavpur area. The above bridge has not so far been put to any use. Is it not a matter of shame for us? On the one hand a pontoon bridge is lying unused in an area and on the other hand people of other area are making persistent demand for such a bridge. I, therefore, request the Government of India to intervene in the matter and ask the Government of Bihar to dismantle the pontoon bridge which is lying unused in Begusarai and Khagenia area of North Bihar because a permanent bridge has been provided there. This pontoon bridge may be brought over to Raghavpur area. But my request falls flat. I would like to tell that there is another big problem in Vaishali. It is the problem of water logging. Due to water logging at a number of places in Vaishali, thousands of people have to live in water logged areas. When further flood water reaches here from the adjoining areas, it can not be absorbed and people are washed away by flood waters. Though crores of rupees were provided for the provision of a drainage system for outflow of accumulated water and schemes were prepared for this work, but no action has been taken so far on it. Water-accumulation is a long standing problem in my area which has resulted in loss to thousands of people and devastation of vast areas of land. The common man is not getting any relief from this menace. The general public of the area has been clamouring for a solution to the above problem. Though there are floods every year in our area but nobody talks of providing relief. It is a matter of great shame for us. I cannot reach the area. Through you, I would, therefore, like to request the Government to construct a pontoon bridge at Raghavpur which looks like an island for want facilities to drain out the accumulated water and make imme-

diately efforts to solve the above problem.

I would also like to add that after the floods, scores of other problems arise. I have already spoken on the flood control. We must control floods because it is the poor people who suffer most during floods as they are rendered homeless. You will find no road in North Bihar on the sides of which people have not taken shelter. People leave their homes, come to road sides, construct jhuggis and live in them. There is no place for their cattle. Thousands of cattle are washed away by flood waters every year. I have made a request to the Department of Animal Husbandry to find some way out to save the cattle of these people. In North Bihar, cattle is the prime wealth of the poor people. Though every effort is being made to save that wealth yet it gets destroyed. The other measures like supply of ration and construction of houses for the poor people are not being implemented properly. Financial assistance provided by the Government does not reach them. Due to lack of proper distribution, the money does not reach the poor. I would like to request you to, at least, send such a team which would try to give maximum relief to poor people. Rich and influential people happen to corner the entire amount of assistance. As a result, the relief meant for the poor does not reach them. I want that, at least, relief work operations should be done honestly and properly. The poor Harijans should, be provided at least that much amount of relief with which they can build up jhuggis in place of their houses which were washed away by the floods. After the havoc caused by rain, winter also sets in. But like animals they find no place to live in. They lie shelterless in the open. Kindly provide maximum relief to the landless poor and the unemployed so that they could like human beings. Besides this, the distribution system should also be streamlined. I feel that if it is done they will not more blame the Government and whenever we visit these areas, we can say that the Government is providing relief to

them. The officers entrusted with the work of relief should perform their duties sincerely and honestly. District Vaishali and North Bihar have already faced the fury of floods. But, as I have already said a team comprising of the officials of the Central Water Commission, Ganga Flood Control Board and Pune Research Institute for Flood Control is going to visit these places to assess the flood situation. In view of this, while drawing the attention of the Government I would like to request the hon. Prime Minister to provide relief to Bihar as liberally as it is being done in case of other States.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Salem-pur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion on floods in this House has almost become an annual feature. This discussion now appears to have assumed a shape of ritual which we are obliged to perform. If the suggestions made were implemented even partially, some remedy would have now been found out. As my constituency is a floodprone area, more time needs to be given to me. No doubt, a large number of people in South India and Assam have also been ruined due to floods. Our colleagues have already expressed their concern on their plight. I hail from the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, whose one part is struck by flood and the other by drought. Hardly any year passes when Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria and Balia district do not suffer from the devastation could be floods. Today a vast track of land spread over between Lucknow and Delhi is reeling under drought where was Basti, Deoria, Basti and Gorakhpur districts are in the grip of floods. People travelling by trains along with course of rivers passing through the districts might have witnessed the scene and for the moment mistaken it for a sea as the river and the plains of the area have taken the shape of a sea, because a vast area has been submerged by flood waters. This happens every year. No repair is made to the breaches caused in the dams till the floods strike next time. Our colleague has rightly pointed out that only after the floods strike an area, our leaders and the officials rise from them slumber and realise the magnitude of devastation

caused by the floods and sanction the amount for carrying out repairs to the breaches in dams. I have seen with my own eyes at bamboo sticks being used to stop the gushing flood waters though funds had been sanctioned for the repairs of the dam. Last year on my visit to Pindi, I found that attempts were being made to the strengthen the dam on Ghagra river with the help of bamboos to enable it to withstand the gush blow of flood waters. A report on flood situation is submitted every year. It would be better if the branches in dams are repaired well before the floods occur. However, it is not done, as a result of which public money is wasted and misused. I would like to draw your attention to Deoria and Balia districts. Deoria and Balia districts are surrounded by the rivers from all sides. Narayani river flows in the North, Ganga and Ghagra in the South, Rawati in the West and Gandak in the middle. Besides, there are a number of rivulets. Hardly any year passes when some areas or the other are not submerged by flood waters. In my constituency, 250 villages were submerged by flood waters and crops were destroyed last year. Some remedial measures should be taken in areas suffering from this recurring problem. I may submit that Nawalpur, Salempur, Pyasi, Babusara, Bankata, Bhatni, Jignamishr Bhatneji villages situated on the bank of river chooti Gandak are suffering erosion by the flood water and they suffer from it every year. If four embankments are needed, only two are constructed. Funds are sanctioned every year. If these villages are not protected from soil erosion, there will be no land left to rehabilitate the people living there. An amount of crores of rupees is shown on the paper as spent but it is not properly utilised. Funds for construction of embankments at Barhaji Bazar and Pindi along the river Ghagra were sanctioned but no amount was released. If it is not constructed, the whole area will be swallowed by the river. Barhaj, Bhagalpur, Pindi, Belchara, Haldi Rampur, Nilbar, Kathaula are all situated on the river bank and they are being eroded by the river waters. We are living at a place which is facing soil erosion. Scheme was formulated long ago and we had suggested yet another



[Sh. Ram Nagina Mishra]

scheme that after holding talks with the Nepal Government, an arrangement should be made to control the flood waters. However, that scheme could not materialised. Before occurrence of floods arrangements should be made to save the villages which are being eroded and getting submerged in flood water. If that is not done, lakhs and crores of rupees spent will go waste. More than 50 villages in Bhatpat area in my constituency have been submerged by flood waters from Haha Drain. There is 4 feet deep water on the road. Recently an aerial survey as was made Shri S.B. Chavan was also one of the members of the survey team. It looked like a sea. A scheme to construct a dam there is already pending. This usual ritual of expressing grief over the calamity in the House will not at all serve the purpose. A flood board has been constituted. The Government should send a central team and make proper arrangements. Otherwise Gorphpur Deoria and Balia will be ruined. As regards compensation for loss suffered due to flood, I would like to submit that last year also thousands of houses were destroyed in my constituency. Compensation for the same is being paid now after one year of the calamity. I think that the compensation will be paid next year to the people whose houses have been distorted in this year's floods. After all why does this happen? If I am wrong, the Government may get it investigated and I may be taken to task for making a wrong statement. I would like to urge upon the Government that it should get the entire facts investigated and find out whether my submission is true or not? Today people are starving due to untimely relief because compensation for the last year is being paid now. I do not understand the use of such a companion. Some time ago when I was on my way to Haldiram, the dam breached near Bansaon, as a result of which 8 villages in the vicinity were submerged and the people from those areas took shelter on the road, causing road blockade for a stretch of one kilometre. I was also held up there. As my car was carrying a flag on it, the people gathered around me and blocked the passage. The police also reached there. When I request the people humbly,

they lifted the blockade and allowed me to move ahead. I called on the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, who was resting at his home, unmindful of the tragedy faced by the people. When I told him that people have been rendered homeless due to floods and therefore he should make arrangements for boats, he replied that he was sending a requisition for the same to Varanasi. You can very well understand the consequences in such a situation. Deoria and Gorakhpur are struck by floods every year and people are ruined. This will happen in future as well and the same old story would be repeated that the requisition for boats is being sent to Varanasi. Relief from the Government is sent only when the people are totally ruined. My submission is that a permanent solution to this problem of floods should be found out.

There is a river Gandak in district Deoria. Piprasi dam has been constructed on this river. A canal emanates from this dam. There is heavy seepage of water from this canal due to which heavy destruction is caused in the entire Deoria district. Similar is the situation of river Ghagra. Last year people had to face lot of problems due to Piprasi dam and this year also they have faced the same problems. One of the problems faced by our district is that when the embankment on Gandak canal was breached, water was not released in the canal, as a result of which crops withered away. When there was some rainfall, people sowed sugarcane but even that was destroyed by flood. Thus all the crops in Deoria district have been destroyed. I would like to submit that special relief should be provided by the Government for Deoria district. Students should be given full exemption from payment of fees special facilities and assistance should be provided by the Government to the people who have been affected by the fury of floods continuously for four or five years. Since you are pressing the bell, before I conclude my speech, I would submit that the Government should consider the points raised by me in my speech and take concrete steps in this direction so that the people in my constituency may get some relief. I hope that the

State Government will be directed by the Centre to pay special attention to the people who have faced destruction due to floods. I thank you for giving me time to speak.

SHRI MADAN PANDEY (Gorakhpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister Shri Namgyal has taken an hour and I want that at least 4-5 minutes should be given to me. As a number of my colleagues said that floods struck our country every year. Even after 42-43 years of independence and despite having spent crores of rupees on various projects, we have still not been able to get rid of floods in India. We have not got any success even after making a master plan. Therefore, this is a matter of great concern for all of us. The hon. Minister is not present in the House at the moment but I would submit that the Government of India consider this problem in all seriousness.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHII): I am noting down your points

SHRI MADAN PANDEY: In order to find out a permanent solution to this problem, the Central Government should formulate some such well-planned scheme for the prevention of floods, which strike one or the other part of the country every year and due to which people have to face lot of difficulties as their houses collapsed and there is heavy death toll. We have the examples of U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and particularly China whose present system of Government came into being much after that of ours, yet it could be able to harness a big river such as Hwangho. By taking advantage of their experience, can we not control rivers such as Kosi, Balan, Gandak, Ganga and Brahmaputra? Sir, in brief I would like to submit that there are 5-6 such basins in our country, which if controlled with the help of some schemes, may turn the floods from bane to boon within 10 years. Both Ganga and Brahmaputra have a basin and we have already been able to control the Indus, basin, which no longer causes damage. A national grid can be set

which may comprise of the Narmada and Tapti. Even for small rivers like Kaveri or Godavari, we can have a separate grid. In this connection, a master plan was prepared here by a Minister of the Central Government which was known as Ganga-Kaveri Plan. I cannot say whether we were in a position to implement the plan at the time when it was prepared but the need of the hour is that we should again think over it. If we can afford to waste billions of rupees every year on controlling floods, why can't we spend a few billions of rupees on this plan to link Ganga and Kaveri? As per this plan, at certain points water will be lifted, and we will generate electricity at the points water of these rivers falls. We should discuss these things at very high level.

Sir, now I would like to speak about the area to which I belong. At present, 10 states of our country are reeling under devastating floods. I belong to Uttar Pradesh. According to the Government figures only 5 districts of Uttar Pradesh have been affected by floods and one of them is Gorakhpur. An hon. Member was just speaking on the loss suffered in Deoria due to floods. Similarly, in Gorakhpur alone, 1047 villages have been badly affected by floods, out of which 350 villages have been completely cut off by flood waters and nobody can venture to go out without a boat. As per the official figures, the loss on account of damage to standing crops and other things has been estimated to be Rs. 2500 to 2750 million. Besides the loss of standing crops, so far 3000 houses have been reported to have collapsed in floods. On the other hand, we have started making tall claims that for the coming generation, we will leave behind a country which will be the manifestation of our vision of Ram Rajya, for which the following lines are of quoted:

Dehik Devik Bhotik Tapa, Ram Rajya  
Kahoo Nahi Byapa."

Sir, on one side, we have thinking of Ram Rajya in our country, on the other side, the people are writhing under the devastation caused by the floods. But the relief work

[Sh. Madan Pandey]

being undertaken in this regard is not sufficient, it needs improvement. Particularly, the amount of central assistance for them, should be increased. As per the figures just quoted by the hon. Minister, only a provision of Rs. 204 crore has been made for the purpose but the expenditure under this head may ultimately go up to about Rs. 800 or 1000 crore with the passage of time. Still it will not provide relief. Like all my colleagues, I would like to point out that the system of distribution of the material provided by the Centre to the States is not foolproof to which attention of the Government has been drawn. Whenever, I visited the flood affected areas, I found that no doubt, the system is deficient but the arrangements for monitoring are appreciable. However, it needs further improvement.

Hon. Chairman, Sir, with the implementation of certain minor plans of construction of bands on some small rivers, Government is trying to convince the village people that the Government is making all out efforts to control floods. Mr. Chairman, Sir, in this connection, I would like to quote to the hon. Minister the example of Gorakhpur district where about over half a dozen bunds have collapsed and the loss suffered on that account cannot be made good for years. Therefore, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister through you that several bunds in the Gorakhpur region such as Kodi Ram Soh Gora, Gajpur Majoli, Rigauli, Moosavarka, Machhli gaon bund on Vandeiya Rohin river and the doovain bunds near Akathawa, Makhnaha bund and the embankments in the Gorakhpur city itself have been so badly damaged that minor repairs will not do. Therefore, the new embankments to be constructed there should be strong enough to withstand the pressure of minor floods so that they may not create havoc. I would like the hon. Minister to ask all the concerned departments to ensure the quality of construction of the new embankments. Without ensuring it, I think, we will not be able to control the menace of floods and these will continue to increase in gravity. In this con-

nection, I would like to point out to the hon. Minister and entire India that in this era of Rajiv Gandhi, which is the Golden era, we have to get rid of menace of floods and to contain it we have already prepared a master plan on which we should start work in right earnest so that next year we have not to lament again over it. With these words, I thank you.

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH (Padrauna): Sir, the recurrence of flood in the country is not a new feature; nor it is something that we are not used to. Unfortunately what happens is that the people who suffer, the people who lose, their property, their Lands, their crops are not given back enough. Nothing is given by the Government except paltry sums of money or a kilo or two of foodgrains.

I think, after Independence it is an absolutely shameful fact that we in India cannot control the flooding of certain rivers that have become a perennial problem in this country. In China the river Hwang Ho was known as a river of sorrow. But have we heard of floods in this river today? See in the developed country, the United States, the river Mississippi was another river which created havoc. But today floods are unheard of there.

I belong to an area which fortunately fought the East India Company, fought the Moghul and fought the British kingdom. I suppose that is why we did not get the advantages that other States and other areas even after Independence got. People talk of the Independence movement. The Independence movement came at a much later stage. The very thrust of opposing the East India Company, that move was taken in my area by my ancestors.

Mahatma Gandhi was a leader which this country, which this world will never forget. For we had leaders of that calibre, who went to the people, who sat with the people and shared their grief and sorrow. Unfortunately today what is happening? The high-

flying Doordarshan types, the high-flying information service of India are showing us Ministers and the Doordarshan crew in their aircraft hovering over the flooded areas and taking an aerial survey and the photographs of the poor people who are suffering below:-

It was a better time when there were no aircrafts or helicopters which our Ministers and with the servants of the people because they had to travel by road, they had to camp in tents and they had to sit among the people. That is what we need. By debates and by handing over these small paltry sums of money and foodgrains we will not be able to solve the problem of floods.

The river Gandak has caused havoc for years and years in my District. But what do we do? What does the State Government do? Crores of rupees have been thrown into the river during the floods. I have used the word 'thrown' and challenge the Minister to give me the figures, since independence, of how lakhs of rupees have been spent in putting up kucha bunds, or boulders, how many lakhs of rupees have been spent in the transportation of officials' movement to these areas and how many lakhs have been supposedly given to the poor people for foodgrains. It is real mockery. Various people share the profits that come from putting boulders or the so-called kucha bunds. That money into the pockets of many.

13.56 hrs

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

These temporary measures when the river is in spate, are of no consequence; are of no use. River and water management in what we need. The Gandak and the Choti Gandak create havoc every year. Right from Faizabad eastwards, we have some of the biggest rivers that have origin in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim and eventually go down to the Hooghly. There is not one single Hydel project and we talk of power shortage. There is not one single water management scheme on the river Gandak. It is a pity. Discussing

floods, without flood protection measures, is pointless. I would request, through you, the Government to take this challenge and give us the figures of amounts that are spent on and when the floods have come. I will only ask for this specific instance at Chittauni in my Constituency. How many crores of rupees have been spent by the Central and State Governments for floods? Three-fourths of it go down the river, because it is all on paper. Why does not the Government of India along with the State Government bring out a project by which water management will be given prime importance, by which land usage, afforestation and shifting of villages to higher sites and proper alignments of roads, canals, bridges be done. Consider, as was done during the time of the late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The only project that we have got in that District after independence is the Gandak Canal which is supposed to be the largest in South East Asia. But, fortunately or unfortunately, the smaller drains that came out from the offshoot of main canal were considered politically and not by alignment. Now what I mean by that is that if a particular canal had to go on a particular course of alignment, as suggested by engineers and technocrats, that was not adhered to. But political reasons shifted the directions of the canal leading to alkalinity and salinity. The area, you know, is one of the most fertile areas in Eastern UP. Projects in this canal system have led to the collection of water because the natural drainage has been shut because of highways and the canal system. So, what we need now is a fresh outlook. It can only be initiated by the Central Government and it should be given a thorough look into as to how this river could be tamed and how this river and the water could be put to use for the people of that area, for the people of this country, instead of the ravages that it does during the monsoon season. I would request, through you, that the Minister direct the State Government or the concerned Minister of UP Government, specially, irrigation, PWD, Social Welfare, etc, that instead of flying Helicopters and aircrafts they should go and camp in the areas that are suffering from the malady of floods.

[Sh. Chandra Pratap Narain Singh]

14.00 hrs.

Although I would like not like to put the finger on Doordarshan yet I would like to to submit that is it because we do not want to show the real sufferings of the poor that the Doordarshan crew only takes photographs from the air and do not come down to earth. They should take photographs along the river. People down below should realise that Government is interested in their welfare. We the representatives of the people go to them but the succour and the benefits and help can only come from the Government. Government must take its presence felt. We have a dynamic district magistrate there who has been touring the area but he is a small officer and the senior people who can do something are sitting in their air-conditioned rooms here at Delhi. By making paper reports only you cannot help the people. We must have a thorough look not this.

Lastly I would like to once again request that a special team should be constituted to go into depth in respect of matters relating to river Gandak and there should be better coordination between various Ministries. A hydro-electric scheme should come up there. Mrs. Gandhi had laid the foundation stone for a bridge on the river Gandak. The Janata Government did not allow it to be built. If a bridge had come up there would have been better river and water management but these things were prevented from the beginning by the British because that area opposed them. Now it is our free country and since our Minister has been doing a lot of touring, I hope, he will take some of the suggestions that I have humbly made because that is one of the most densely populated area of the country and year after year ravages of that river have literally played havoc in the mental set-up of those people who fought valiantly for the independence of this country.

[*Translation*]

SHR: UTTAM RATHOD (Hingoli): Sir, during the span of last more than nine years,

there was never a year when we did not discuss or have a debate on floods, drought or some other natural calamity. It is a matter of great regret that we have not been able to control the floods inspite of so many efforts made by us.

Sir, it has been out experience that almost all the irrigation projects have been affected by silting at a very early stage. Accumulation of silt raises the river bed and results in the water over-flowing the banks of the river. I would like to know from the Government whether for the purpose of dredging, we can use the rigs in our rivers in the same way as they are used for dredging of the seabed. If it is possible I will request the Hon. Minister to allow the silt thus extracted to be dumped on the banks and to permit farmers to take it away free of cost. If it is done people will definitely carry it away because, as you know, silt is a very fine soil and rich manure. You are aware that a few years ago when the Morvi dam had collapsed a large number of people died. I do not recollect the exact number of victims. So when recently I was talking to a person from Gujarat I asked him whether the dam collapse had taken a toll of 500-600 human lives. He told me that it had taken toll of about 1000 people in one night. The same thing had happened at Panchhet, and wherever the dams collapse, devastation capacity of water is not abated, instead it increases, because the speed of gushing water is very high and as soon as this water surges forward, it flows with tremendous force carrying away in its wake not only standing crops but also human beings, houses and all that comes in its way. As Shri C.P. N Singh has just said, we have neither understood the water management properly nor have made any efforts in this direction After all what is the reason that we have to face such a devastation again and again. I remember that Prime Minister had once said that the drought conditions in the country had completely shaken the national economy in that year. In such circumstances, it becomes our bounden duty to streamline our water management. We find that every year we undertake large scale relief operations for the flood



affected people, which is no solution to the problem. If Shri Bhajan Lalji had been the Minister for water resources, I would have liked to ask him whether it is a fact that some authority was constituted not only to control floods of Brahmaputra but also to work for the development of agriculture and for the rehabilitation of the people living in these areas. If it is so, he may please tell the number of the Authority meetings of this held so far and the details of the recommendations made by them and the number of recommendations implemented by the Government. It is a fact that big projects take not only more time in their completion but their cost also goes on escalating with the passage of time, which results in a heavy burden on the national exchequer and people also do not get the benefit of the facilities. I would like to submit that instead of undertaking massive dam projects which have, no doubt, the advantage of gravity of water we should make efforts to control through small stream rivers. If we construct small Kolhapur type bunds, it will check soil erosion and the water in a particular area will also be utilized in that very region. In this way if we continue to check the force of water at various points, a time will come when there will be minimum accumulation of water behind the embankments as the larger quantity of it will be released through it which we can utilise for the purpose of irrigation and for some other work of utility. I hope that the Hon. Minister will pay attention to these points. Last year the Prime Minister had conducted a special meeting of the Department of Science and Technology so as to find out the way the Department of Science and Technology and various other central departments could combat the drought situation. I was very happy when one of the secretaries claimed that we could have artificial rains here perhaps his name was Gowariker, It heartened me. I would like to mention that long time back it was known that American scientists were trying to find out the ways of diverting the course of natural calamities like floods or storms towards the tropes of their enemy countries. In the same way, is it possible for us to divert the rain clouds hanging over the flood affected areas to some other areas

which are reeling under drought or famine. If it is so, then I feel, that artificial rains can be given a second priority and a successful attempt to divert the rain clouds will add to our achievements because it will be benefit the vast desert areas of our country which generally have scanty rainfall. I would like to say that we should concentrate our research in this direction so that we may achieve success in water management and flood control. I would like to add that there is a limit for the Central assistance. I have got the statistics in respect of Maharashtra for the year 1986, 1987 and 1988. I have seen that during these years that State Government did not get more than one fourth or one third of the Central assistance. The balance is never paid but the State Government is made responsible for everything. Bhajan Lalji, you have yourself been Chief Minister of a State. Don't you feel that the Central Government should help the smaller States which are in distress and helpless. Now at least the Central team reaches there in time. Earlier they used to take 2-3 months to go there. If there State Government demanded Rs. 1 thousand crore, they would not recommend more than Rs. 100 to 200 crore. We do not know as to what is their yardstick. It should not be like that. If the demand is for Rs. 100 crore, they pay only Rs. 15 to 290 crore and tell the States to take care of their people themselves. But this will not do. I would also like to submit that the Centre has reserved a number of taxes with itself out of which it gives very small share to the states. My request is that the Centre should strengthen states so that they are able to face and meet the situation arising as a result of the natural calamities. They have become an annual feature. I hope that if we are elected again to this House next year, we should find a way out to solve this problem.

With these words, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN (Alleppey): Sir, I know that many hon. Members want to speak on the flood situation

[Sh. Vakkom Purushothaman]

in the country because it has affected many parts of India and thereby affected their constituencies also. So, I will take only five minutes.

Just like in many parts of India, we, in Kerala, also had torrential rain and it caused havoc in the State. Sir, about 80 persons died and 780 persons were injured. Apart from so many cattle, more than five lakhs ducks also died due to some disease connected with the flood.

Heavy damages were caused for the cultivation of pepper, paddy, rubber, cardamom, plantains, etc. Communication facilities in the State have been completely disrupted. Roads were washed away and heavy damages were caused even in the National Highway. The entire network of the telephone system and power connections were destroyed. In Kerala, about 86 lakhs people are affected in about 878 villages. The rough estimate prepared so far shows that more than a lakh houses have collapsed due to rain and flood.

Coming to my home district, Alleppy, the total loss comes to more than Rs. 25 crores. In Kuttanad, the rice bowl of Kerala, almost the entire crop is damaged. Do you know the peculiarity of Kuttanad? It is 5 to 10 feet below the sea level. It is called the Scotland of India. When the flood comes, the bunds protecting the fields from the water are broken and the entire crop gets destroyed. That is an annual feature in Kuttanad. The seriousness of the situation has been seen by our hon. Minister for Planning also from the helicopter and I am thankful to the hon. Prime Minister for sending senior Ministers to different parts of the country to have an on the spot study of the serious flood situation.

In this connection, I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister for Agriculture one serious problem faced by the farmers of that area. Since the paddy fields are below the sea level, the State Government used to

construct permanent bunds to protect the fields from the water. But this was done only in very limited places previously. Therefore, the State Government decided to construct permanent bunds on a large scale with the help of financial institutions. Fortunately, I was also there in the then Government in Kerala. At that time a Land Development Corporation was formed. The original idea was that the agriculturists must repay the loans in instalment. But the cost of cultivation for paddy, especially in Kerala is very much on the high side. An agricultural labourer is paid Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 per day. Apart from that, the natural calamities, the floods are now-a-days an annual feature and the crops are damaged and they are in a very difficult position. So, these poor farmers were not able to repay the loans given by the Corporation and many of them are now facing revenue recovery. I request the Government of India to discuss this problem with the State Government and find out a way out how these poor farmers can be helped. They are not in a position to repay the loans and due to revenue recovery, their entire property will be lost. I honestly feel that the Government have got a duty to protect these farmers, especially when their land has got a peculiarity of being below the sea level. My request is that the entire amount due to the Corporation should be written off. How it can be done, the hon. Minister may kindly discuss it with the State Government.

Another horrifying sight that the hon. Planning Minister has seen in my constituency is that in a panchayat called, Arattupuzha, about one to two kms of the sea shore has been eaten away by the sea erosion during the last eight years. Every year there is sea erosion in that Panchayat. Innumerable houses, a mosque and a cinema theatre were lost in the sea erosion, and the hon. Minister for Planning has already seen this. A study has to be conducted why the sea erosion occurs in such a serious form in certain areas. I believe it may be due to the tidal behaviour of the sea in those areas. I understand that the Central Government have now facilities to study this tidal behaviour of sea. The hon. Minister, Shri

Narayanan gave this information in answer to a question recently. We have got some research vessels to study the tidal behaviour of sea. A study must be conducted in such areas to find out why this sea erosion takes place in those areas. Also, steps should be taken to construct sea walls immediately in such areas so that further erosion can be avoided.

Sir, I do not want to take more time of the House. There are heavy damages in districts like Wynad, and Idukki and the hon. Members from those areas will also highlight the difficulties in those areas. I do not want to go into all that.

So, my humble submission is that a Central team may be sent as early as possible. In places like Kerala, if you send a team after some days, you may not find the evidence of the damage caused by the flood. So, I request the Hon. Minister to send a Central team as early as possible and at the same time adequate relief may be given to the affected people.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the flood situation. As everybody has observed, floods are the common annual feature and a natural calamity but what is unusual is that although it is an annual feature we do not yet have a national and a long term plan to contain it. This is very important. I would say that without any further delay we should go in for a realistic long term plan to contain it. It is increasing in intensity and the reason for this increase in intensity is not far to seek.

As you know, there is a large scale deforestation. Added to that the amount of silt and soil that is carried away by the rivers is enormous. This raises the bed of the river and with the result the flood grows in intensity. According to the report of the National Commission on Flood about 9 million hectare of are is affected every year by the flood. In 1950 in flood prone area in our country was around 25 million hectare and now it has gone up to 40 million hectares. About one

thousand crores worth property was lost due to floods in 1970 and now this figure has gone up to about 3000 crores. So, I need not go further to speak on the intensity or the seriousness of the flood situation that we have in our country.

As you know, this year there were torrential rains because of a cyclonic depression in the sea. The North-eastern hilly states like Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh are reeling under serious flood. The State of Maharashtra, which was earlier suffering from the drought, is now reeling under serious floods. So is the position with regard to other coastal States like Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and to some extent Madhya Pradesh also though it is not a coastal State.

The loss of life and property is unprecedented this year. The data with regard to this loss is still being collected and so it is not possible right now to tell the exact figure. I would specifically like to know from the hon. Minister as to what has happened to our weather forecastings and metrological readings. We have an advanced system. We are making use of our satellites. But what happened? On Sunday night, there was a warning but not of such a serious nature. But there was only a little shower here or there. Again there was a warning about the wind, that there will be wind, its speed may be around 54 kms. But what happened? Although there was wind but its speed was about 84 kms. There was again a warning of torrential rains on Tuesday. But it was only very light showers. This they forecast on Tuesday. So, you yourself can see the contradiction of our weather reports. I would like the hon. Minister while replying to the debate to kindly tell as to why this had happened. The weather reports of Television, Akashvani which are based on meteorological reports received from Pune, cannot be depended upon. Then, how to manage?

When there are serious floods, there will be loss of lives and damage to property. Thousands of people are perished. So many people lost their lives due to floods. Our

[Sh. Sriballav Panigrahi]

heartfelt sympathies to those people who lost their lives due to floods.

I would suggest that we should give two types of reliefs. Firstly, short-term relief or emergency relief. Here, we give them relief by way of shelter, food and so on an emergency basis, i.e. immediately after the occurrence of such natural calamities. Secondly, we have got long-term relief. How to grow the alternative crop? Therefore, seedlings, etc. will have to be provided, agricultural loans will have to be provided to the farmers who were affected by floods on a very liberal term. They should be made available at their door-steps. Seedlings and other things will have to be provided to the farmers by the Government at their door-steps. This should also be given to them on a very liberal term and on a war-footing.

We should have a national plan for such disasters which I mentioned just now. We can tackle this problem if you go on for a large scale afforestation. When there is heavy rain in the catchment area, only 95 percent of water is retained and only 5 percent is discharged. Now, it is not like that. Only 5 percent of water is retained and the rest 95 percent is allowed to go out. That creates hardships. We have to carry out afforestation, planting of more trees in the catchment areas of all rivers, nullahs etc. We have to carry out desalting of rivers also. My learned friend Shri C.P.N. Singh also dealt with the aspect of water management. I wholeheartedly support him in this regard. We should not block the natural drainage or choke it by way of constructing roads, canals, etc. Nowadays population is also increasing. There are people who are living in slums, in nullahs. Due to heavy rain the flowing water which get blocked also creates problems. That should be cleared. We should have a well-thought-out programme.

Now, let me come to dams. What is happening to the dams? In some places, there are rains. In some places, there are no rains. In some places, there are not much

rains. It happens. The hon. Minister in his statement of 26th had said about rainfall. I would politely bring it to his notice that it is a deceptive way of saying that there was 102 per cent rainfall in the country. It is not like that.

India is a vast country. It is a Sub-Continent. We can simply be deceived by that. In some States, there is very heavy rain; in some other States, it is dry. So, we should go in for construction of dams over the rivers, etc and connecting some major rivers in different regions. Together with that, we have to take some other measures like afforestation, desilting, water management and construction of dams, etc. Maharashtra is a very rich State, still their position is miserable. The Chief Minister went for an serial survey along with the Opposition Leaders. That has given an impression that political consideration is not there is the matter of giving relief. Our thanks are done to the Prime Minister. He has released Rs. 40 lakhs immediately for giving relief to the people who are affected by the floods. This is a very good steps taken by the Prime Minister for giving relief to the affected people. But it is not sufficient. The margin money which is provided is not sufficient for many States. For example, a States like Orissa, which is the home of natural calamities, this is not at all sufficient. For State which are having an income less than the national average, there is should be grant, not advance, etc. Therefore, I would say that more money should be provided and we should have a national long-term policy, programme to contain this usual annual feature of flood, which is causing a lot of loss to human lives and property.

**SHRI GEORGE JOSEPH MUNDACKAL (Muvattupuzha):** In the recent floods and natural calamities, there was a lot of loss to human lives and property. I am only saying about the difficulties of the farmers, who have been experiencing these difficulties in recent years

Long-term cultivation is quite different from the paddy and wheat cultivation of the Noth. Coconut trees or rubber trees or pep-

per or ilachi, they all take 8-10 years for getting income. If a natural calamity comes, then all the crops are destroyed and life of the farmer is almost lost. Like that we have to think. Again, he has to replant and wait for 8-10 years. He has been wasting all his energy and money in replanting all these things. At the most, Government or some department of the Government gives him soe-manual work. But that is not enough for the farmer. So, I am pleading for them because the recent floods and rains have destroyed their houses, killed cattle and so many human lives were lost, because there was no proper soil erosion method adopted by the Government. The farmers are prepared to do it, but there is no agency to help them, because it is a costly affairs. So, for building bandhs and anti-soil erosion work, the Central Government has to finance. The Stage Government has always been saying that they have no fund. By constructing dams, we can prevent floods.

The Government has to encourage the crop insurance scheme, because for 8-10 years, the farmers have to wait for their income. Whenever any sudden calamity comes, he is losing everything. So, the Government has to help the farmer for getting crop insurance; if possible, the premium of the crop insurance should be remitted by the Central Government itself.

NABARD and banks are charging a higher rate of interest on the loans given to the farmers. The Central Government must see that for long-term cultivation the farmers must get loan at a cheaper rate. The crops of pepper and ilachi are being spoiled this year because of floods and natural calamities and this has also affected our export earnings. So, we have to give some more incentives to the farmers of fight all these things. The Government must have a more sympathetic attitude towards the farmers and help them in fighting all these things. But the State Government has always been saying that they do not have money; they cannot help the farmers. So, the Central Government must come to their help because the policy of our Government is to help the farmers. I am

congratulating you and requesting you—the Central Government as well as the Agricultural Department to help the farmers.

[Translation]

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH (Jhalawar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is nothing much left to say on this subject after a debate on flood which continued for two days. I would specially mention those points which are directly related to the villages and on which much has not been said by the hon. Members. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that in the last 40 years i.e. since independence, we have started making development in a planned way. But the frequency of floods as well as incidence of soil erosion has increased a lot. I hail from a constituency which is not affected by floods. Rajasthan has received scanty rainfall this year and till now, even sowing has not been done. But when it rains, I am sure it will bring floods and there will be destruction and damage. It has been happening always and it will continue. The preventive measures which ought to be taken by the Government have not been taken so far. No follow-up action is taken after the debate is over every year. I would first of all like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that the agricultural practises followed in the villages till now are not very practical. Hon. Minister, Sir, the land use policy in my State is also defective. I hail from that part of Rajasthan where soil erosion is the maximum even though the areas is small in size. I think the area is not more than 1/16th or 1/20th of the total area of Rajasthan. However, the percentage of soil-erosion in that area is 60 to 65 per cent. Thus you can imagine the extent of damage in that area due to floods. No remedial steps have been taken so far to check it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if I remember correctly years back there used to be a boundary in every field, a village boundary in every village and the marginal land adjacent to the rivers also used to be covered and protected. During the last 3-4 decades these have gradually vanished. There is neither



[Sh. Jujhar Singh]

any field boundary nor any village-boundary to be seen now-a-days and as a result the rain water flows straight into the rivers and causes erosion. It is a simple phenomenon and does not involve any expenditure. If the officers of the Agriculture Department or *gramsewaks* try to convince the cultivators in the villages, in a practical way about the importance of village boundary and the covered areas and how it can check soil erosion, I feel the problem can be solved to a great extent. The top soil which is washed away during the rains will be saved. My submission is that since we are discussing matter which is related to agriculture the Government should pay more attention on land use. Land to the landless has become a slogan now. Nobody either resists it or gives any practical suggestion in this regard. I do not mean that land should not be given to the landless but what I mean to say that the areas which are already prone to erosion, and can be used only for recultivation or fruit orchards, even there the land gets washed away. The soil erosion in my area is so high that even the fertility has been affected. I do not know upto what extent. Therefore, I would request that the Government should adopted realistic approach in the field of farm practises and land use policy. Efforts should be made to implement them in a practical way. Proper use of the land should be made so that its best utilisation is possible.

[English]

Every piece of land is just not good for farming.

[Translation]

If that land is utilised for free-plantation, it would not only fetch more income but also check soil erosion. The Government should try to pay attention to this aspect.

We assess everything in terms of money viz. The quantum of funds allocated for flood relief etc. My submission is that the Govern-

ment should not assess the performance in terms of money. The areas which are prone to erosion should be identified and earmarked. There are such areas in every State where floods are a regular feature. After earmarking such areas, practical steps should be taken to find out measures to control floods. Steps should be taken to raise embankments wherever need.

If an officer is granted Rs. 10 crore and he spends Rs. 12 crores, he is supposed to be very good.

[English]

This should not be the criterion for judging the work of an officer. The actual criterion should be whether he has done anything in regard to soil conservation or to reduce the rate of erosion.

[Translation]

So far attention has not been paid to this aspect. I would also like to add that the richest area in Rajasthan from the point of view of water is my own district. However, it is not being utilised.

[English]

The total irrigated area of the State of Rajasthan is twenty two per cent. And in my district, which is the richest potential from the point of view of agriculture, it is only fourteen per cent.

[Translation]

The utilisation of water is below average in Rajasthan even in the areas where water is available and this is because of lopsided planning. The excess water in some areas is naturally causing damage. This should be studied from flood point of view. The Government should go into details and if more attention is paid to the water requirement of different areas, the impact of floods may be reduced to a large extent.

I do not want to speak much on this

subject. Having made my point, I hope the hon. Minister will pay attention to the land use policy and to utilisation of water in areas where it is available. I also hope that he would pay special attention to my district Jhalawar and Kota which are flood prone areas and take suitable steps to avoid further damage.

[English]

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I agree with all the suggestions that have been made by our friends. These suggestions are being made every time whenever such natural calamities like droughts, floods, cyclones take place.

I agree with all the suggestions that were made by friends in regard to better use of water, land use, afforestation and the rest. Sir, to do all these things, you need hundreds of crores of rupees every year. In addition to that, to repair the damage done to public properties, you require several hundreds of crores of rupees more. This is nothing, Sr, when compared to the total loss being suffered by the farmers, peasants and agricultural workers due to loss of their crops, permanent stock and also their huts and hutments.

I would like the hon. Minister to consider the advisability of constituting a permanent fund with the help of the Prime Minister and with the support of the Planning Commission. Every year, a percentage of the total tax revenue of the Central Government should be set apart for helping the country to wade through these disasters. There greater attention has got to be paid to ensure our farmers against these calamities and to make up for the losses that they are suffering every year and year after year and, as some hon. members have said, to rehabilitate them and help them to stand on their feet so that they can take up their cultivation activities for the next two or three years to come by providing capital freely, capital lent at concessional rates and all the other facilities that are needed in order to carry on their agriculture. Without that kind of fund, it is impossible for

the Prime Minister of any party and of our party to give any satisfaction to the people. It is some consolation that the Prime Minister hastened to go to Maharashtra and set apart Rs. 50 crores. But is that enough? There are floods in Andhra, Kerala and several other parts of the country. They also expect similar help. What is the use of this patching up? What is needed is a permanent fund and that permanent fund can be had only by contribution from the total revenues of the country. From out of this fund it is not enough to make up for the losses sustained so far as Government properties public properties and so on are concerned, but more important thing is to rehabilitate our farmers who suffer, one by one, group by group, district by district and State by State, from drought one year, from floods next year, from cyclone third year and from frost fourth year. Therefore, I would like the Government to come forward to devise some financial plan in order to build up such a fund.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGANNATH CHOUDHARY (Ballia): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to you for provide me an opportunity to speak on the flood situation and excess rainfall in the country. Sir, I come from district Ballia in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Ballia district is surrounded by river Ghaghara in the north and river Ganga in the south and river Tons flows through the Central part of the district. Floods caused by the water of all these three rivers create havoc in this district.

Sir, recently, I was on a tour of my district on 29th, 30th and 31st of the last month. People say that in their living memory they did not witness such an excessive rainfall in Ballia district. As a result of this having rainfall, about two dozen major ponds viz. Surhatal, Dahtal, Baheratal, Kathoratal, Koilemuhantal have been filled with water, as a result therefor paddy crops sown in these ponds have been submerged in water and destroyed. Paddy crops sown in meadows have also been washed away. Thus crops sown both in ponds as well as mead-

[Sh. Jagannath Choudhary]

ows have been destroyed totally. Sir, in these circumstances, I would like to request the hon. Minister as well as the Central Government to think seriously about this critical situation prevailing in Ballia. Every year devastation is caused not only by the floods in rivers Ganga, Ghaghara and Tons but over a dozen villages suffer from soil erosion which causes large scale destruction. This year the flood situation has become very critical. In these circumstances, I would like to suggest that suitable measures may be taken to drain out waters from these major ponds, which are spread over in an area of more than one thousand acres of land, into rivers Ganga and Ghaghara by inter-connecting these ponds for out, flow of water. Thus thousands of acres of land submerged under the water of the ponds could be made available for cultivation and farmers will be benefited. I would like to add further that even after 40 years of independence, no action has so far been taken by the Government to drain out water from these major ponds in Ballia district. I would like to request the hon. Minister of Agriculture to give a serious thought to it and make arrangements to drain out rain water from these ponds because it is a question of life and death for the people of the area. A large number of houses have collapsed and many cattle heads have perished in flood water and in fact people are facing a condition of near starvation. In view of the aforesaid, economic condition of the district, I would like to request the Government to open fair price shop at the Panchayat level and supply grains to poor and destitutes free of cost. In addition to it, farmers and students may be exempted from making payment of land revenue and school fees respectively as also all kinds of collection of dues being made at present be stopped forthwith. As I have just now said, that I recently returned from a three day tour of the district where very critical situation of near starvation has developed. In these circumstances, it becomes the moral duty of the Government to stand by the people by providing full assistance to them at this critical hour and save

the lives of people and provide maximum financial assistance to the people to build houses who have been forced to spend their nights under the open sky.

With these words I would like to express my gratitude to you for providing me an opportunity to make suggestions on the situation caused by floods and excess rainfall.

SHRI MOHD. AYUB KHAN (Udhampur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to speak of flood situation.

Just as floods struck many parts of the country and caused heavy damages, these hit many parts of Jammu and Kashmir also recently. It caused heavy loss of life and property in many areas of those 14 districts where floods, occur mostly. Whenever floods occur in the State, people experience lot of hardships and the Jammu-Srinagar national highway remains closed for traffic for several days. A few days back the national high remained closed for traffic for 4 to 5 days. The supply of most of the essential commodities, which are sent from here to Kashmir valley, came to a grinding halt due to road blockade, and thousands of tourists had to face difficulties in their movement from one place to another and many tragedies also took place on the place on the way. A vehicle was buried under a rock near Ramban and a car was also buried and some people were killed. I would, therefore, like to request the hon. Minister to pay attention to the above problem in view of difficulties caused by floods in the States. You may please make an assessment of the problems created by floods in various States. Once you make the assessment, you will come to know as to what are the long term and the short term problems which the people have to face and what could be their remedies. Prof. Ranga has rightly said that we require billions of rupees when such calamities occur. In order to meet the situation, we should set up a national fund. We should also monitor the manner in which the work is being carried out. For example, dams are constructed by the P.W.D. in a very casual

manner. When floods occur, these dams are washed away. Permanent concrete dams are required to be built so that they are not washed away every year. We spend billions of rupees on construction of dams, even then they get washed away by floods. The Government should prepare a plan in this respect. There are some rivers and rivulets flowing in the state. It is necessary to harness them and change their course. In order to do this, the Government should prepare a well considered plan so that people could be saved from the fury of floods. Thirdly, I would like to submit that forests are being destroyed in some areas in the State. I would like to inform the House that during the last 30 years, 30 per cent forests of the State have been destroyed. I, therefore, want that some legal measures should be taken for conservation of forests. Felling of trees for the purpose of obtaining timber should be completely banned. As a result of denudation of forests, we suffer loss of crops worth crores of rupees every year. We should also see that crops grown by our farmers are fully insured, because Government cannot pay compensation for the loss of crop every year. As such all the hurdles in the way of insurance of crops should be removed and crop insurance should be made obligatory for all farmers so that they could be get ride of this problem for ever.

I would like to make yet another submission. There should be a concerted effort to plant trees in the areas where forests have been cleared. At present, there are separate departments and the afforestation work has been entrusted to them. I would like to suggest that there should be a co-ordinated effort for afforestation and there should be an exclusive department for this so that trees could be planted on the vacant lands.

I am grateful to you for providing me time to speak.

15.00 hrs.

\*SHRIMATI KESHARBAIKSHEERSAGAR (Beed): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on

23rd July, cyclonic storms and heavy rains lashed various parts of Maharashtra causing irreparable loss of human life and property. Fourteen districts of Maharashtra hit by recent floods had to face huge damage and financial loss. Especially, Raigad, Beed, Pune and Thane districts of Maharashtra had to sustain heavy loss of human life and property caused by the flood. In Raigad district alone 259 persons lost their lives on account of devastating floods while in Beed, Pune, Thane and Bombay nearly 300 persons died in the unprecedented flood. As many persons are still missing, the exact loss of human life is yet to be fully assessed. Also in Marathwada region also Beed, Nanded, Latur and Parbhani districts had very heavy rainfall causing huge damage to crops human lives houses in this area.

Many areas in my constituency Beed had unprecedented rainfall of 14 inches on 23rd July causing heavy flood to Bindusara river in this area. The flood took toll of more than 103 persons. Still some persons are missing and some dead bodies may still be recovered. Heavy rains washed away many houses and a large number of houses collapsed due to incessant rains and storm. Many people have lost their shelter and means of sustenance. Many cattle also died due to flood and heavy rainfall. Crops in this area are totally washed away alongwith soil and farmers do not know how they will earn their livelihood in future.

Farmers had taken loan from the banks for banks for purchasing agricultural implements like pump sets which have been perished due to floods. In view of this calamity, I request the Government to write off loans advanced to farmers and given them assistance for purchasing agricultural inputs again. Full compensation should be given to the farmers to make good the loss suffered by them.

The Government pays compensation to the farmers at the rate of Rs. 400/- per hectare which is quite meagre. The actual loss sustained by the farmers is Rs. 10 to 15

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thousand per hectare. I request the Government to enhance the rate of compensation to at least Rs. 2000/- per hectare.

The recent flood have badly damaged the roads and bridges thereby bringing the transportation and communication to a standstill. Roads and bridges in rural areas have been totally damaged and have been cut off from other areas. Therefore, we do not have the exact assessment of the damage caused by heavy rainfall and floods in rural areas. I request the Government to take up the work of repairing damaged roads and bridges and in the rural areas on job priority.

Many small dams and embankments washed away due to the floods required to be constructed again. The Government should take up rehabilitation work in this area on war footing. Rehabilitation is taken up urgently in urban areas but rural areas are neglected. The Government should take up rehabilitation work in rural areas urgently. More than 5000 families are needing rehabilitation in this area. As the extent of loss of human life and property is huge in rural areas. The Government should plan effective measures of rehabilitation in rural areas urgently.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as the loss is very huge in my area, please let me speak for a few minutes more.

I am glad that Hon. Agriculture Minister visited our area. He was pained to see the havoc caused by the flood. He assured to pay compensation of Rs. 10000/- to the families of dead persons from Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra also visited this area and announced compensation of Rs. 5000/- to the victims.

Many shops situated on the bank of rivers have been totally perished, and the traders had to suffer huge loss. The Government should give assistance to farmers for purchasing agricultural implements and

rehabilitate all persons who suffered the losses due to the flood.

As advance warning of flood is not available in our country, hence many people lost their lives and also there was huge loss of property. We must develop such a system in our country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please let me speak. I rarely speak in the House. The loss is very huge in my areas.

The Government should take up rehabilitation work urgently. Assistance should be immediately given to farmers. I also take this opportunity to thank Hon. Agriculture Minister and Chief Minister of Maharashtra for visiting the flood-hit areas and announcing the assistance. With these words, I conclude.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the House, has been discussing the flood situation for the last two days. As you are aware, some parts of the country have been affected by devastating floods. As soon as we came to know about the occurrence of floods in the various parts of the country, information in regard to losses sustained in different parts of the country was collected so that the hon. Members of both the Houses could be apprised of the situation. All the hon. Members who participated in the discussion have put forth very good suggestions. All of us have condoled the loss of lives in the floods. I, on behalf of the Government offer my condolences for the persons who died in the recent floods. Three states have been hit by serious floods. Maharashtra followed by Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka are the worst sufferers of this year floods. As soon as the Prime Minister came to know about the floods, he sent senior Ministers to the flood affected areas to make on the spot assessment of the situation. I was sent to Maharashtra, whereas Shri H.K.L. Bhagat and Shri Madhav Sinh Solanki were sent to Andhra Pradesh and Kerala respectively. As regards Karnataka, the Governor did not feel its necessity as the



floods were not serious enough. However, we will visit that state also after some time. Shri S.B. Chavan went to Uttar Pradesh and one of the Central Ministers went to Assam also. Where the floods occurred, our Ministers went there by road and where they could not reach by road, they reached there by helicopter. We tried our best to do what we could do for them by way of help. We visited the places with a view to providing help. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is true that floods are not a new phenomenon. I agree with the hon. Members that there has been heavy loss due to floods during the 42 years period after independence. Though the Government has made very efforts to control floods, those have not yet been fully controlled. Several factors are responsible for it. The indiscriminate felling of trees in the country is one of the reasons for floods as well as drought. As a result of clearing of forests, plains receive scanty rainfall and soil from the hilly areas is carried into the rivers causing deposit of silting in river bed which in turn raises the level of water. Thus when rain water flows down into the rivers, these overflow taking the shape of floods. I have seen the devastation caused by floods in Maharashtra. Unprecedented floods have struck Maharashtra this year. 15 feet deep water suddenly fell on earth with the bursting of the cloud. There was 24-25 inches rainfall in a flash. It was an unprecedented flood in Maharashtra this time. You can well imagine the heavy loss that might have been caused by heavy downpour and that too at the dead of night. Prior to me, my colleague lady M.P. from Maharashtra was speaking. She also accompanied me on my tour of Maharashtra. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra and his two other Ministers in charge of Revenue and Development also accompanied me on my two day tour of Maharashtra. As regards the death toll in the recent floods, hon. Members have furnished their own data but there are no two opinions about it that there is no other instance of such devastating floods in the living memory. Floods do come but level of water rises gradually. But this time level of water rose upto 15 feet all of a sudden. How can one survive under such circumstances? Many pucca houses were

washed away by flood waters. There has been heavy loss of life and property and many cattle heads have also been washed away. There are many villages which are surrounded by rivers on both sides. They looked like island. Entire villages were washed away in water. There was very pathetic condition. There was a heavy loss and all of us were pained to see the heart rending scene. As many as 14 districts out of a total of 31 districts in Maharashtra have been badly affected by floods and 850 people have died in these districts due to floods. This included 150 fishermen who are still untraceable. Dead bodies of some of them have been found and others are still untraceable. As many as 700 dead bodies have so far been recovered in Maharashtra alone but 150 people are still missing. It is feared that missing people might have died because the chances of their survival appear to be remote. Thus, 850 people died in Maharashtra alone and about 22,000 houses have been washed away by floods. Maharashtra alone has suffered a heavy loss. So far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, all the districts have been affected by floods. There has been heavy to moderate floods at different places. As per the information received by me till midnight, 202 people have lost their lives in Andhra Pradesh and 1,70,337 houses have been damaged. Similarly, there were floods in 18 districts in Assam, 5 districts were hit during the first onslaught of floods, whereas remaining 13 districts were hit during the second onslaught. Five persons have lost their lives in the floods, one person died in the first flood and remaining four persons died in the second floods. As water level rose slowly, death toll was not so high. About 3,000 houses were damaged due to floods in Assam. Out of a total of 14 districts in Kerala, almost all the 14 districts witnessed floods. So far 71 people have lost their lives in floods and 850 houses have been damaged. Thus there has been a heavy loss due to floods in Kerala also. Similarly, three out of 11 districts have been affected by floods in Arunachal Pradesh and 24 people have died there. There were floods in 14 districts out of 18 districts in Karnataka and 14 people lost their lives. Some heads of cattle have also

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died. As many as 1470 houses have been damaged. There were serious floods in 8 out of 57 districts in Uttar Pradesh and about 60 people have lost their lives. 25,450 houses suffered damage. Some areas of Gujarat have also been flooded and 43 people have died. Similarly, 2 districts in Bihar were flooded but only one person died. We are pained for that also. Similarly, 5 out of 20 districts have been affected by floods in Tamil Nadu and 14 people have died. I have given you the details of loss of life and property in the various parts of the country affected by floods.

Sir, as regards provide assistance to the states, the Central Government have always tried its best to provide immediate relief to the States affected by unexpected natural calamities. We have already provided funds to the states for giving immediate relief. The amount on this score has been increased from Rs. 240 crore last year to Rs. 339 crore this year so that the relief could be provided to the people immediately. As regard Andhra Pradesh, this amount has been increased from Rs. 24 crore last year to Rs. 43.25 crore now. Similarly, Assam was provided a sum of Rs. 7.25 crore last year which has been increased to Rs. 13 crore this year so that immediate relief could be provided. Similarly, sums of Rs. 33.7 crore to Bihar, Rs. 28.75 crore to Gujarat, Rs. 5.75 crore to Haryana, Rs. 3.25 crore to Himachal Pradesh as against Rs. 4.75 crore last year, Rs. 2.75 crore to Jammu and Kashmir, Rs. 6 crore to Karnataka, Rs. 9 crore to Kerala as against Rs. 5.00 crore last year, Rs. 6 crore to Madhya Pradesh and Rs. 13 crore to Maharashtra have been released for providing immediate relief. Thus, as I have told you, all the states have been provided funds for the purpose. Rajasthan has been given Rs. 16.75 crore and a sum of Rs. 58 crore has been given to Uttar Pradesh as against Rs. 32 crore last year. A sum of Rs. 20.75 crore has been given to West Bengal. Thus a sum of Rs. 339 crore has been earmarked for the purpose as against Rs. 240 crore last year. It means that we have provided an

additional sum of Rs. 99 crore this year to the states so that immediate relief could be provided.

Sir, wherever we went, we instructed the State Governments to utilise the amount already provided to them for providing immediate relief and protecting the lives of men and animals and saving the crops. They have been instructed to spend the money with them on providing medical relief and employment to the people. The sum will be adjusted on receipt of memoranda from the states so that they feel no difficulty of any kind.

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Machilipatnam): Workers are not getting work for the flood period.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: It is true that floods could not be controlled even after so many years and floods should be controlled. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as you know, it is very difficult to control water and air. Wherever water of the rivers could be harnessed through construction of dams, we have tried to do so. But there are some rivers which could not be harnessed by constructing dams as they change their course which resulted in heavy loss due to floods. Therefore, we want that dams should be constructed on all the major rivers—be it Ganga or Kavari, on the pattern of Bhakra Dam. When this dam was not built, the rivers there caused havoc in Punjab and Haryana but after its construction, it has provided great protection and has made available water for irrigation purposes. Therefore, I want that the dams should be built but, as you know, our resources are very limited. It is true that with the money spent so far on flood relief, if the schemes had been formulated, dams could have been built on many rivers. The Prime Minister has directed that the schemes should be formulated where the dams can be built on the rivers and water can be transferred to other rivers or canals can be laid, it should be

done. If it is accomplished, the country can be saved from devastating floods and thus available water can be used in process wherever there is shortage of it. Some plans have been formulated for the purpose. Water Commission set up by the Government is looking into the matter. It will be achieved only when dams are constructed on all the rivers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would also like to add that desilting of rivers should be undertaken and silt thus taken out should be dumped on the banks of the rivers but it is an uphill task and not that easy a job. It is also not feasible that after the floods recede the farmers may lift the silt and dump it in their fields. This problem can be best tackled by preventing silting of rivers and this can happen only when we are able to check the felling of trees, I would like to reply some more points raised by the hon. Member on this subject. Shri Harish Rawat initiated the debate by submitting that the hon. Minister for Water Resources should be present in the House during the discussion but I have reiterated it several times and even today I repeat that all the Ministries have a collective responsibility. We make a note of all the points and thereafter the points are passed on to the concerned Departments. Another point was raised that the Centre should take over the work of Soil Conservation in its own hands. You are aware that this is an ambitious scheme and funds are allocated to the States for its implementation and their work is also monitored by the Central Government from time to time but it is necessary to do more in this regard.

As regards the measures which should be taken for controlling floods, I think that dams should be constructed on all the rivers. One hon. Member also suggested that proper coordination should be there between the Ministry of Water Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture. As a matter of fact proper coordination does exist between these two ministries and joint meetings are convened as well. In these meetings flood control measures are discussed and different schemes are formulated. However we would

make efforts to accelerated the pace of work in this regard.

One hon. Member made a mention of the rivers of the hilly areas and in particular, he mentioned the names of Gandak, Kosi and Brahmaputra. We would also look into it to see as to what action can be taken in this regard. Shri Shahabuddin has proposed that a national level programme should be formulated for control of floods. This proposal is under consideration of the Government.

A mention was also made of Mahananda and Bakra rivers. As regards the rivers which have been mentioned in this connection the Government will look into the individual cases and take all possible measures in regard to them.

Shri Balsaheb Vikhe Patil referred to weather forecasting in connection with Jamalpara village. As a matter of fact, a forecast was made through T.V. and radio 24 to 36 hours in advance about the torrential rains in that region. But in spite of that warning the people residing in this village refused to shift to a safer place. They thought that perhaps the news was false. In such a situation, they resigned themselves to the fate, hence they did not budge from their place. It was this attitude on account of which they had to suffer heavy loss. We make full efforts to issue advance warning in this regard. A super computer has been installed so that advance information can be provided to the people and their life and property can be saved. This has proved quite beneficial for the farmers. If the farmers are able to know beforehand that it is going to rain in a certain area, they can make due arrangements for preparing their fields and for sowing seeds.

Rs. 10 thousand per family have been provided out of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund as compensation to the family members of those who have died. In addition to that the Central Government has extended assistance of Rs. 5 thousand to each family of the deceased and the State Government has also decided to provide the matching

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amount of compensation. It has been decided to provide Rs.25 thousand as compensation to the families of the poor fishermen who have lost their lives in the floods. All the essential commodities are reaching the people. The people who have been rendered homeless are being provided shelter in camps. Due arrangements have been made for their meals and other necessities so that they do not face any kind of hardship.

Some hon. Members have referred to the problem of housing of these people. All our efforts will be made for the rehabilitation of those, whose houses have been washed away by the floods. The State Governments will also make their contribution. It is absolutely essential to make housing arrangements for those, whose houses have been washed away as otherwise they will have to face great difficulties. The Government will make its all-out efforts in this regard.

The bill, which was sent to the States for their concurrence, has not been returned to the Centre after approval by any of the State except Manipur so far. The Centre will issue a reminder in this regard.

Shri Yadav has pointed out that it was because of fishermen moving closer to the sea that so much of loss was incurred. That is why, assistance should be provided to the families of the deceased. Necessary assistance has been given by the Government. However, when their memorandum reaches us, we shall take action on that basis. After taking into account the extent of loss such as the number of boats, trawlers etc. which have been washed away, we shall provide all possible assistance.

Alongwith it, some shops and factories were also washed away. We want that relief should be provided to them as well and in this connection we shall convene a meeting with the banks for extending them fresh loans and the instalments will be the same as in the case of the previous loans so that they are able to restart their factories and the workers

who were rendered unemployed are re-employed.

Similarly, Shri Somnath Chatterjee suggested that the rivers should be interconnected to form a national grid. In order to prevent natural calamities like floods, talks should also be held with Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan with which we share common waters. Even in the past negotiations were held in this connection several times and the hon. Minister of water resources had also gone to Bangladesh to attend a meeting on this issue and another meeting will also be convened shortly. Our endeavour has been to check the devastation caused by the discharge of surplus water of these rivers and also to make the optimum utilisation of this water. The hon. Member has also made a mention of the havoc caused by floods and erosion of the upper layer of the soil in Orissa. As I have stated just now, all these points are under consideration.

Shri Bipin Pal Das referred to Assam and pointed out that this State may be affected by floods in September. I can say this much that Rs. 85 crore were given to Assam for this purpose last time and out of that amount, they have not been able to spend ~~Rs. 8 to 10 crores.~~ The state Government was directed to strengthen and raise the level of the embankment of the Brahmaputra river to prevent flooding of a large area and the resultant loss but necessary work has not been done so far. Similarly, the condition of Dibrugarh is also not satisfactory and they need permanent assistance. He also raised the point of a bridge on this river. A Central Minister has toured Assam and he will try to pay a second visit as well.

Shri Banatwalla has submitted that Central assistance for this purpose should be enhanced. You are well aware that relief assistance is based on the extent of loss in a particular area and wherever it is more, assistance also goes up accordingly and it will be given to all the affected people of the State. The State Governments have been directed to send a memorandum to the Centre giving the details of the losses they have

suffered. Previously, there used to be delay in sending a Central team but now it has been decided to send it within a week. This team would also submit its report within a week and thereafter a meeting of the high-powered committee will be convened which would also not take more than a week's time. In this way, a decision can be taken within 21 days and funds can be disbursed to the States within a month. If the extent of the damage is more and in view of that it is essential to provide relief in advance, necessary assistance will be extended even before the Central team is sent to take stock of the situation. For example, last year advance relief assistance was provided to the States like Assam, West Bengal and Punjab. Assistance was extended to these 3 or 4 States without sending the Central team to make an assessment of the situation. Similarly, advance relief assistance shall be provided wherever it is necessary to do so.

Similarly Shrimati Usha Choudhary gave the suggestion for the construction of minor bunds to control floods. She also suggested that all the Departments should make concerted efforts for the rehabilitation of the flood affected people. In addition to it the loans taken by these helpless people should be written off and efforts should be made to waive the interest and to undertake rescheduling the recovery of loans so as to help the people to the maximum extent.

Shri Kurien mentioned that Kerala had already spent more than what had been allocated to them by the Centre. He referred to the drought and floods in that State and in this connection, I would like to submit that their memorandum has just reached us and efforts will be made to consider it and disburse funds at the earliest.

Similarly, it has been mentioned that dams should be constructed on different rivers to control the recurrence of floods, which has become an annual feature in this country. You are aware that certain crops such as paddy, barley, maize, bajra etc. do not take long to grow whereas plants of horticultural nature such as black pepper,

coconut, cardamom, betel nut etc. take a very long time to mature and bear fruit. Therefore, heavy losses are suffered when such plants and trees are uprooted and washed away by floods. In this connection, the Central Government is making efforts to provide maximum relief to the farmers so that they could be saved from losses. Similarly, Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil was in favour of formation of a national grid of the rivers. I agree with the proposal and a national grid should be formed by interlinking all the rivers. It will provide water those areas, where there is shortage by channelising the excess water from one area to the area of shortage. It may be utilised for the generation of hydel power, which will cater to the needs of deficient areas. In order to achieve this end, a national power grid may be formed. This will prevent floods and benefit the entire country.

It has been submitted that the allocations which have been made for Maharashtra are inadequate. When I visited Maharashtra, I had asked the State Government to make all the necessary expenditure and get it reimbursed from the Central Government. This should be added in their memorandum. If it is found essential, we will make advance payments to Maharashtra, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The Central Government will render all possible assistance for providing due relief to the affected people. Similar things were said about the crop insurance scheme. This scheme has been implemented all over the country except in 3 or 4 states. As you are aware, the block level has been taken as the unit. Compensation will be paid keeping in view the extent of the damage.

**SHRI K.S. RAO:** What is the position in regard to the rural areas?

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** A committee has been constituted for the rural areas. Its meeting is in progress but the matter has not reached the final stage. We would like the Patwari circle to be taken as a unit for the purpose under which all the farmers may be covered. However, we have not yet reached a final stage in this regard.



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Shri Tombi Singh made a mention of Manipur. The hon. Chief Minister of that state also rang me up and we at once sent our officials from the Centre to take stock of the situation. These officers are visiting the State for that purpose. We have assured them of immediate help and we will provide all possible help to Manipur. Shri Shanta Ram Naik said that this issue does not concern agriculture alone. It is true that all the departments should shoulder equal responsibility. The Ministry of Water Resources and the Central Water Commission should convene a joint meeting and take a decision in respect of the places where they could control the situation within a short time. However, regarding the priorities we shall have to take a policy decision. Priorities have to be fixed. First we will take steps to control the situation in those places where it has caused more destruction and later on, this work will be done in the whole country. I have told you about the floods, drought, developmental projects and about the warning we have been giving in this regard. Hon. Members have also raised the point of C & AG Report wherein names of one or two States for example, Andhra Pradesh have been mentioned who have not properly spent the funds. Shri Dighe gave figures also. The figures furnished here by me indicate the number of people, who died. I can say only this much that there has been a great damage to roads, hospitals, schools, railway lines, water supply and to the public property. We will provide help at the earliest. Shri Vijay Raghvan had asked about the number of people who died in Kerala. Their number has gone up to 71. You mentioned that there should be a permanent solution to the problem and deforestation should be checked and a study team should be sent there immediately. They should be helped at the earliest. We will take steps to help them at the earliest. Shri Owaisi wanted to know about the number of people, who died in Andhra Pradesh. As I have told you, their figure has reached up to 202. We will provide funds for houses, drainage, sewer and roads and will try to start the work at the

earliest.

SHRI K.S. RAO: What will be done about the agricultural labourers?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: Efforts are being made to provide work to the agricultural labourers.

SHRI K.S. RAO: They have no work.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: They will be provided employment under the Jawahar Rozagar Yojana and Indira Awas Yojana. Shri Rajhans pleaded for providing help to the families of the deceased and that a high level area should be set aside in every panchayat where the people living in the lowlying areas could shift in case of floods. Efforts will be made to shift the people to places or higher level. Special efforts should be made for the flood prone areas such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. Similar steps can be taken in other states also. Shri Paswan has suggested that the release of excess water in the canals causes floods hence we should streamline it, rivers should be tamed and a dam should be constructed on the River Bagmati. Shri Man said that the danger of flood increased with the overflowing of canals. We will try to improve the working of canals. Shri Ram Ratan Ram also mentioned something like this. Shri Ram Nagine Mishra also suggested that preventive measures should be taken to save all the districts from floods. He also mentioned that floods cause heavy damage to Deoria and Gorakhpur. Arrangements should be made for them Shri Madan Pandey suggested that a master plan is required for it. This is true and we are going to have a master plan. Shri Uttam Rathod said that even though the issue of floods is discussed every year in the House, these have not been controlled so far. As I have stated, these should be controlled and we are making our all out efforts to control floods.

SHRI C. P. THAKUR (Patna): In Patna, the Hon. Prime Minister had said that the issue of floods should be discussed in the Technological Mission.

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** Just now a meeting has been in this regard and one more will take place. As soon as the final decision is taken in this regard, we will let you know about it. Shri C.P.N. Singh mentioned about the death of cattle heads and human being. He also made a mention of a river of China.

**SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH (Padrauna):** You are giving a different version of what I have said.

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** Don't be angry. I can assure you that the necessary steps will be taken on all that you have said which I shall note down from the copy of the proceedings of the House. Another thing which you have mentioned is that the hon. Ministers go on tours by helicopters.

**SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH:** What is the use of my speech when he has a wrong version of it.

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** I can send you the copy of notes with me.

**SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH:** Please think over it. What can I do when he has not written all that what I spoke here. Hence please read from the official version of the proceedings. Do not read Shrimati Krishna Sahi's version of it.

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** You mentioned that the hon. Minister used helicopter for his tour. He should have gone by road to take stock of the situation, that is correct. I, myself went to Maharashtra by road. Only for a short distance I availed the service of a helicopter and rest of the distance was covered on foot. But as you know it, one cannot go by road in a water logged area. However to make on the spot study we will again go with you and will provide all the necessary help to your district. Uttar Pradesh is the heart of India, if nothing is done for Uttar Pradesh, for whom else it will be done.

Another thing you have mentioned is regarding a dam on the River Gandak, which I have noted down in my own hand. We will

discuss it with you and the concerned department.

The Government will consider your suggestion regarding the construction of a dam.

Necessary action will taken even in respect of betel nut, coconut, coffee, tea and rubber, to which attention has been drawn by Shri Purushothaman.

**SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH:** Regarding the hydel generation I had asked you to discuss it with the Ministry of Energy. In the eastern region, the system of hydel power generation is not available on any river. Such a system should be provided there.

**SHRI BHAJAN LAL:** We will discuss it and ensure that whatever is possible in this regard, is done.

Similarly attention was drawn to the damage to paddy crop in Kukna and it was suggested that there should be permanent plan to prevent its recurrence and preventive measures should be taken to save the crops. Land erosion caused by sea should also be checked. In respect of all these things, we will take all possible steps and all possible help will be provided.

Shri Panigrahi mentioned the recurrence of floods every year and also drew the attention to the system of weather forecasting. All help will be provided in this regard. He suggested that a national plan should be prepared for it. That is correct. It should also contain the provision of minimum wages and national grid. All these things will be taken in to consideration. Shri K. V. Thomas suggested that there should be provision for the coconuts. Shri Jujhar Singh suggested that a policy should be formulated regarding the damage caused by soil erosion. It will also be considered. The suggestion regarding the proper distribution of water will also be considered. Shri N. G. Ranga suggested a permanent fund for the purpose. It is a worth while suggestion. Floods can only be cor-

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trolled by constructing dams on the rivers with the money from this permanent fund. Suggestions have been given for foolproof arrangements. Attention will also be paid to such issues as the loss suffered by the farmers, loss of public property and rehabilitation of people. All possible help will be given to the farmers.

Shri Jagannath Choudhary mentioned that the paddy crop in Balia is destroyed due to the overflowing of water from 2 dozen ponds in the district. Proper arrangements should be made for draining out this water. A suggestion has been made to provide funds for the construction of houses. We will look into all these issues and will take necessary action.

Regarding Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan mentioned that a survey should be conducted in respect of the heavy loss of life and property in that state. We will certainly do it and provide all possible help on the basis of its findings. He has also made a mention of the national fund. It is another good suggestion that felling of forest trees should be checked. Regarding the insurance of crops, I have stated that the crops of only those farmers are insured, who take loans, but all other farmers have not been covered so far under the scheme. A committee has been constituted by the hon. Prime Minister to discuss this issue and action will be taken on its recommendations at the earliest. Shrimati Kesharbai who accompanied us during our Maharashtra tour, made mention of Maharashtra. We found that considerable damage had been caused in that State. 3 camps have been set up there. I would like to congratulate the Government of Maharashtra for their commendable relief operations to help the people during floods. I would like to assure the hon. Members that we will provide all possible assistance even in future. We pray to God because floods are striking the areas where no rains are required and the areas which require them the most, are reeling under drought; it seems that God is also discriminating against us.

The whole House should pray to God to shower His grace in the form of rain in the drought affected parts of northern India i.e. in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, West Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, and to stop the rain in Flood-hit areas.

Once again, I would like to assure the House that the Government of India will always extend maximum help to the people at the time of natural calamities like earth quake, drought or floods. We will also pray to God to send rain in those places where it is needed most and to contain it in the flood hit areas, so that the condition of the farmers may improve.

15.50 hrs.

KARNATAKA BUDGET, 1989-90- GEN-  
ERAL DISCUSSION  
AND  
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (KARNA-  
TAKA), 1989-90

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up General Discussion on the Budget for the State of Karnataka for 1989-90 and Discussion and Voting on the Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget for the State of Karnataka for 1989-90, items 11 and 12, together.

Motion moved:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the Fourth column of the order Paper, be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Karnataka to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1990, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands 1 to 62."