

की। भारत के लोग जानते हैं कि आप राजनीतिक मकसदों की पूर्ति के लिए इस बिल को ला रहे हैं। इस वास्ते मैं इस बिल का विरोध करता हूँ। इस बिल को लेकर आप राज्यों के अधिकारों में दखलंदाजी कर रहे हैं। संविधान बनाने वालों ने तीनों कार्य सूचियाँ अलग-अलग रखी हैं। आपने उनमें इंटरवेंशन करना शुरू कर दिया है। मैं किसी मंत्री की इंटरवेंशन पर शक नहीं करता हूँ। उनकी नीयत पर शक नहीं करना चाहता। गृह मंत्री हों या राज्य गृह मंत्री या और कोई मंत्री, हो सकता है वे अपने को कम्पोटेंट या मावरेन न समझते हों। लेकिन प्रधान मंत्री ने जब बहस चला दी है देश में कि हिन्दुस्तान की जम्हूरियत पर दुबारा विचार होना चाहिये, ऐसे मौके पर यह कानून लाया जा रहा है और इसी से यह शंका पैदा होती है कि आप जम्हूरियत को खत्म करना चाहते हैं। ओ० एन० जी० सी० का मामला हुआ है। हिन्दुस्तान के जो कमजोर, एजुकेशनली, सांख्यिकी दृष्टियों से बैकवर्ड लोग हैं जिन के लिए रजिस्ट्रेशन रखा गया है, उसको लेकर झगड़ा हुआ है, मारकाट हुई है, लोगों के हाथ पर तोड़ दिए गए हैं, घर फूँक दिए गए हैं, उनका अनाज, कपड़ा, लत्ता, चारा आदि सब फूँक दिया गया है। जम्हूरियत पर बहुत चलवाने में आपकी सरकार के मंत्री, आपकी मशीनरी दोनों शामिल है। दोनों के खिलाफ अभी तक आपकी सरकार ने कोई एक्शन नहीं लिया है। इन सब चीजों से एक शंका पैदा हो रही है और वह सही भी है, तथ्यों पर आधारित भी है और वह यह है कि श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी फिर से इस मुल्क में एमर्जेंसी लाने की तैयारी कर रही हैं,

आप हिन्दुस्तान के लोगों की स्वतंत्रता छीनने जा रहे हैं, ज्यूडिशरी की स्वतंत्रता छीनने जा रहे हैं।

श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी में एक गुण और है। वह भी ज्यूडिशरी में विश्वास नहीं करती हैं। ज्यूडिशरी की ज्यादा से ज्यादा पावर को छीन कर लैजिस्लेशन के द्वारा एग्जिक्यूटिव को देने में विश्वास रखती हैं।

आप राजनीतिक उद्देश्यों से इस बिल को लाए हैं, यह साफ है। इसका मैं विरोध करता हूँ और प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि इसको आप वापस लें ताकि लोगों के अन्दर जो शंका है कि जम्हूरियत संकट में पड़ सकती है, वह खत्म हो सके।

17.00 hrs.

MOTION RE: MODIFICATIONS IN
 NOTIFICATION REGARDING
 INDIAN TELEGRAPHS (4TH
 AMENDMENT) RULES

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will take up item No. 13 of the List of Business. Mr. R. K. Mhalgi may move his Motion.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI (Thane): I beg to move:

"That this House resolves that in pursuance of sub-section (5) of section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (13 of 1885), the following modifications be made in the Notification regarding Indian Telegraphs (4th Amendment) Rules, 1980, published in the Gazette of India by Notification No. G.S.R. 492(E) dated the 27th August, 1980 and laid on the Table of the

[Shri R. K. Mhalgi]

House on the 17th November,
1980:—

(i) in rule 1, in sub-rule (2),
for '1980' substitute '1981';

(ii) in rule 2(i),—

(a) in item (a), for 'Rs.
150/-' substitute 'Rs. 80/-';

(b) in item (b), for 'Rs. 75/-'
substitute 'Rs. 40/-';

(iii) in rule 2(ii),—

(a) in sub-section (1)(a), for
'Rs. 75/-' substitute 'Rs. 25/-';

(b) in sub-section (1)(b), for
'Rs. 150/-' substitute 'Rs. 50/-';

(iv) in rule 2(iii),—

(a) against entry 1, in
columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for
'Rs. 125', '250', '30 Paise', '40
Paise', '50 Paise', substitute
'Rs. 75', '300', '20 Paise', '30
Paise', '40 Paise', respectively;

(b) against entry 2, in
columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for
'Rs. 150', '250', '30 Paise', '40
Paise', '50 Paise', substitute
'Rs. 100', '300', '20 Paise', '30
Paise', '40 Paise', respectively;

(c) against entry 3, in
columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for
'Rs. 175', '250', '30 Paise',
'40 Paise', '50 Paise', substitute
'Rs. 125', '300', '20 Paise',
'30 Paise', '40 Paise' respec-
tively;

(d) against entry 4, in
columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for
'Rs. 200', '250', '30 Paise', '40
Paise', '50 Paise', substitute
'Rs. 150', '300', '20 Paise', '30
Paise', '40 Paise', respectively;

(v) in rule 2(iv),

Omit 'and the first 250 Calls
will also be charged at the rate
shown in column 4 of the table
applicable to measured rate

systems appearing in item (a)
of sub-section (1) of section
III';

(vi) in rule 3, for '100', suosti-
tute '0.20';

(vii) in rule 4, for '50 Kms.'
substitute '25 Kms.'

This House do recommend to Rajya
Sabha do concur in this resolution."

*Sir, I move my motion listed at
item No. 13 in the order paper for
today, under Rule 235 of the Rules
of Procedure and Conduct of Busi-
ness in the Lok Sabha.

In the budget of 1980, the tariff
for telephones had been increased
and the Finance Bill including the
proposal to increase the rates had
been passed by the House. The pur-
pose of my motion is to reduce the
rates.

I am aware that there is little
likelihood of the rates being reduced
as they have been approved by the
House, but the members have the
right to move amendments to the
rules laid on the Table of the House.
The purpose of my moving the
motion is to initiate discussion on the
subject of the rates.

The rates for installation, shifting
and trunk calls have been increased
by the Telephone Department. An
amount of Rs. 17.71 crores was rea-
lised by the Government as a result
of the increase. No body knew, how-
ever, about the increase because the
Demands for Grants in respect of the
Ministry of Communications were
never discussed in the House. The
subscribers came to know of the in-
creases when they got the bills at the
new enhanced rates. The Govern-
ment would, of course, retort that the
increases had been gazetted but in
order to be known to the people the
new rates should have been widely

publicised in the press, particularly the district level newspapers. In future, the Government should take care to do it.

The Ministry of Communications demands came to be discussed in the House after many years and only four hours were allotted to the discussion. Mr. Stephen's speech was merely a jumble of facts and figures leaving many questions unanswered. I would like to seek some clarifications about some of the point.

The Government has a moral right to increase the telephone tariff only if they can ensure efficient service, but that they are unable to do. That is why they have no moral justification for the increased rates. Mr. Stephen had himself admitted that only 52 per cent of the calls actually matured. Why should the subscribers be burdened with the charges for the rest of the 48 per cent calls which never matured. The hon. Minister compared the performance of the telephone department with those of England and Japan but incomplete comparisons are not proper.

A committee reported that more than 40 per cent of the calls were 'wrong numbers'. The subscriber is charged for a wrong call even if he has dialled properly but has got a wrong number. In such cases a complaint is only natural.

Mr. Stephen had visited Bhuvaneshwar after the Prime Minister's visit and inspected the working of the telephones there. He had to admit that the working of the telephones was in a total mess. That being so, there is little point in increasing the rates.

Some of the officers of the telephone department at Calcutta, had stated at a press conference in September 1980 that "our bad name is largely due to our own faults". In the face of this admission, how can you

expect the subscribers to accept the increased charges?

I would like to know the steps that the Government has taken to realise the arrears of telephone bills amounting to almost Rs. 30 crores. What steps have Government taken to realise arrears of telephone bills from Ex.MPs? Corruption is on the increase in this Department. In the Andheri Exchange at Bombay, some calls were tampered with and 12 subscribers did not pay a single naiya paise as telephone bill for many years. That shows that the employees are working in collusion with such dishonest persons who cheat the Government to its just dues.

My intention is moving the motion is more to secure a better service than to reduce the revenues of the Government. People must feel that they are paying for an efficient service.

Some times, the people are forced to pay the inflated bills before their complaints are entertained. It would have been tolerable when the Britishers were ruling us, but now when we have our own Government. The complaints of the subscribers must be registered and proper action taken. It is wrong to presume that all subscribers are rich; some of them might find it difficult even to meet the normal rates, not to speak of inflated bills. Government must pay proper attention to the needs of the rural subscribers.

Government must take action on the judgment of the Gujarat High Court which stated *inter alia*:

"Where bills show more than thrice the number of maximum calls in a quarter, the Telephone Department will have to issue an *ad hoc* bills equal to the average of the preceding undisputed bills."

The Task Force Committee had made many short-term and long-term

[Shri R. K. Mahalgiri]

recommendations, but we do not know what action has been taken by the Government in that regard. I hope that the Government would say what they plan to do about them.

The employees do not give courteous and polite service. The subscribers pay for the service and they must get it.

Only 5 per cent of the telephones are in the rural areas: the proportion should be increased by providing a better telephone network for them.

An early decision must be taken about the electronic equipment for the telephones. Mr. Stephen has said that this is a decade of the breakthrough. The Electronics Department on the other hand has expressed dissatisfaction with the working of the Telephone Department.

The Railways, Oil and Natural Gas, Indian Oil Corporation, the State Electricity Boards, the Police and the Aviation Department have decided not to import any foreign equipment during the Sixth Plan period, but the Communications Ministry proposes to import telephonic equipment of the order of Rs. 343 crores. That would only impose a fresh burden on the subscribers and they would not be pleased to bear any fresh burdens.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That this House resolves that in pursuance of sub-section (5) of section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (13 of 1885), the following modifications be made in the Notification regarding Indian Telegraphs (4th Amendment) Rules, 1980, published in the Gazette of India by Notification No. G.S.R. 492(E) dated the 27th August, 1980 and laid on the Table of the House on the 17th November, 1980:—

(i) in rule 1 in sub-rule (2), for '1980' substitute '1981';

(ii) in rule 2(i)—

(a) in item (a), for 'Rs. 150/-' substitute 'Rs. 80/-';

(b) in item (b), for 'Rs. 75/-' substitute 'Rs. 40/-';

(iii) in rule 2(ii),—

(a) in sub-section (1)(a), for 'Rs. 75/-' substitute 'Rs. 25/-';

(b) in sub-section (1)(b), for 'Rs. 150/-' substitute 'Rs. 50/-';

(iv) in rule 2(iii),—

(a) against entry 1, in columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for 'Rs. 125', '250', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', '50 Paise', substituted 'Rs. 75', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise' respectively;

(b) against entry 2, in columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for 'Rs. 150', '250', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', '50 Paise', substitute 'Rs. 100', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', respectively;

(c) against entry 3, in columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for 'Rs. 175', '250', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', '50 Paise', substitute 'Rs. 125', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise' respectively;

(d) against entry 4, in columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, for 'Rs. 200', '250', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', '50 Paise', substitute 'Rs. 150', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', respectively;

(v) in rule 2(iv),—

omit 'and the first 250 calls will also be charged at the rate shown in column 4 of the table applicable to measured rate systems appearing in item (a) of sub-section (1) of section III';

(vi) in rule 3, for '100' substitute '0.20';

(vii) in rule 4, for '50 Kms.' substitute '25 Kms.'

This House do recommend to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do concur in this resolution."

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Mukundapuram): I support this Motion. While supporting it, I want to invite the attention of the Minister to certain points.

This is a Ministry which is being criticized by one and all, on many counts. After this Minister took charge of this Department, I expected that the experience that he has had with the labourers would stand him in good stead. In this Department, there are lakhs and lakhs of workers.

In order to improve the efficiency of this Department, the Minister has to rely mainly on 2 or 3 things. One is equipment. The equipment should be modern and uptodate. For that purpose, proper maintenance and upkeep are necessary. Another important factor is the people who work in the Department. They should be kept contented and satisfied, so that their efficiency can be exploited to the maximum. Even, then, in a country like India many kinds of difficulties will arise. I do agree that many difficulties will arise in such a Department. But here, after our present Minister has taken charge of the Department, everybody—from the Prime Minister downwards—has got a complaint.

With regard to the technical question, my friend has put forth one main point, viz. that we will have to go in for modern equipment. Agreed. But on whom are you going to rely for that? We are now relying on imports alone. I am not saying that imports should be stopped immediately. But what should be the emphasis? The emphasis should be on the point that indigenous production should be helped.

Through his Motion Mr. Mhalgi wants to reduce the rates. Technically, we cannot pass a resolution for reducing them. I know. But this opportunity is being taken to say something about the Department. So, I want to tell the Minister that for making the equipment uptodate, whatever indigenous skill is there, should be used to the maximum. Relying on imports should be reduced to the minimum. The second point is with regard to the approach to the workers. I know something is being done. I am not blaming the Minister for everything. But there is a norm fixed by the Department for everything. But the Department is not giving people on the basis of those norms. In certain places, they are appointing people on hourly basis. In India, even without any payment people will come forward to work, if there is hope that employment will be given after 15 or 20 years. But that is not a modern approach. So, the Minister should discuss the problem of efficiency, with the trade unions in a proper manner. For that purpose, the Department should keep its word with regard to the existing norms agreed to between the management and the workers.

Then the efficiency question can be discussed with the workers and some solution can be found out. In Kerala, as you know, the demands for telephone connections are on the high side. So many thousands of demands are there. Naturally, everybody wants to have an automatic equipment which is not there in stock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How can you bring in these things?

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: I am told we are having some manual exchanges there in Kerala circle. If you establish those exchanges somewhere, then this burden can be reduced to a certain extent. I request the hon. Minister through you to consider these points also.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): My very valued friend Mr. Mhalgi and Mr. Balanandan sought to stage another budget debate under the guise of this resolution. As I said on the previous occasion, we had a fulfilled discussion. All aspects were gone into and no aspect concerning this matter was allowed to go in default and I had replied it also.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): You congratulate him for having taken a detailed notice of the Notification.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: That is right. I agree with my very elder brother that we must congratulate them for having taken note of a Notification which was laid on the Table of the House which generally goes unnoticed. If only all the members had taken this much of interest in this, I think the position of the Department could have improved considerably. I must congratulate him, compliment him and thank him also for this. But the scope of the motion is absolutely limited. Many of the matters which were mentioned I have already answered. I do not want to cover the whole ground. It is absolutely limited. We had issued a Notification on 1-9-1980 which was placed on the Table of the House. This had 3-4 sections. One was about the installations charges. The other was about the shifting charges. We had increased the rate of charges. There were certain other sections. Mr. Mhalgi has not attacked every part of it. It is not as if the entire Notification has been challenged by him. Those areas where we have increased the calling rates, that he has left completely unchallenged. Therefore, all the arguments that he has now put forward fall to the ground because that part which he has approved, he does not want to undo it. This is the simple part of it.

SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Do not capitalise on small slips by members.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: On 1-6-1979, what that time when Mr. Mhalgis Party was in power—you had notified certain matters. Now he wants to go beyond that. Certain grades which were prescribed on 1-6-1979 were in force on 1-9-1980. For example, upto 1-9-1980, for installation charges in an exchange a particular capacity the rental was Rs. 100. He wants to reduce it to Rs. 80. This is not mine. It was there earlier. He wants to go back on that in the case of every one of these. Earlier for casual connection, the installation charges were Rs. 50. Not the one I had brought about. He wants to go back and make it Rs. 40. For shifting it was Rs. 50 and he wants to make it to Rs. 25. Before in all the other cases of shifting from one position to another, it was Rs. 100. He wants to make it to Rs. 50. Therefore, the attack of the motion is not against my Notification, the attack of the motion is against the Notification that was placed on the Table of the House by the then Minister at that time. He is attacking on that two years after. He wants to go back on that. This is the simple thing about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps he could not do it at that time.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: He has shown one act of grace: assuming that he comes back to this, he wants the date of the implementation to be not 1980 but 1981. He wants to take it back to 25, 50, 60 and all that. He is very gracefully telling me, 'Do not implement from 1-9-1980. This reduced mass rate must come into force only from 1.9.1981.' This is what he has said. Now, then I will certainly support the proposition of his that the effective date should be from 1.9.1981.
(Interruptions)

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: You do not follow the intention of the motion itself.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: You are a well intentioned man. Have I ever doubted it? He has raised certain points. One or two I will just mention about. He spoke about

the electronics Ministry's statement. The Electronics Ministry has stated certain facts, namely that the production was not built up, production slumped in the last four or five years. As a result of that import has become necessary. Conversion of the electronic system was not accepted in the course of the last period. Therefore, this import has become necessary. What I have done is, what was kept undecided, for such a long time, I have taken a decision, steps are being taken. Expansion of the Rae Bareilly unit was shelved. I have taken a decision. The expansion start now. The building is starting. The work is beginning. The electronic question was shelved. I have taken a decision that one million lines must be produced every year. We have issued global tenders and two factories will be set up. The Chairman is smiling with Bhubaneswar in his mind probably. I know. Anyway, we have started this process. Whatever was shelved is started. As a result of the shelving we are now forced to import. Whatever shelving was done in the course of the last four or five years for the major part of which period Mr. Mhalgi must also share responsibility. I have united it, decisions are taken, steps are being taken, the things have started moving. There is no question of indecision as far as we are concerned. Now, the supply is not able to meet the demand. The only alternatives are either to import or to tell the subscribers that until after ten years they will not get anything at all. That we cannot do. Therefore import has got to be resorted to. We are also asking the other public sector units as to whether they will be able to supply us anything. They cannot supply us switching equipment. But they can supply something else. On that our attempts are open. We are seeking their assistance. That part of it, I do now. With regard to the other matter, I do not want to go into them.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Why do you not go into that part of the other matters? They are very important.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: What are the other matters?

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: I have already stated.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: The entire area, as I said, we have already covered. My friend Mr. Balanandan spoke about the workers' role and I think he knows what we are talking about. I expect from the workers a sense of commitment. It is not a question of a commercial deal. There must be a sense of commitment to the people. Two hon. Members have sponsored this. Mr. Balanandan has listened to what Mr. Mhalgi has said, as the reason for the deterioration. He put his finger right against Mr. Balanandan who is one of the leaders of the unions that we have. And then Mr. Balanandan may also take this message and ensure that cooperation is forthcoming. As far as we are concerned, we are doing our very best to get the best things through.

Now, if some Minister will stand in 1990 here or in the year 2000 then that Minister, if he is an honest Minister will have to say that things are not as satisfactory as one would like, because that is the nature of this Ministry; and that is the position in any country. Not that things cannot be improved. They can be improved still, still improved, and still improved and still there will be scope to say that there is some scope still to be improved and therefore, as an honest man I go about saying that things are not as satisfactory as they should be, but that does not mean that things are bad. Things are improving and still I will be confessing that things are not as good as one would like to be. That does not mean as somebody was saying, that things are in shambles. That is not a word to be applied to this Department. It is not. We have got our jumble of different types of instruments operating, about two and a half lakh workers spread out throughout the country of different types, different affiliations and of different varieties. It can happen and may take place here and there. With all that, I may state one

[Shri C. M. Stephen]

thing, as I said, in Delhi, the daily complaints that we are receiving are seven thousand and odd and the faults are about 3,500. The total connections number two lakhs: which means two lakhs minus this are working fairly all right. Per day the complaints only come to this. That means that the remaining telephones are working all right. This is not a bad position. I would request the hon. Members to have sympathy and an understanding of the entire thing of this Ministry, of the entire operation and of course, the human failure. All the staff which are operating, are putting forth their best, according to me. Discipline is coming back. Things are improving. It will improve to the maximum and still there will be an occasion again to say that things can improve further. This is the nature of it. But things are improving. I am sure, Mr. Mhalgi will be satisfied with my explanation and he will withdraw his motion and allow the motion that was put on the Table of the House by the Janata Government to remain as amended by me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, it is 5.30. And at 5.30 we have to take up half-an-hour discussion. If the House agrees, we can finish this item within 4. 5 minutes and then take up half-an-hour discussion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI (Thane): The hon. Minister has merely repeated himself while replying to the debate. He made the same points he did at the time of the discussion of the demands for his Ministry. We live in age of science and we must aim at increasing our efficiency. An attitude of complacency would not do. Dissatisfaction is law of progress is a dictum which should not be lost sight of.

A parliamentary committee should be appointed to go into this matter thoroughly so that a proper assesment of the working of the Ministry can be made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That this House resolves that in pursuance of sub-section (5) of section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 (13 of 1885), the following modifications be made in the Notification regarding Indian Telegraphs (4th Amendment) Rules, 1980, published in the Gazette of India by Notification No. GSR 492 (E) dated the 27th August, 1980 and laid on the Table of the House on the 17th November, 1980:—

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(b) Against entry 2, in columns 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 for 'Rs. 150', '250', '30 Paise', '40 Paise', '50 Paise' substitute 'Rs. 100', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise' respectively.

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substitute 'Rs. 150', '300', '20 Paise', '30 Paise', '40 Paise' respectively

(v) in rule 2(iv)—

omit 'and the first 250 calls will also be charged at the rate shown in columns 4 of the Table applicable to measures rate systems appearing in item (a) of sub-section (1) of section III';

(vi) in rule 3, for '100' substitute '0.20';

(vii) in rule 4, for '50 Kms' substitute '25 Kms'.

This House do recommend to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do concur in this resolution."

The motion was negatived.

17.33 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

DISTRICTS IN VARIOUS STATES AFFECTED BY DROUGHT DURING 1980-81

SHRI G. NARASIMHA REDDY (Adilabad): With reference to the answer given by the hon. Minister for Agriculture to Starred Question No. 478 on 23 March, 1981, I would like to raise certain points arising out of the answer given by the hon. Minister.

This is the time when the entire States are suffering from drought conditions. The month of May is so severe that this is the proper time for giving sufficient relief to the States which are suffering from drought. As I see the entire list which was laid on the Table by the hon. Minister, three States i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are suffering from severe drought conditions this year. As you all know, Andhra Pradesh unfortunately, even last year,

had suffered drought and cyclonic conditions. The people of Andhra Pradesh have been facing drought and cyclonic conditions for the last two, three years. The entire machinery of the State Government has been geared up. In spite of that, the people in rural areas in some of the districts, have started migrating for want of employment and drinking water. Although all the MLAs, Ministers and the Government officials have been trying to create confidence among the people of Andhra Pradesh that the Government is there and the Central Government is there to take care of them and to give all the assistance that they require, the situation is so grave that most of the people have already migrated. And the remaining people who have not migrated, have been transporting drinking water on tractors, trucks and so on and so forth. Here I would like to ask certain specific questions and expect specific answers from the hon. Minister. It is not a fact that the States of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are suffering almost with the same intensity of drought? In Andhra Pradesh the post-monsoon drought-affected area is about 22 lakh hectares, while in Tamil Nadu it is about 23.50 lakh hectares. The population affected by drought in Andhra Pradesh is about 200 lakhs while in Tamil Nadu it is about 219.90 lakhs. The assistance sought by Andhra Pradesh was Rs. 159.33 crores but, on the basis of reports, a ceiling of Rs. 23.33 crores has been fixed. Tamil Nadu sought assistance of Rs. 160.68 crores. According to reports, a ceiling of Rs. 60.91 crores has been fixed in the case of Tamil Nadu. If the statistics which I have given are correct, then it is very clear that both the States are having almost the same intensity of drought. While Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu asked for assistance of Rs. 159.33 crores and Rs. 160.68 crores, the Government of India has permitted only Rs. 23.33 crores for Andhra Pradesh, while it has permitted Rs. 60.91 crores to Tamil Nadu. I have not been able