

Shivendra Bahadur Singh, Shri
 Siddiq, Shri Hafiz Mohd.
 Singaravadivel, Shri S.
 Sinha, Shrimati Kishori
 Sinha, Shrimati Ram Dulari
 Sinha, Shri Satyendra Narayan
 Suman, Shri R. P.
 Thakkar, Shrimati Usha
 Vairale, Shri Madhusudan
 Vanakar, Shri Punam Chand Mithabhai
 Venkatesan, Shri P. R. S.
 Verma, Dr. C. S.
 Vyas, Shri Girdhari Lal
 Yadav, Shri Shyam Lal
 Yazdani, Dr. Golam

15.14 hrs.

FLOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY OF
 INDIA BILL, 1986

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up the Flood Control Authority of India Bill. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Verma.

[Translation]

DR. C. S. VERMA (Khagaria) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that :—

“The Bill to provide for the setting up of a Flood Control Authority of India to control floods and for matters conneted therewith, be taken into consideration”.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Subject to correction the result* of the Division is :

AYES 006
 NOES 054

The motion is not carried in accordance with the Rule 157 of the Rules of Procedure and in accordance with the provisions of Article 368 of the Constitution of India.

The motion was negatived

*The following members also recorded their votes.

AYES : Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao,
 Shri V. Tulsiram, Shri Parag
 Chaliha.

NOES : Shri Keyur Bhushan, Shri Swami Prasad Singh, Shri Sriballav Panigrahi, Shri Mahavir Prasad Yadav, Shri Ram Pyare Panika, Shri Deep Narayan Van, Shri Naresh Chander Chaturvedi, Dr. G. S. Rajhans, Shri S. K. Singh, Shri M. R. Sodi, Shrimati Sheila Dikshit and Shri Madan Pandey.

Sir, while introducing the Flood Control Authority of India Bill, I would like to express my views thereon. This Bill is very important from the national point of view because floods have become one of the main problems of the country. Had attention been paid to solve this problem after independence, our economic condition would not have been such as it is today. Other countries have taken steps in this direction after attaining independence. China accorded priority to measures to control the floods. They first took measures to control their rivers because their economic and social condition could be improved only when measures to control floods were taken. But unfortunately we accorded priority to other sectors whereas priority should have been accorded to flood control measures. But after sometime when the situation became serious due to the floods in the country, our Government paid its attention towards flood control and work on the flood control measures started in 1954. Earlier, the problem of flood control was very serious due to the varying natural and geographical topography of the country. Due to excessive rains and drought, vast low lying areas used to be flooded resulting in the inundation of the villages and as a result a number of diseases used to break out there causing a lot of hardship to the people. Previously people used to construct embankments along the rivers to protect their lands. When this failed to prevent floods, the Government started

[Dr. C. S. Verma]

constructing big dams across the rivers. The Government set up the Central Control Board and the State Flood Control Boards for this purpose. The secretariat of the Central Flood Control Board is Central Water Commission which coordinates the activities of the various States, Committees and departments of the Government. In this connection, the State Governments have been entrusted this onerous responsibility. The State Governments are solely responsible for formulating and execution of flood control schemes. It is not proper to burden the State Governments with such an onerous problem. The problems vary from State to State and the rivers pass through several States. The Governments of those States make schemes according to their needs. In this way they fail to bring about co-ordination between each other. In view of the problem of the floods, the Government had Constituted a high level commission and various other committees in 1954. As there was no co-ordination between those committees, the efforts to control the floods slackened and the desired results could not be achieved.

[English]

There are a number of committees such as High Level Committee on Floods, Ministerial Committee on Flood Control, Minister's Committee on Flood and Flood Relief, Committee on Scientific Problems, Flood Forecasting, Mitigation Committee, Study of Erosion, Problems of the Brahmaputra, Flood Control of Adhwara Group of Rivers.

[Translation]

Despite such a number of Committees, the flood control measures did not make any headway. Instead of these Committees, had the Government given the charge of flood control to a single Authority, the problem would have been solved smoothly. A National Commission For Flood Control was constituted in 1976. It submitted its report in 1980. It took four years in preparing the report. What to talk of relief and protection from floods, no scheme could be formulated even after spending crores of rupees. Only a report was submitted. If it

takes four years in the submission of a report, how such a colossal problem can be solved. If you see the review of the Sixth Five Year Plan, you will find that a sum of Rs. 1200 crores was spent for providing relief to the flood affected people while a sum of Rs. 780 crores was spent on the flood control measures. From these figures it is evident that the amount spent on flood control measures is less than the amount spent on flood-relief operations. The loss of property and cattle wealth has not been included in it. The Government of India has not so far paid the desired attention to the control of floods. In order to demarcate the flood zones, a master plan should be prepared. Requisite work has not been done even in this respect. However, the Damodar Valley Corporation Project has made significant progress and has generated hydro-electricity. If more of such projects are undertaken in our country, our country would make considerable progress. I want to give the example of China. China began its flood control operations after 1949 and was able to regulate the flow of water of all the rivers and had constructed small reserve points in order to generate hydro-electricity. In this way, they were able to improve their economic situation. If we also undertake projects to produce hydro-electricity in our country and if we had adopted Chinese technology for it, then perhaps we might not have faced the situation that we are facing today. According to the 1982-83 statistics, only 11 per cent of the total rivers, have been harnessed for generating hydro-electricity. There are many such rivers which can be harnessed for generating hydro-electricity, but no work has been undertaken in that direction. If we can do it, then not only the pollution problem will be solved but we can also become self-reliant in the matter of our power requirements.

In China, 4.9 per cent of its total power generated is contributed by hydro-electricity, and it leads the world in this respect. Compared to China, we have more resources in our country. We have abundant rainfall during the monsoon months, i.e. from June to August and we can utilise it for producing hydro-electricity. But the Government is not paying any attention to it. Almost all the rivers originate from northern and North-

Eastern States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Assam, and the States have different problems, due to which the inter-State river disputes are not being resolved. Therefore, I would request you to set up a Central River Control Authority, so that such problems do not arise.

Secondly, I would refer to the problem of resource constraints. The funds made available by the Centre for this purpose are not adequate. The State Governments are not able to complete the projects due to inadequate funds. If a certain project cannot be completed within a year, then there is cost escalation and adequate resources are not available to meet this cost escalation and the projects are left incomplete. Again fresh resources are mobilised to complete the same projects, and consequently new projects cannot be started. I would request the Hon. Minister to accept the Flood Control Authority Bill, 1986 and implement the schemes under it, so that the socio-economic conditions of our country may improve. So far as the development of the Command Area is concerned, if these are developed and brought under the Integrated Scheme of the I.C.A.R., then there would be no shortage of foodgrain in these areas. Our average yield of foodgrains per hectare at present is 11 tonnes whereas, the average yield per hectare is 6 tonnes in the developed countries. The flooded areas are very fertile and must be utilised properly. The North-Eastern zone in particular, is very backward from the socio-economic point of view. It is due to the recurring floods that literacy drive cannot be undertaken properly, industries cannot be set up, roads cannot be constructed and railway lines cannot be laid. These are the prime reasons underlying the backwardness of this region. Although the area is very fertile, yet it has not been utilised properly and it is another reason for the backwardness of the region. The incidence of diseases is also quite high and diseases with parasitic manifestations are very common there. If the Government is able to control the floods then it will not have to bear additional expenditure which it incurs now. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to move this Bill in the House and give due recognition to this Bill.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO (Vijayawada) : Mr. Chairman, first of all, I congratulate the Hon. Member, Dr. Chandrasekhar Verma for introducing this Bill to enable a full-fledged discussion in this House.

Sir, it is one of the very important issues which is causing serious concern to the whole country. I believe the Government will respond positively and the Hon. Minister will take into consideration several valuable suggestions that will be made by the Members and take all possible steps to prevent or at least minimise flood damage and come up with a comprehensive Bill regarding setting up of the Flood Control Authority of India.

Mr. Chairman, the intensity of this problem is very very serious. In fact, year after year the total loss of crops is increasing and the damage to crops as well as public utility services in the last 30 years comes to more than Rs. 450 crores. In the year 1983 alone, the loss was Rs. 2,292 crores. Hundreds of human lives and thousands of heads of cattle are lost every year.

In Andhra Pradesh due to the unprecedented floods in August the flood damage reached astronomical figures, loss of crops was to the tune of Rs. 407 crores, and damage to public utility services was Rs. 1,686 crores. During the monsoon in 1986 in the entire country, standing crops in 36 lakh hectares were damaged due to floods and also due to heavy rains. The damage to crops alone is estimated to be Rs. 848 crores. As many as 19 lakh houses were either fully or partly damaged, and 51,426 heads of cattle were lost and 1078 human lives were lost. The damage to public utility services amounted to Rs. 2,056 crores. So, this year, the total damage has come to nearly Rs. 3000 crores which is the highest so far. Between 1953 and 1984 the total damage due to floods and cyclones is more than Rs. 30,000 crores.

And the estimates show, on an average, that every year in Uttar Pradesh nearly Rs. 137 crores worth of crops are lost. In Andhra Pradesh it is nearly Rs. 53 crores, in Bihar it is Rs. 50 crores, West Bengal

[Shri Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

Rs. 34 crores, Orissa and Gujarat Rs. 14 crores, each and so on and forth.

The estimates also say that every year nearly 40,00,000 hectares are damaged and for crops alone the damage is Rs 316 crores per year.

Due to these flood damages every year there are serious repercussions on the rural economy. The small and marginal farmers in the flood prone areas are becoming bankrupt. Their financial position is ruining and the moneyed people are exploiting them...

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : Sir, I have a point of order. Sir, according to the notice that I had received earlier, the time was mentioned as 3.30 p.m. But now you have advanced it to 3.00 p.m. How has this change been made ?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no Point of order. The revised programme is from 3 O'Clock. It was circulated to the Members.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Sir, the non-official business begins at 3.30 p.m. Therefore, I ought to have been informed about the change in the timing.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It has been circulated to Members.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : It may have been circulated to Members today. But I had been given notice previously that it would start from 3.30 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is expected that every Member must have received the Revised List of Business in the morning. There is no point of order. The matter is closed.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Sir, the Mover of the Bill must get a notice about the change in the timings. How can it happen otherwise ? I should have been specifically informed.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : No question of special notice. Rules do not contemplate that there should be a special notice to a particular Member. The Business of the House is being circulated to all the Members. So the question of special notice does not arise.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Previously I was given notice that the Private Members Business would start at 3.30 p. m.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No further discussion on this. I have already given my ruling.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : As per the earlier information, the Private Members Business was to start at 3.30 p.m. And now a change has been made therein and I ought to have been informed about it.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : There should be no further discussion on the ruling. I have already given my ruling.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Because of recurrence of floods, millions of small and marginal farmers are not able to cross the poverty line and they are being pushed further below the poverty line.

Regarding prevention of floods, I do not say that the Government is not doing anything. But I am sorry to say that it is not doing that much effort which should be done for prevention of floods.

15.33 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *In the Chair*]

We are spending more money on flood relief and less money on flood control. The reluctance in the past to spend adequate money on flood control is now compelling the Government to spend more on flood relief. Another reason in the delay of implementation of flood control programme is the lack of cooperation among States. For example, Narmada river threatens Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh and Baroda in Gujarat. If Tawa and Bagri schemes on Narmada are completed the flood can be effectively controlled. But the scheme is not making much progress due to unresolved inter-State dispute. So, I suggest that necessary steps should be taken so that such disputes are settled without loss of much time and pave the way for completion of schemes.

Out of the total surface area of all Indian rivers which is estimated at 1700 million acre feet, according to Ministry of Irrigation, till now we have been able to build reservoirs and store water with a total capacity of 120 million acre feet. That means only fifteen per cent of the total water. Construction of irrigation projects or reservoirs will, to some extent, reduce the intensity of the floods, but I am sorry to state that the present procedure that is adopted by Central Water Commission for issue of clearance, needs some rethinking on the part of the Government. On this occasion, I will take only two minutes to quote one example. The Yeleru Reservoir Project was started by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1980 with the object to supply water to Visakhapatnam Steel Plant for which the then Prime Minister laid the foundation stone as far back as 1971. With the good intention of supplying water to that project, the Government, pending clearance from the Central Water Commission, has gone ahead with the construction of Yeleru Reservoir Project— not the present Government but the previous Government—and till now nearly Rs. 70 crores have been spent on that. But even now, in spite of the fact that our State Government has replied to the several comments sent by the Central Water Commission, the Central Water Commission is asking for minute details of each and every small equipment or machinery that is used in this project. How unthinkable it is! Similarly, they are asking for the soil survey reports and some other things. At least there should be no

objection to clearing the first phase of it because by 1988 the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is coming into being since sufficient funds are being provided by the Union Government. Unfortunately, it is not causing any alarm to the Central Water Commission, I am very sorry to state that. So, I request the Hon. Minister to ponder over this matter. Not only our project, I fear several projects from several States are being held up because of this bureaucratic attitude of the Central Water Commission.

Dr. Mitra Committee had submitted its Report in 1954. The Government has accepted the recommendations but has not implemented them except in regard to Damodar River. In our State of Andhra Pradesh, the State Government has implemented, to some extent, some of the recommendations of the Mitra Committee. We have collected nearly Rs. 30 crores from the farmers but all the good work that was done, was damaged due to the frequent cyclones and recent floods in Godavari and other rivers. The Godavari— Krishna delta has completely gone out of gear and now again it needs the attention and assistance of the Central Government.

Similarly, the Master Plan for Brahmaputra was taken up only in 1981. I need not go into details of the vast damages caused due to Brahmaputra every year. The flood control plans cannot be implemented by the State Governments alone. The Central Government also must help. The damage to crops is not only a loss to the State but is a loss to the entire country. Till now the Government has spent only on a few schemes and that too in very few States. I suggest that the Flood Control Authority should be set up and strengthened with necessary experts on the lines of the Central Water Commission. It must be given statutory powers. It should identify the flood-prone areas. By 1984, embankments of a total length of 12,905 kms. had been built and 25,331 kms. of drainage channels had been constructed. Only one-third of protectable area has been covered under the National Flood Control Programme till now since the inception of this Programme.

The Centre is recommending to the State Government to have flood plain zoning

[Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

areas so that the flood impact can be minimised. It has suggested that Defence installations, industries, hospitals, railway stations, commercial complexes and other public utility buildings should be located above the level corresponding to a level of one in 100 years frequency or the maximum observed flood level. It is a good thing. Although this need is recognised by all, none of the States except Manipur has so far enacted the legislation. One of the reasons advanced by the State Government for the non-implementation of these zoning measures was non-availability of survey maps on suitably large-scale to enable proper demarcation of flood areas. So, I request the Centre to see that the Survey of India prepares survey of flood prone areas.

The modern sophisticated measures like Electronic computers should be used to forecast and control the floods.

I congratulate the flood control organisation under Central Water Commission. It has given a timely warning to our State Government and the people regarding impending danger of floods to Godavari. But for this timely warning the loss of human lives would have been much more. I express thanks to the organisation on my behalf and on behalf of our people.

There are scientific reasons to believe that deforestation does increase the possibility of floods. The Forest Conpoy does after all break the fall of rain, with the penetration of the ground being more gentle, there is less soil erosion and run off and the water table rises. The removal of this forest conpoy automatically means a faster flow of rain water. This also lowers water table, increases chances of floods, soil erosion increases. So we have to take up afforestation programme in a very big way. I am happy that Government of India has taken the serious note of the fact that the forest area has decreased to 12 per cent though in records it is 23 per cent as against the minimum repriment of 33 per cent. That is why our Government has taken very good programme of afforesting/reforesting-nearly 5 million hectares per year. I fear this is not possible with the present practice of produ-

cing plant seedlings or saplings unless Government asks every Agricultural University to produce seedlings and saplings through tissue culture.

The State Governments are also taking this subject as No. 1 programme. In spite of their best efforts the seedlings are not being made available to the people because they are in shortage.

Watershed plans should be prepared and the rich experience gained in the world famous model of survival sukhro-majri and Bunga should be tried in as many number of places as possible involving the local people. Check Dams should be constructed wherever possible because it reduces the intensity of flood. The Flood Control Authority should be entrusted with the responsibility of identifying the flood prone area through Survey of India and prepare plans for prevention of floods in every State and take up the responsibility of implementing the plans. This stupendous task is easier said than done. The State Governments as well as the people of the flood prone areas are to be involved in this task. I suggest the Government should give at least Rs. 500 crores per year to the Flood Control Authority with a matching amount to be taken from the State Governments and also the matching amount from the people in the flood prone areas. Only then we can effectively tackle this flood programme.

I appreciate the Minister some time back has clearly stated that no industry, public utility buildings should be constructed in flood prone areas taking the maximum flood level of one in hundred years. I bring it to his kind notice that recently floods to Godavari have reached the maximum level in the living memory. They have surpassed the previous maximum flood level. In fact the present flood banks should be raised by 1.5 metres on both sides if we have to prevent this type of damage so that it may not happen in future.

I request the Government of India to take this into consideration and make available necessary financial assistance. Some time back the Agriculture Minister was telling—the Government has relaxed the

present provisions. When the Government wanted to help some drought affected States which were very very affected, some relaxation was taken. Similarly, in respect of our Andhra Pradesh flood situation, the flood banks of Godavari be raised to the maximum. The Government should come to our rescue.

Lastly, Sir, though it does not directly pertain to this Bill, it is very much concerned with this flood aspect. From 1985 kharif season the Union Government has started the comprehensive crop insurance scheme and brought some crops under the purview of that scheme. The experience in the last two seasons clearly brought out that some of the provisions of this scheme need radical change. In fact, with the present provisions, some of the farmers in the villages which are really affected, 100 per cent affected, are not going to be helped because the threshold yield in the defined area, that is, a taluka or panchayat samiti or a mandal, is not going to be changed considerably and because of this fact, the General Insurance Corporation, though it has taken the premium from the farmers, is not coming to the rescue of the affected farmers. The Government is not directly helping the farmers for the loss sustained due to the floods. This is the only mechanism through which the farmer can be helped to some extent. So, I request the Hon. Minister to use his good offices because he is very much in knowledge of how much extensive damage is being done to the farmers every year, to use his good offices with the Minister for Agriculture to bring out a change so that in that defined area the present taluka/mandal should be replaced by the revenue village. Wherever the farmer is affected due to floods or cyclones or drought, certainly he can be helped by this way.

I request the Minister to come up with a comprehensive Bill to take care of this flood problem and set up a Flood Control Authority of India which is the object of the Hon. Member's Private Member's Bill, with all the necessary provisions which empower the organisation to take care of this prevention of floods.

SHRI VJAY N. PATIL (Erandol) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the first instance I congra-

tulate Dr. Chandra Sekhar Verma for bringing this important Bill. As my friend, Mr. Rao has covered the flood problem in this country in a comprehensive manner, the important fact remains that because of deforestation the flood damage and flood situation in this country is aggravating year after year. Thirty-three per cent of the land should be under forest as per the norms laid down. But as the photographs of satellite have shown, only 12 per cent of the forest area is left and the percentage is going down every year, and because of this there is a lot of denudation and the water is not retained in the jungles and on the forms, it goes directly into the rivers. Not only the water, but also the silt in large quantities goes into the rivers and the river-bed and it changes its course every year when there are big floods and because of that there is a lot of damage to crops and the damage goes up to Rs. 2000 crores in some years, as is pointed out by my friend, Mr. Rao.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, to control the floods different countries have adopted different methods, but in our country although we have got all the scientific knowledge for that, there are financial constraints. But at the same time, because of our remote sensing satellite and wireless and electronic control, the damage caused by floods which occurred last year in Godavari, could be minimised at least as far as human life is concerned.

Sir, when we think of flood relief in hundred crores of rupees every year, why can't we think of connecting the Ganga with the Kaveri, a big canal that was being thought of. It is also a matter to be considered. When you can think of a pipeline from Bombay High to Jagdishpur by spending thousands of crores of rupees, why can't we plan, in a perspective planning, joining of the Ganga and the Kaveri? That is also a matter to be considered so that the irrigation in this country can also increase and we can control the floods.

The Britishers had planned so many dams. We have also planned so many dams on important rivers. But the progress is so slow that we do not know by the turn of the century, how many of them will be completed. For example, Narmada-Sarovar in Gujarat on the border of Maharashtra, Madhya

[Shri Vijay N. Patil]

Pradesh and Gujarat was planned in 1959. But the work could not be started even in 1974 and till today only the foundation-stones are laid. So, dams are one of the important factors which will be able to control the flood and also increase irrigation. But here we are not able to provide finances. Even on river Tapti, Khariaguty-Navatha dams were planned so many years earlier and the foundation-stones were also laid by the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra during the Janata rule. But that was not started because of inter-State disputes and inter-State finances are involved. Because of that, such projects are not undertaken. When we talk of construction of dams on important rivers passing through Madhya Pradesh, the Madhya Pradesh Government say that so many important rivers flow through their State and they are not in a position to contribute to so many dams which are to be constructed and used for irrigation in different States. Under such circumstances, we should have the Central authority for control of floods which occur every year. This Flood Control Authority of India can serve a good purpose.

With the advancement of science and technology, we can do many things. But we are not able to control the sequence of rains and their frequency. We have tried Omega experiments some years ago. But we do not know the outcome of it. We have seen that the rain has changed its course. In places where there were 20 inches rains or 40 inches rains, there is no rains now and drought has come in. We have been seeing, because of deforestation in Maharashtra, clouds which gather at the Western Ghats go directly to Madhya Pradesh and then to U. P. and Bihar, then strike Himalayas and come back and bring a lot of rains in U. P. and Bihar and with the result floods occur and they take a dangerous course in these States. That is what we are experiencing for the last 4 or 5 years. So, there should be afforestation in large scale in all the States. That is an important thing. We have to undertake this. We think of flood control in large measures. We know that rivers are not big in the beginning, at their origin. They are very small in the beginning and so many rivulets joining become a river and that makes so big. The Britishers and our ances-

tors constructed very small diversions and *bandaras* on these rivers and rivulets near every village or big villages. At present, they are also silted and water is not stored there. In our Maharashtra State, through Employment Guarantee Programme, when there is no work to the farmers and labourers, we undertake construction of roads, metalling and other work. I have suggested why do we not take out sands from small *bandaras* so that water can be stored even in small places in small quantity and floods can be minimised.

We are told by the States and by the Central Government also, that taking out sand from this small *bandara* is not economical. We are not to see the economics. If we see the economics, what about the expenditure on flood relief which we are incurring in hundreds of crores of rupees every year? We should think of desilting, taking out the sand, from these very small *bandaras* which are in thousands of numbers in every State. If that is done, the intensity of floods can be reduced. The water availability can be increased in those areas.

Excepting the State of Haryana, some parts of Bihar, UP and Punjab, in other States, the water table is going down. On the one hand, we find there is a flood problem. On the other hand, the water table has gone down many feet below. I come from an area where bananas grow in large quantities, Jelgaum and Busaval which also come here into the market. The water table there 20 years ago was 30-50 feet. Now it has gone down to 80-100 feet. On the one side, the water table is doing down. On the other side, the floods are causing increasing havoc every year. By the establishment of Flood Control Authority of India, we will be able to coordinate between different States.

My friend Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao has suggested that some fund should be allocated to this Authority and the matching contribution can be had from the different States Governments to control the floods.

Haphazard manner will not help. You have to take measures like the strengthening of river embankments, construction of dam on it and other flood control measures on a war footing and you have to complete those

measures. Otherwise, if you do just half way, floods come in the rivers, as in the river Godavari which made large cuts as was done 125 years ago. Half-way measures on that river will not help.

One river at a time can be taken up by the Central Government through Flood Control Authority of India and the flood control work can be completed.

China has experimented with mini-hydel plants. Here also we can have mini-hydel plants by establishing mini-hydel plants at different places instead of thinking of big hydel plants at few places.

In the end, I would like to say again that we must have think of joining river Ganga with river Kauveri in right earnest, with all sincerity, so that something will be done for increasing the irrigation potential of this country and in controlling the floods.

[*Translation*]

*SHRI R. ANNANAMBI (Pollachi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the A. I. A. D. M. K., I welcome the Bill for establishment of Food Control Authority in the country, which has been brought forward in this House by Dr. Chandra Sekhar Verma. Sir, in this connection, I am sorry to point out that the Centre has not taken any action for the establishment of an Authority for taking flood control measures, and almost all the States in the country have been affected either due to floods or due to drought situation in several parts of the country. Flood has been playing a great havoc in the country at regular intervals. Due to incessant and heavy rains in several parts of the country, heavy floods are caused and because of this not only food production is retarded but the people living in the low lying areas and flood prone areas are put to a lot of difficulties.

In this context, I would like to draw the attention of the Government that about four months back, in and around Tanjore District, the granary of Tamil Nadu, there was a heavy damage to the paddy fields due to unprecedented heavy rains causing floods in

*The speech was originally delivered in Tamil.

these areas. The common people living in slum areas were greatly affected because of inundation. I have also brought to the notice of this august House in the last Session in August, that thousands of workers, farmers and the common people were put to great sufferings on account of heavy rains and floods in Tamil Nadu. At that time, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. M. G. Ramachandran, took immediate steps in right earnest, to render relief and rehabilitate those affected due to floods. With his timely action in providings relief to the affected people, the suffering of the people could be mitigated to a great extent.

I am very much grateful to the Central Government, particularly to the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, for providing relief and giving other help to the flood affected people in the country. At the same time, I would like to remind this House that the Central Government is not showing much interest in solving the water problem throughout the country.

I would now come to my State, Tamil Nadu, where people are facing untold sufferings due to non-release of water in the Kaveri river. The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. M. G. Ramachandran, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri Rama-Krishna Hegde and the Union Minister met many times to discuss about the release of water in sufficient quantity in Kaveri River which is flowing through Tamil Nadu. But nothing concrete had emerged from their meetings. Therefore, our Chief Minister, Dr. M. G. Ramachandran, has requested the Centre to appoint a Tribunal for this purpose. Here I would like to remind the Centre that they should take immediate step to appoint a Tribunal so that the this long pending water problem could be solved.

Sir, there has been an increasing demand for a long time from the people of the country for linking the Garga and the Kaveri rivers. Shri C. Subramaniam, the then Finance Minister at the Centre, had suggested about 20 years back that the Ganga and the Kaveri rivers should be linked. The estimated cost worked out at that time was about Rs. 25 crores. Now that there has been inordinate delay caused in taking up the project, the cost of this scheme has

[Shri R. Annanambi]

escalated to too many-folds. Even now it is not too late. I would therefore request the Government to take immediate action in implementing this scheme.

I come to the next point. Sir, the water resources of the country should be nationalised. If the maintenance and control of all the rivers in the country are under the Centre, it would not only help the people but it would also be helpful for inland water transport system. Consumer goods and materials could be moved within the country through water transport. This will be most economical and the cheapest mode of transport of cargo. Inland water transport system would also greatly help the country's development. This transport system would ease the pressure on the railways, trucks, Lorries and other vehicles in transportation of goods and materials and save the time and reduce the cost also.

I would also request the Centre to allot more funds for the development of land and the protection of fertility in the soil so that agricultural production in the country is increased by leaps and bounds.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I conclude, I would like to point out that at some places in Tamil Nadu, because of failure of monsoon, agriculture was very much affected and this has led to low production on the food front. But at some other places, because of heavy rains leading to floods, poor people and weaker sections lost their homes and property. To mitigate their sufferings, the Tamil Nadu Government took prompt and urgent relief measures. They had sanctioned crores of rupees for this purpose. Moreover the Tamil Nadu Government also requested the Centre for financial help to the tune of Rs. 310 crores for relief measures. Accordingly, the Centre had sent some team of officials on more than two occasions to make assesment on the spent regarding the damage caused due to drought and floods. Those teams had surveyed and submitted a report to the Centre. But the Centre had only sanctioned a meagre amount of Rs. 30 crores for relief measures in Tamil Nadu. Though the Tamil Nadu Government requested for sanction of Rs. 310 crores, the

Centre should have atleast come forward to sanction at least a sum of Rs. 150 crores. Unfortunately, they had given only a plutry sum of Rs. 30 crores. Since this small amount was hardly sufficient for relief measures, the Tamil Nadu Government had to undergo a lot of difficulties to find funds for relief measures to the people affected due to floods and drought. Whatever the financial constraints at the Centre, they should not hesitate to sanction the fund asked for by the State. Whenever a particular State is affected due to natural calamities like floods, droughts, etc. the Centre should come forward to sanction the amount asked for by the State Government for providing relief measures. This is my humble request to the Central Government.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, natural calamities like drought, floods and cyclone are common phenomena in our country. Due to floods, human lives are lost, cattle heads are lost, we have loss of crops, dislocation of communications, miseries to many people, washing away of houses, sandcasting of lands, etc. The amounts earmarked during the whole Plan to meet the immediate measures have been spent within two years, as has been said by the Hon. Prime Minister himself. From this, the magnitude of the problem can be well understood. We are always giving due importance for immediate measures. We should give a thrust for permanent measures also.

In every State there are different rivers and different river basins, and all these river basins have to be surveyed, negotiated and connected. Unless the different river basins are connected, there may be floods in one part of the State and drought in other parts of the State. So, this should be looked into.

Similarly, the different rivers flowing in different States should be connected and the water that otherwise flows to the ocean should be utilised for irrigation. Hydro-electricity is the cheapest. By constructing reservoirs we can have flood control and at the same time we can generate power.

It will certainly take a very long time to connect the different rivers in different parts of India. Therefore, we can resort to what is called 'water-harvesting structures' or water-sheds. These 'water-harvesting structures' or water-sheds give us three benefits: one is they arrest soil erosion; they help in the irrigation of dry-land farming—if not to rabi, certainly to kharif—and they also raise the ground water strata. This should be given priority in all the States.

In the southern part of India, in the former Madras Presidency, we had 'inundation channels'. That is, villagers raise cross bunds inside the river during drought and take water through the inundation channels to their fields for irrigation. Specially in Orissa there are many inundation channels which are silted and the small irrigation projects have become derelict, for want of repairs. So, sufficient funds should be given by the Centre specifically for repairs of inundation channels and small irrigation projects in Orissa which is affected by drought, flood as well as by cyclone every year. At least Rs. 400 crores should be given for repairing of these minor irrigation projects and inundation channels

Water management is now considered to be more important than the construction of irrigation projects because water is being wasted for want of scientific way of utilisation. We have got in our country water resource which the nature has given us.

A scientist from Russia has said that if the sacred Ganga would have fallen at Cape Camorin the whole of India would have been made green. Now also the course of the river can be changed. In Russia they have joined one ocean with another and converted desert into a green field.

In China also the water has been best utilised. Mr. Chairman, both of us have gone there and seen how water resources best utilised for irrigation as well as for hydro electricity. So, why not we adopt the same methods in our country so that water resource of our country is best utilised for the benefit of the nation.

We have got Flood Control Authorities and commissions. But I am sorry to say that these authorities and commissions are satisfied if some immediate measures are taken. Pardon me to repeat it, permanent measures that ought to have been taken are never given much importance. So, I would tell the Hon. Minister through you that it is not a problem of small magnitude, it is a problem concerning the whole country. In spirit I support the Bill. I hope the Hon. Minister will bring a comprehensive Bill. Let it take two or three decades, we don't mind. But see that permanent measures are taken and this menace is put an end to.

PROF. N. G. RANGA : Mr. Chairman Sir, I would also like to speak on this Bill.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to congratulate Shri Verma through you for making a good suggestion. This suggestion has been given at a time when various parts of our country are experiencing floods. Normally, there are no floods in these days and it is our misfortune that in spite of maximum water resources, we not only become victim of the floods but a major part of our country also remains drought affected. In some parts of the country, our farmers pine for water. This situation is not confined to a particular State. Even within a State, the situation may vary in the different parts. The main reason thereof is that we could not formulate a long term policy of water management under which every drop of water, whether surface water or underground water, could be utilised properly. Every year, the Government sanctions crores of rupees for flood relief work. But the relief serves no other purpose except relief. If we calculate the total amount which we spend on relief and spend one fourth thereof on the flood control work and utilisation of water, I think that will be a good beginning. Resource constraint is the biggest problem before the State Governments in initiating such plans. Shri Muttemwar, M.P. told me that whenever he approached the State Government to construct any dam, the State Government expressed its inability due to lack of funds. Flood control work, construction of small

[Shri Harish Rawat]

dams, canals etc. are in the hands of State Governments but they do not complete them due to the shortage of funds. The Central Government should provide technical know-how or other assistance through C.P.W.D. for the completion of such works. The need of the hour is to take the State chief Ministers and Irrigation Ministers into confidence, so that a plan to utilise the water resources can be formulated. I would like to say that we should prepare a sketch of our country with the help of remote sensing Centre to determine flood prone and drought prone areas in the country and more grants should be provided to these areas for their development. There are so many areas in Northern Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Orissa which permanently remain either flood affected or drought affected.

If there are no floods or drought during a year, the farmers consider themselves very lucky. We should prepare a long term policy for the development of these areas.

In this regard, you can make use of super computers, being acquired by us, for at least forecasting the floods and to provide technical knowhow to deal with drought. We cannot link the big rivers because it requires billions of rupees which is not possible for a country like ours. We can make a beginning by linking one or two rivers. If we make a beginning by linking one or two rivers flowing in a State, it can be further extended to the other States also. I do not say that at this time, we should undertake the linking of Ganga and Cauvery. But we must express our determination to undertake this work in order to create confidence and new hope among the people. It is all right that in flood affected areas, we undertake flood control work, dam construction etc, but primarily it is necessary to save our cities. The more important thing is that we should plant trees along the banks of rivers which ravage thousands of acres of land every year. It will not only improve the environment but will also be very useful to control the floods. Hundreds of acres of land can be saved which may be distributed among the poor farmers. Here I would like to bring this fact to the notice of the Hon. Minister that we start flood

control work in the highly flood prone areas whereas it should be started at the origin of the rivers. So long as we do not undertake the soil-conservation measures and dam construction work on the rivers in Nepal, we cannot save Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Northern Bihar from flood fury. In this way you cannot save the dams and floods in Ganga and silting of rivers unless you undertake soil conservation measures in the hill areas of Uttar Pradesh. The State Government also undertake these works on a very small scale with their limited resources. The Central Government considering it as a national responsibility should give adequate grants to the State Governments to undertake soil conservation work on large scale so that soil erosion and silting may be stopped. The dams which are completing their lives can be saved and in addition to it, the damage caused by the flood can also be avoided.

Now I want to say something about the Projects which are lying incomplete due to Inter-State water disputes. It appears that your work and the work of your Ministry is merely to inform the Lok Sabha about the State of completion of a particular dam or project. Your responsibility ends merely by saying that this project is lying incomplete due to Inter State dispute. One of such cases is pending since 1940-44. Similarly, there are many other Projects which are lying incomplete. Every year the conferences of chief Ministers and Irrigation Ministers are held and there ought to be some outcome of such conferences. It is a separate thing that a project may be completed due to the intervention of the Hon. Prime Minister. A few back days you had said in the High Power Committee meeting that it was necessary to formulate a national policy which should be honestly implemented by every State. It appears to me that every State is considering it so far as it serves their own self interest. So long as we do not have any authority to force the States, no State would come forward on its own. I once again support the Bill brought by Shri Vermaji and want that there should be a body, as envisaged in the Bill. But that should not be a formal body like many other Authorities, but it should be a high powered body with adequate financial powers which may ensure completion of the projects as per the

schedule and formulate policy in this regard. I think that our wise Minister understands this subject more deeply and will definitely do something in this regard.

[English]

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to thank Dr. Chandra Shekhar Verma for having given us this opportunity to discuss this matter in this House. I agree with all the points that have been made so far by the various speakers. It is clear that the House irrespective of party differences is unanimous on this matter, in suggesting to the Government of India to take definite, constructive and time-bound steps in order to consult and obtain the consent of the State Governments and then establish an all-India Authority to function under the Government of India with the cooperation of all the States concerned, not only an all-India Authority for flood control, but also for drought control, namely, an all-India Flood and Drought Control Authority. If they wish to have to separate Authorities, one for flood control and the other for protection from drought, well, that would be welcome, but nevertheless, both these seasonal calamities that overtake different parts of the country at different times have to be tackled. In order to do that, you need huge sums of money, hundreds of crores of rupees every year. The Government would naturally find it difficult to get all this money at one time. Therefore, I would like to suggest that a special levy may be imposed on all the people, especially the salaried people, industrial magnates, industrial workers as well as farmers for this specific purpose, in the same way as they had done it in Europe soon after the last war, by way of what is known as 'reconstruction tax'. Some such tax has got to be thought of. Credit goes to Shri Brahmananda Reddy in Andhra for having had the political courage to impose what is known as 'drainage tax'. When it was imposed it was very unpopular. So many of my own followers were very much opposed to it. But we find now that it has been a very good imposition and only recently, the latest Ministry has even enhanced that imposition. Some such thing has got to be done all over India.

Now, would it be possible for the State Governments to muster necessary political courage in order to do it all by themselves or for each one of the States by itself? It will be easier for them to do so, if there were to be an authority like this for the whole of India and on the urging of that authority, the State Governments take up this responsibility. It is true that this subject is in the Concurrent List. It is so, Sir? I speak subject to correction. Therefore, Government of India alone, by itself, would not be able to take up this work. It would not be able to consider the possibility of nationalising all the waterways and rivers on its own. It has got to get the cooperation of the State Governments also. Therefore, necessary political and semi-political steps will have to be taken by the Government of India through negotiations, as well as through inter-State conferences in order to get the consent and cooperation of the State Governments in this regard. I have been pleading on a world-scale for some such fund, which I call 'Insurance Fund'. At least let us try and do it in our country and at the national level; that itself is a big enough task. I hope that the Government of India would try to take initial steps in order to make some progress in this direction. Already, we have lost 40 years. Tens of thousands of crores of rupees of losses have been sustained by our farmers. All credit to them that in spite of these losses, still they are carrying their occupations, they are self-employed and they are making their contribution to the economic and social progress of our nation.

Sir, so many of these rivers are inter-State rivers and each river is fed by local tributaries, which are known as 'Bandas' in Maharashtra. On each one of them, small hydro-electric plants can be established as is being done in Japan. That way, double purpose can be served. Then, forestry has got to be developed in every area. Anti-erosion measures will have to be taken up. All these schemes have got to be financed by the State Governments as well as by the Government of India.

I am sure, the soul of Dr. K. L. Rao would certainly be happy at the way in which we have been discussing this matter in this House this day. A reference has been made

[Prof. N. G. Ranga]

to his bold conception, rather a bold suggestions for an engineer to have made, that from Ganga to Cauvery we should try to have not only irrigation projects, but also hydel projects and waterways. My Hon. friend from South India, from AIADMK referred to this waterways. For a long time, we have neglected them, because of our fancy for the railways. Now, we find that the Railways are not enough to carry all the freights that are being made available by our progress in industrial development. Now, the time has come when waterways also have got to be developed. Then, in addition to that, hydel projects have to be developed. It is an all-India problem. Every State is suffering and at the same time, most of the States have not been able to develop that much of statesmanship as not to stand in the way and put their foot in the way of progress. Take now Narmada for instance. For the past 40 years, I for one and so many Members also of this House have been pleading for the development of the Narmada project so that, not only farmers would be protected all along the way but also the cities like Surat and other places in Gujarat can be protected from floods. Yet, so little progress has been made. Thanks to Dr. Katju that Chambal has been harnessed to some extent, but it can be developed much further. Something can be said about Godavari. My Hon. friend Mr. Rao has given very many relevant details in regard to this. Latest sufferings that were inflicted upon our farmers as well as agricultural workers, but also the long time sufferings that our people have had to go through because of the neglect that we have displayed. Industrial development is partly at the mercy of the proper use of these waterways. Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant cannot be developed unless Yelurer Project is developed. Then, the Polavaram Project. Then Inchampalli Project. Madras city cannot be fed with water unless, Godavari water is allowed to go to Krishna river from Krishna to Telugu Ganga, as they would like to call it, right upto Madras. In this way, today our economy is inter-dependent and yet it has not been inter-connected. Efforts have got to be made in that direction in order to do all these things that are being suggested. One needs as I said earlier, not hundred but more than thousand crores expenditure

every year on this alone. How can we raise all this money? How can we expect our own Government here to make available all the money? The State Governments are more or less bankrupt and they are dependent upon subventions and grants in aid and so on from the Central Government. Therefore, the time has come for the people as a whole to agree to the imposition of special tax for development of this water power on one side, as flood protection and also drought protection and anti-erosion and ecology development, on the other. It is a stupendous, task and if my Hon. friend would try to bend his energies in getting the State Governments also to agree with him and then place forward before our people the proposal and I am sure the country would be willing to accept it. At least, now, three years before the election we have a powerful national Government, I am sure during these three years, it would be possible for them to think of a set of proposals which would be placed before the country. I am sure it would be a challenge to all the political parties and their statesmanship and I hope all the political parties would at the time of elections at least next time would be willing to lend their support to such a proposal and raise it above party differences.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Bill introduced by Shri Verma and request the Hon. Minister that if he is unable to accept it, he should bring another Bill on this subject. I once again congratulate Shri Verma and would like to say something on the subject.

These days you may visit any part of the country and you will find that Rajasthan is affected by drought, one part of Bihar is affected by floods and the other is affected by drought. Similarly, East Andhra Pradesh, is reeling under floods whereas in Western side of Andhra Pradesh, people are dying and cattle are perishing due to acute scarcity of water.

There are two reasons for this state of affairs. One of the reasons is that we have not taken any concrete steps to implement the water policy formulated so far. We

know that earlier Shri K. L. Rao had also submitted a proposal to link the rivers Ganga and Cauvery. We know that we cannot link the rivers Ganga and Cauvery and other rivers Krishna and Cauvery. We know that issues relating to water disputes have been raised in this House many a time. There was a water dispute between Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and Shri Shankaranand was involved in that controversy. He was criticised especially by our Telugu Desam friends and the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and it was alleged that he was not giving clearance because he belongs to Karnataka. I would like to say to my friends that Shri Shankaranand should consider water management policy at the national level.

The waters of the rivers Ganga, Cauvery, Krishna and Narmada are national assets and are not the property of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra or Madhya Pradesh. If one person suffers due to the construction of a dam, 8 other persons are benefited at the same time. It will not be wise to stop the construction of the dam to save one person. So there must be some national policy and the irrigation and flood control should not be a State subject.

We can meet the shortage of electricity by constructing dams on the big rivers and by generating electricity. For example, N.T.P.C. is setting up a project at Ramagundam. The place is in Andhra Pradesh and the coal used also comes from Andhra but the electricity generated is used by Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. It is possible that this project might have rendered many persons homeless and landless but we never opposed it. The farmers have become jobless due to the Singrauli Coal mines and the N.T.P.C. project but we did not oppose it.

If the Ichampalli project is not cleared by the Governments of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh it will be detrimental to the national interest. If the Ichampalli project is implemented then we can keep about 200 K.M.C. water in reserve. The people in Hyderabad are facing an acute water shortage. You should know that

3 lakh acres of land can be irrigated through the Nizam Sagar project which would benefit the farmers. But the fields there have dried up and the farmers have agitated against it but without any result. They asked Shri N.T.R. to release water for irrigation but the choice was between the human life and the harvest. The Government's first duty is to save the human life. Therefore, in order to provide water to Hyderabad, the standing paddy on 3 lakh acres was sacrificed. Now the farmers are very much agitated. We could have saved the crops in 3 lakh acres in Andhra Pradesh by providing waters from the dam on the Majira river which falls in Karnataka and Maharashtra but the Governments of these States did not oblige. At present irrigation is the State subject that is why they refuse to provide water to others. I want that it should be a union subject.

The present losses which the farmers suffer due to the floods are not in national interest. A permanent solution will have to be found to stop its recurrence. Several inter State river water disputes are pending. The Madhya Pradesh Government wants to protect the interests of its farmers and so is the case with the Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. We should not quarrel on such issues. Justice should be meted out to everyone. Shri Mirdha has replied that all the three Chief Ministers have reached an agreement on the Ichampalli Project. I want to tell him for his information that the Chief Minister of Maharashtra has opposed this agreement. What sort of attitude is this? The Central Government should not remain a silent spectator. It is not good that the Central Government should remain inactive while the three State Governments are making claims and counter claims on the water issue. This water is the property of the whole of the country. No one State can stake its claim and at the same time other States should not be deprived of their rightful claims.

A few days ago we came to know that about seven thousand persons agitated against the Ichampalli Project. I met the agitators and requested them not to do so and told them that let the waters of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra not flow to

[Shri C. Janga Reddy]

Andhra Pradesh but they should not quarrel among themselves on such petty issues. I would request the Hon. Minister to take initiative in the matter and resolve this water dispute.

Today, increasing investments are being made in the industries. As during a war where all the resources are diverted to war, the floods should also be treated on the same footing and relief works should be carried out on war footing.

In case of drought, the people are always forewarned but in case of floods, the people are taken unawares—the fields, houses and crops are submerged in water—and people face starvation. The flood control should, therefore, be a Union subject.

Andhra Pradesh has suffered losses to the tune of Rs. 1700 crores due to floods. You have granted a help of Rs. 132 crores only. The Chief Minister Shri N. T. Rama Rao considers this amount highly inadequate and so he is demanding more money. Our farmers are in trouble due to all these problems. People are dying either due to water scarcity or due to starvation. Starvation forced four persons to commit suicide by jumping from Char Minar in broad daylight day before yesterday. Some persons have died of hunger in Mehboob Nagar. What are the reasons? Wherever water is available it should be properly managed. Water is a national asset and as such it should be made a Union subject so that even the smaller States get water.

You have advised sinking of wells and installation of rigs. But for how many days can it work? You know that even if it is installed at a depth of 20 ft. water will not be available the very next year. And, if it is 10 ft deep then it will not provide water even for one year. I am pained to see the surface water going waste and my fields remaining dry. The water should be managed properly. The Government should not sit idle because of inter State water disputes. If Madras needs water and we do not supply water to it then our brothers in Tamil Nadu will suffer. Can we see them suffer? While travelling in a train we share

others water and nobody charges us for that. The people of this country are dying somewhere due to the scarcity of water and somewhere due to its abundance. It should be prevented. The Central Government should take initiative to intervene and link Ganga with Cauvery, and the river Krishna with Godavari. The Tungbhadra and the Godavari be linked either with the Trisalem, or Telugu Ganga or Pullichintara. Ichampalli will have to be linked with Polavaram, Godavari or Krishna otherwise we cannot prevent the floods. If the Governments of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are not ready to supply water to the Ichampalli Project for which they had agreed some 10 or 20 years back and violate that agreement then the Central Government should intervene and persuade them to supply water to the project. If you fail to do so, then we shall raise our voice against it. We shall ask the Madhya Pradesh Government to keep its water with itself and let our water flow to us.

Your view is that with this step forests will be submerged and that is why it cannot be allowed. But we want water in spite of it because if water is supplied to the drought affected areas, forests can again be raised in the drought affected areas. For example, in Telengana, Nalgonda, Mehboobnagar, Medak new forests can be grown with a little water. There you can increase the area under forest. We can grow forests equivalent to the area deforested.

Once Environment Secretary had told me that in the absence of trees and shrubs on the banks of rivers, ten lakh tonnes of soil is washed away into the sea every year.

The Godavari river is changing its course. Why? Its breadth is increasing and depth is lessening. It is getting silted. Pay attention to it. If the breadth is more and the depth less, it would result in floods. That is why more areas are inundated. The rivers are changing their course with the result that the villages are getting submerged. To check this water should be controlled. Trees should be grown on the banks of rivers. In addition, maximum water should be made available to the villages for irriga-

tion. Shri Shankranand knows how much agricultural labour we have. The more water we make available the more will the employment opportunities be generated. You can see that the number of these labourers is more than even industrial labourers. You can calculate the number of industrial labourers. In villages 80 per cent people are agricultural labourers. Shri Datta Samant boasts of large number of textile workers of Bombay but the number of unemployed is more in villages than in Bombay. But in Bombay the workers are organised and they speak unitedly. That is why their voice is heard as far away as in Delhi. The voice of agricultural labourers living in villages does not reach here. They are either victim of drought or of floods. That is why their voice does not reach Delhi. Agricultural labourers outnumber the industrial labourers. Therefore, agricultural labourers should be protected. 80 per cent people living in the villages are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. This Flood Control Bill is necessary to save them. Management of water is very necessary. Water is necessary to protect them from drought. Every field and every industry needs water. Every human being needs water for drinking. He needs water to sustain life. Without it we cannot survive. Without water farming as well as industrial production will come to a grinding halt. In the absence of water, there has been steep fall in production in Vishakhapatnam steel plant. Similarly, in Patnacharu and Bhagyanagar due to shortage of water all industries have been closed. People are crying for water but you are not providing it. The country cannot make progress without water. Water is necessary to take the country forward.

Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to take some concrete steps in this direction. Only then you can make this country happy and prosperous and save it from drought. That is why I support this Bill and congratulate Shri Verma for bringing it here. I congratulate Shri Shankaranand also for being retained for the last two years as Water Resources Minister in Shri Rajiv's Cabinet because the Minister's of other Departments have been frequently changed. I request him to take concrete steps during his tenure in the present Ministry for formulating different Central irrigation projects and to implement them.

***DR. PHULRENU GUHA (Contai) :**
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I whole heartedly thank the mover of this Bill for bringing forth such an important Bill before this House. This is a very important Bill and very essential for our country. Sir, we are all aware that in India every year some States are faced with severe floods. At the same time we also see that some State is afflicted by drought every year. This situation is prevailing in the whole country. We have to deeply ponder over this problem and have to take effective measures to combat them. The Hon. mover of this Bill has considered one aspect of this twin problem and has brought forth this Bill and for that I thank him heartily. My previous speakers have said many things about this problem and I fully endorse everything that they have said. The Hon. Member who spoke immediately before me said a very important thing that no State must claim ownership of the water of the river flowing through that State. This we will have to keep in mind. Rivers flow from one State into another State. Therefore if one State insists that they own that water, then our river water disputes will keep on increasing among the various States. Just as we cannot hold the air in bondage, similarly we cannot hold the water in bondage. Water belongs to all. It is our national wealth and belongs to the whole nation. This must be remembered.

16.53 hrs.

[SHRI N. VENKATARATNAM
in the Chair]

Now, Sir, when floods take place in our country what do we see? Crores of rupees are spent most of which goes waste because only some of it is spent for temporary relief of the flood affected people. Some steps are taken for temporary relief but no permanent measures are taken for flood prevention. Floods bring untold misery for the people. Many lives are lost, not human lives alone, many cattle and birds also lose their lives. Hundreds of trees and crops are destroyed, many houses collapse and many houses are damaged. Lakhs of people suffer financial loss and are reduced to destitution. Now the time has come when we must find a solution to these problems. We cannot delay it

*The speech was originally delivered in Bengali.

[Dr. Phulrenu Guha]

any more. Most of the people living in the villages are poor. Their lives become unbearable due to floods or droughts year after year. All our rivers ultimately fall into the sea and all this water goes waste. Therefore we have to think where we should construct dams so that we may produce maximum crops, and also be able to harness the rivers to prevent floods. Not only that, we should also try to generate the maximum power and energy by harnessing these river waters so that it will mitigate to a great extent the power shortage faced by the whole country. Here I will say one more thing. There is much fertile land available in our country but nothing can be produced there for want of water. On some land only one crop is being raised for want of water where 2 or 3 crops could be raised if adequate water could be made available.

Sir, floods occur due to rains also. It is not correct to say that only rivers cause floods. Recently in Midnapore district of West Bengal where I come from, and in my own constituency, Contai, there were devastating floods. This was caused by incessant heavy rains for more than 15 days. Therefore I will suggest the use of the word "floods". This may be caused either by rivers or by rains. In this context I will point out that it has been provided in our 'crop insurance' provisions that "floods caused by river waters". Therefore if "floods caused by rains" are also not included in the crop insurance provisions, then the poor people will face great hardship in the future. I draw your attention to this aspect also.

Sir, I do not know whether it is possible to have drought control and flood control together by the same board. If it is not possible, then it is necessary to have two control boards at the same time to control drought and flood. I will urge upon the Hon. Minister to think about including 'natural calamities' also along with these. We have often seen the misery of the people in 'natural calamities'. When they become victims of natural calamities, there are no provisions to help them and this often causes much misery and suffering. I do not like to take the time of the House in narrating

them. They are too well known. Sir, I will request the Hon. Minister through you that we must adopt some permanent steps for natural calamities also.

Lastly Sir, I will request the Hon. Minister to bring forth a comprehensive Bill very soon. The Control Board to be set up under that Bill should consist of floods control experts if the Board concerns itself with flood control alone. If it deals with flood control and drought control both, then experts of both flood control and drought control should be on that Board. If a board is set up with these two set of experts, no 'if' Sir, it is our demand that such a Board must be constituted without delay. All these sets of experts who will work through that Board, small exclusively think of floods, droughts and natural calamities respectively. When that is done, they will have an overall view of the whole country, as to where floods takes place, where droughts takes place, why do they occur at those places, how they can be prevented. When they get overall view of the whole country in this respect, then they will be able to formulate new plans from their experience and expertise to combat these evils. When that is done, we will be able to stop the expenditure of crores and crores of rupees which we are incurring of floods. We should make an estimate of how many crores of rupees we have spent on flood and drought during the 40 years. Whatever figures we get, that is not the final thing. Because we get figures about only those things which are visible to us. The innumerable lives that are lost, the innumerable families that are ruined, they do not form a part of such estimates. Therefore, I will request that this Board may be set up immediately.

17.00 hrs.

In the end, I would request the Minister through you that he should consider a comprehensive Bill for flood control. I would request him that not only the flood control but the Drought Control Board should be there and if possible both could be amalgamated or there can be two separate Boards.

Apart from that, I have already said, I would like to emphasise that there are natural calamities every year throughout India.

So, he should consider to have a Committee or a Board or whatever may be the name; some arrangements should be made in so far as natural calamity is concerned. We are spending crores of rupees but at the same time we are not able to help the people or do good to the people. So, I would request the Minister through you that he should bring a Bill, if possible, in the next Session—the Flood Control Bill, a Drought Control Bill or Flood and Drought Control Bill together. I do not know the technicality. I request that the Minister should consider and see the terrible difficulty of the people is reduced to the minimum in the near future.

(English)

SHRI P. NAMGYAL (Ladakh) : I rise to support the Flood Control Authority of India Bill, 1986, moved by Dr. C. S. Verma. Flood and drought are the two major problems which country faces every year in one part or the other. Besides floods and droughts the country also generally faces natural calamities in the form of cyclone, causing flood in the coastal areas of our country. Frequent occurrence of cloud bursts causes irreparable loss to crops, houses, property and causes damage to forests, roads and highways. The damage caused due to cloud burst and other natural calamities are being tackled by the respective State Governments in a very small way with the help of relief provided by the Government of India. Often it has been noticed, particularly I refer to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, when there was a flood or natural calamity like cloud burst in a very far flung area of the State, instead of providing immediate relief to the sufferer who were locked up in a far flung area they utilised the relief money elsewhere, for those who are more near to the seat of the Government. For instance in the year 1982-83 in the Changthang region of Ladakh, about a lakh of sheep, goat and other domestic cattle perished as a result of heavy snow fall. The Government of India had sanctioned relief immediately, as soon as we approached the Government of India. But the State Government diverted that money to the Kashmir valley in Jammu region to meet the damages caused by hail storm to fruit plants and some minor floods in Jammu region. The natural calamities in the Jammu and Kashmir region occurred later

than the one which had occurred in the Ladakh region. To the victims of this snow fall occurred in Ladakh we have paid relief only this year, that is, only after four years of the occurrence of the snowfall. This is the unfortunate thing some time happened in some part of our country. It so happened that as a rule the margin money which the Government of India places at the disposal of the respective State Governments to meet the urgent, rather emergent, requirement of floods, I mean, the damages caused as a result of floods and other natural calamities is not accounted for immediately. But the State Governments are required to submit the utilisation certificate to the Government of India as soon as the money is utilised so that the Government of India could replenish the utilised money. Unfortunately the State Governments often do not submit the accounts in time with the result the victims of floods and other natural calamities living in distant areas have to suffer. Therefore, Sir, if a Flood Control Authority is set up, it will be working independently of the State, of course in close coordination with the respective State Governments and attend to the needy victims without regional and political considerations in the disbursement of relief money for construction and for provision of flood protection measure. Also, the Flood Control Authority can take up the protection measures in a phased manner giving priority to those river basins which are more prone to flood. At present the State Government are adopting some flood control measures in a very small way and they are not in a position to carry out any large-scale flood protection work due to financial constraints. So, by constituting the Flood Control Authority or a more appropriate wording would be, as I feel, "Flood and Drought Control Corporation, the objective will be served. Besides the funds provided by the Government of India, it would be in a position to raise its own funds or it can borrow even from the financial agencies like the World Bank. So, Sir, I support the view of Dr Chandra Shekhar Verma and request the Hon. Minister to kindly consider bringing in a comprehensive Bill on the question of setting up of a Flood and Drought Protection Authority or Corporation, whatever you may call it, so that the Corporation or Authority could manage or rather raise its own funds to meet its requirements. Otherwise it would be very difficult to meet this project like the flood protection

[Shri P. Namgyal]

work in the whole of the country with the help of Government of India funds alone.

With this request, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the time.

[Translation]

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH (Jhalawar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support a very important Bill introduced by Dr. C. S. Verma in the House today and I want to congratulate him for it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I belong to an area which is part of Rajasthan. Generally, Rajasthan is considered to be a desert State which faces constant scarcity of water but I hail from an area which abounds in rivers. There are at least a dozen big rivers and almost double this number are small rivulets in my region and they cause floods every year. Every year loss worth crores of rupees is caused but to date neither the Central Government nor the Rajasthan Government have taken steps to harness these rivers or to develop them in a systematic manner. I want to tell it for the information of the Hon. Minister that if the water resources of the Jhalawar Constituency are properly harnessed,

[English]

80% of the Constituency area could be irrigated. Against that, only 14% of the area is being irrigated today. Against the average of 22% of Rajasthan, which is a desert area, the position is like that. From this point of view, you can just imagine how the State Government has utilised the funds.

[Translation]

The average irrigated area in Rajasthan, which is a desert area, is 22 per cent whereas only 14 per cent of that part of Rajasthan is under irrigation which has abundant water resources and suffers losses due to floods. That is why I want to say that the work done so far has not been done in a systematic way.

There are some projects under the consideration of your Ministry which have

not been cleared so far. There is a very big scheme for Manohar Thana. There are projects e.g. Kali Sindh on Parvan river, Gagarin and many other schemes which have not been cleared due to some interstate problems. But despite it the waters of these rivers can be utilized through lift irrigation and minor irrigation schemes. The waters which should have benefited us and our area are instead causing us losses and every year we suffer losses due to this problem.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to tell you that there are many villages situated on the banks of rivers in our region and there is no village which could remain at its original place. The villages have to shift due to floods and soil erosion and there is no certainty that in future they will remain at their present location. The erosion is so massive that many villages have changed their location two or three times. As per the erosion figures for the whole of India, erosion occurs in 998.76 lakh hectares and out of it 172.65 lakh hectares area is in Rajasthan. This area is maximum as compared to other parts of India. Soil erosion is mostly caused by wind erosion and water erosion and water erosion is mostly confined to my Constituency. The area of Kota Division is not very large and it is just one tenth or one sixteenth of the total area of Rajasthan and 55 to 60 per cent of its area is affected due to water erosion. You can therefore, imagine the severity of floods there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I want to inform the Hon. Minister that the land use policy followed hitherto for this area is also wrong. Where rivers and rivulets are in abundance there the first precaution every Government should take is not to allot the marginal land near the banks for cultivation. If it is allotted to some landless person then it should be used for afforestation or free plantation so that the trees may hold the soil. The present policy is defective. Soil erosion has been increasing year after year and fertility of soil has been decreasing. I had raised this question in Rajasthan Assembly also some 10 to 15 years back. I had demanded a survey of the flood hit areas to find out the extent of loss. The damage caused due to soil erosion is quite obvious in the form of ravines but the damage caused to the cultivated area is in

the from of erosion of the top soil which hampers the productivity of land. So efforts should also be made to check the soil erosion. The statistics collected by the experts reveal that in India about twelve thousand million tonnes of top soil is eroded every year. If it is calculated in terms of money then the extent of loss is between Rs. 4500 crores to Rs. 7,600 crores every year. We are also affected due to this erosion. Our area also abounds in rivers. The Central Government and the State Government have planning departments and they have various schemes for soil conservation. Forty years ago there used to be princely States and then Planning Departments were not in existence. Kota was also a princely State at that time. There used to be a department for dams, which used to look after soil conservation and construction of barages on small rivers and lift irrigation. It is a matter of regret that during the last forty years the desired progress has not been made in achieving scientific development to check soil erosion. Even the old department has been wound up without any replacement. The special efforts required to control floods in our area have not been made. The ravines spread over an area of 70 lakh acres. In our area also, ravines cover a large area and it is expanding rapidly which leads to certain social problem. Today Dholpur, Swai Madhopur and Shahbad, Kishanganj, Chhabda of Kota, Chhiwabarot have become dacoit infested areas. The Central Government have certain schemes to curb the activities of dacoits but no funds have been provided to implement the same in our area. Ravines are still expanding but no efforts are made under the anti-soil erosion schemes. Had some efforts been made to prevent expansion of ravines and had there been construction of roads for the purposes of communication, the same might have helped in reducing the losses incurred as a result of floods. I request that some concrete steps should be taken in this direction. The area of Kota division was once famous for its forests. Forests are scanty in Rajasthan but 25 to 30 per cent area here used to be covered by forests. Generally, forests are scarce in Rajasthan. According to the national norms, forests should cover 33.3 per cent land but in Rajasthan the forests covered only 11 per cent land before its formation. The latest available statistics reveal that only 1.75 per cent area in Rajasthan is

covered by forests because of reckless felling of trees. It is a very serious problem. The loss of forests has increased erosion and the floods have caused greater loss. I would like to draw the attention of the House to this issue and request the Hon. Minister that to deal with this important subject raised before the House some law or authority or body should be Constituted for the control of floods. We, the villagers understand the losses caused by floods better and we want you to take some positive action to deal with this problem.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time allotted for this Bill is already over. Some more members have to speak on this. Shall we extend some more time ?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : We can extend the time for this Bill by one more hour.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA (Jorhat) : Sir, I come from one of the most flood-prone areas of this country. I am very glad that a Member from the Treasury Benches has introduced a Bill to which I give my qualified support because it has become evident from its introduction that the existing Rules, Procedures or Acts are not adequate to meet the menace caused by this very constant ravage which has brought misery to millions of people of this country every year. It has rightly been pointed out by my predecessors that the amount so long spent in the name of flood relief would have totalled thousands of crores of Rupees by which many permanent flood protection measures could have already been completed, as was envisaged by our seers of the past. We have to combat the menace of flood. The Brahmaputra Board was—as it has already been made known to the Hon. Minister—was established in the year 1981. The Board has taken five years to prepare two master plans I am very sorry to state that not even one of the projects, as envisaged by this Board, has so far been even taken up for consideration. The more pitiable fact is that for the Brahmaputra Board, in the Seventh Plan, only Rs. 35 crores have been earmarked which is obviously a meagre amount. Most of the money will be needed only to meet the capital expenditure, establishment expenditure of the Board.

[Shri Parag Chaliha]

Sir, in our country, particularly in my State—which I have already stated,—we have to meet most of the ravages of the Brahmaputra every year resulting in an unprecedented flood havoc. I just recount the damages caused by the recent floods. 23 lakhs of people were affected; 3.25 lakhs of houses were damaged; 4.25 lakhs of hectares of land with standing crops were damaged. The State Government's estimated loss is about Rs. 380 crores. We are happy that the Agriculture Minister paid a visit. We have all along been urging the Prime Minister to make a visit and see the things for himself. At our instance, I am glad to state that the Prime Minister, on the floor of this House, had assured us that he will make a visit. Also, at our instance, the Central Team hastened its visit and now, perhaps, the team is on work. We urge the Minister for Water Resources also to make it convenient to visit the flood-affected areas and see things for himself.

Sir, in the course of a visit of one of the Delegations of our Party, we made known to the Hon. Minister that the Brahmaputra has more tributaries in Assam than all the tributaries of the other big rivers in the whole of India put together. Even then nothing whatsoever has been done to combat the floods caused by these innumerable tributaries of the Brahmaputra in Assam. I will cite one instance. Due to our not taking effective and timely measures, we have already lost a 300-year old Hindu Peeth known as 'Ramka Peeth'. That was by the side of a river, a tributary of the Brahmaputra. Things have come to such a pass that that particular 'Ramka Peeth', due to erosion over the last the several years, instead of being the concern of the tributary, has become the concern of the Brahmaputra itself. As was made known to the Minister about a couple of months back, the entire Peeth was totally eroded. That means, only in 1986 we lost a very sacred relic of the Hindus in Assam because of the dire negligence of the powers that be, particularly the Board Authority.

Another strange thing is this. On one side of the river we have the Hindu shrine and on the other side we have a Muslim

shrine known as 'Hazrat Azan Peer Durgah'. We have been impressing upon the authorities and more particularly our Water Resources Minister that, unless some concrete measures are taken, that Muslim shrine known as 'Hazrat Azan Peer Durgah' will also meet with the same fate as has already overtaken the Hindu Peeth. Only at our instance, the Planning Commission was good enough to give us an assurance that, if specific schemes were brought to them, they would very favourably consider them so that the flood problem of Assam could be dealt with properly.

This fact is not generally known that most people affected by the ravages of the Brahmaputra are tribals like Misshings, Bodos, Deuris and others. This fact has never come to the notice of the powers that be. The Minister was good enough to suggest that, if some specific schemes were brought to his notice, he would look into the matter and see that something definite was done.

Only in mid-October I had been to a village where I was amazed to see—I say this with full sense of responsibility to this august House—that several hutments of tribal villages were almost floating above 10 to 12 feet of water caused not by floods but by rain water banded on four sides of the hutments in a flood-prone area. The Assam Government has only recently sent some specific proposals for permanent flood control measures, particularly in tribal areas, amounting to about Rs. 117.50 crores. I, therefore, take this opportunity to impress upon the Hon. Minister of Water Resources to see that he takes up the matter of implementation of the Tribal Sub-Plan which involves an amount of Rs. 117.50 crores. The Planning Commission has already assured that they would very sympathetically consider this...

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you have something more to say, you can continue on the next occasion...

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA : I may not be here. I will conclude now in a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude in a minute. We have to take up the Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA : The Authority which is contemplated in the Bill should be more effective, should have full financial powers to provide resources for flood control projects.

My suggestions are that : Assam's TSP demands of Rs. 117.50 crores be taken up. At least one of the permanent projects of Subhansiri, which will mean providing power to the extent of 20000 MW should also be taken up.

With these words I support the Bill with the hope that something more concrete and effective would be done by the Minister by introducing a more comprehensive Bill.

17.31 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

[English]

Modernisation of Textile Mills

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up half-an-hour discussion. Shri Sharad Dighe to speak.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central) : Mr. Chairman Sir : After having discussed mainly on rural problems for the last two and a half hours viz., rivers, floods, forests, etc, I would like to take this House to an urban problem of modernisation of textile mills. I beg to raise half-an-hour discussion on the point arising out of the answer given by the Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Textiles on 14.11.1986 to Starred Question No. 166 regarding modernisation of textile mills.

The main answer was merely in the negative and no further information was available in the main answer.

Part (a) of the question was a pointed question regarding the decision to identify 100 textile mills for modernisation. Therefore, the answer was "No Sir". Then, the further questions are said to be not arisen in view of the answer to Part (a). So, we could not get

from the main reply the information regarding the criteria for selecting these mills for modernisation. That was Part (c) of the question. In view of the negative reply to Part (a) of the question, the Hon. Minister has said that regarding (b) and (c) the question did not arise. In this half-an-hour discussion my main thrust will be on the criteria for selecting these mills for modernisation.

Sir, in the Textile Policy statement which was laid before this House in the month of June 1985, references were made to these modernisations in Paragraph 19, Sub-paragraphs 19.1, 19.3 to 19.6. I would quote from those paragraphs a few lines.

19.1 "One of the main reasons for the present difficulties of the Industry is inadequate modernisation and renovation of old and obsolete plant and machinery. Despite encouragement and incentives by the Government, the Industry has only modernised to a limited extent. Government policies would aim to accelerate the pace of modernisation in the Industry.

19.2 There has been very little modernisation in the ginning area...

19.3 Modernisation in the spinning, weaving and processing sectors shall be undertaken on the basis of carefully identified needs of each unit as to installation of balancing equipment, renovation of existing machinery, replacement and technology upgradation.

19.4 For the purpose of modernisation, adequate funds would continue to be provided in adequate measure under the soft loan scheme of the IDBI. In order to enable the Industry to generate internal resources for modernisation, a Textile Modernisation Fund shall be created".