

भी नहीं किया है। इसमें योजनाओं की आवश्यकता नहीं है। पटेल कमीशन ने बड़ी अच्छी योजनाएँ दे दी हैं, उन्होंने लिखा है कि लघु योजनाओं का पैटर्न तमाम जिलों में क्या हो सकता है। आजमगढ़ के लिए 20 लघु उद्योग योजनाओं को सुझाव दिया है, देवरिया में 14 लघु उद्योग योजनाएँ, गाजीपुर में 15 लघु उद्योग योजनाएँ और जौनपुर के लिए 12 लघु उद्योग योजनाओं का सुझाव दिया है। मैं चाहूँगा कि वहाँ जिला स्तर पर आप योजना बोर्ड बना दीजिए तमाम जिलों में, केवल चार जिलों में ही नहीं, क्योंकि सब को अपनी अपनी योजनाओं का पता है कि क्या हो सकता है और क्या नहीं। और आप धन की व्यवस्था कर दीजिए, सड़क बनाने की व्यवस्था कर दीजिए और कुटीर उद्योगों के लिए ट्रेनिंग सेंटर जिले पर बना दीजिए और वहाँ इस प्रकार का प्रबंध कर दीजिए ताकि जो माल वहाँ बने वह खरीदा जा सके। इस प्रकार लघु उद्योगों के द्वारा उस क्षेत्र की उन्नति की जा सकती है, बेकारी और गरीबी दोनों का समाधान हो सकता है। जनता सरकार ने इस प्रकार की योजना बनायी है। मैं समझता हूँ कि जनता सरकार का अगर कहीं परीक्षण होगा तो वह उत्तर प्रदेश के पूर्वी क्षेत्र में होगा। देखते हैं जनता सरकार अपनी योजनाओं को पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश से ही शुरू करेगी।

18.29 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

FLOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will now take up Half-An-Hour Discussion.

Shri Prasannbhai Mehta.

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA (Bhavnagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I raise this Half-An-Hour Discussion in

regard to flood situation in the country arising out of the answer given to the Unstarred Question No. 126 dated the 14th November, 1977. Flood and famine have become a permanent phenomenon in our country.

श्री रूपनाथ सिंह यादव (प्रतापगढ़) : सभापति महोदय, यदि पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश सम्बन्धी मोशन के लिए कुछ समय और दे दिया जाये, तो हम लोग भी दो-दो मिनट में अपनी बात कह लें।

सभापति महोदय : मैं तो सब सदस्यों को समय देना चाहता था, लेकिन यह विषय ऐसा है कि माननीय सदस्य पांच मिनट में अपनी बात नहीं कह सकते हैं। अब तो खैर हाफ-एन-आवर डिसकशन शुरू हो गया है। माननीय सदस्य कल इस बारे में स्पीकर साहब से कह सकते हैं।

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA: Floods cause a considerable damage in various parts of the country every year. The situation is very alarming. Both the Central Government and the State Governments spend a huge amount on relief, rescue and rehabilitation work every year, but, unfortunately, very little has been done to control floods in the flood-prone areas.

Sir, for the benefit of the House, I would give some figures which indicate how serious and grave the flood situation is and also its magnitude. It is a different matter that people reconcile psychologically after the occasion is over.

In our country, the average damage caused by floods every year is of the order of Rs. 124 crores. This figure represents only the direct damage caused by floods. Huge indirect damage is also caused due to disruption in communications, loss in subsequent production, expenditure on relief operation and rehabilitation work.

[Shri Prasannbhai Mehta]

etc. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister one thing, and ask him. Whether it is a fact that at present there are no scientific methods to assess such indirect damage. But the indirect damage mostly exceeds the direct damage.

The total direct loss to the country during the period from 1953 to 1971 is as much as Rs. 2,360 crores. It should be a matter of concern to this House that the flood damage is increasing every year. The average annual damage during the period from 1953 to 1961 was Rs. 55 crores. The average annual damage during the period from 1962-1977 was Rs. 183 crores; the average annual damage during the period from 1967 to 1977 was Rs. 311 crores. This year, that is in the year 1977, the damage is horrible. The total damage to crops, houses and public utilities is of the order of Rs. 31215 lakhs, that is, Rs. 312 crores. The highest is in Rajasthan. The damage in Rajasthan is of the order of Rs. 7405 lakhs. Second is Haryana; it comes to Rs. 6500 lakhs. There is a great damage in Gujarat also. It is of the order of Rs. 5399 lakhs, that is, Rs. 53 crores.

The hon. Minister had laid on the Table of the House a statement regarding flood situation in the country and the steps taken by the Government to meet the situation on 5th August, 1977. On page 250, it says:

"In Gujarat there were heavy rains in the State during the last week of June affecting parts of Kutch, Rajkot, Junagarh, Banas Kantha brought to the Bhavnagar Sababrought to the Bhavnagar Sabakantha, Mehsana, Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad, Kheda, Panchmahal, Vadorda, Bharuch, Surat and Valsad district."

"Banaskantha and Mehsana districts again experienced heavy rains during the last week of July. According to the reports received from the State Government, a population of 9.68 lakhs has been affected in 1587 villages."

In reply to Unstarred Question No. 126 of 14th November, 1977, it has been said that the population affected in Gujarat is 32.97 lakhs.

In my district, Bhavnagar, there is a river called Kalubhar. This river brings destruction often and many villages are affected by the flood: waters of this river. Here I want to make one suggestion. If this river, Kalubhar, along with another river called Ghelo, are tamed and their water are brought to the Bhavnagar Port, it will serve two purposes; first, it will control the floods and will protect the flood-affected villages; and, secondly, it will also flush the creek of the Bhavnagar Port and will keep the Port-Harbour—in proper condition.

Now, the basic question is about financing of the relief expenditure. At present it is governed by the recommendations of the Sixth Finance Commission. What the Sixth Finance Commission says about it, I would like to quote:

"In the light of our analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the establishment of a National Fund, and the views expressed by the State Governments, we have concluded that the establishment of a National Fund, fed by Central and State contributions, is neither feasible nor desirable. At the same time, the present arrangements for providing assistance to the States for meeting expenditure on relief operations need to be completely overhauled. Detailed programmes of both medium and long term significance for permanent improvement of the areas liable to drought and flood should be drawn up with the utmost urgency and these programmes fully integrated with the Plan. We strongly urge that instead of incurring expenditure on relief on ad hoc basis on schemes of dubious value, provision should be made on a much larger scale for development of drought and flood-prone areas in the Fifth Plan both in the State and

Central sectors. Any assistance which is provided to the States for purposes of relief in this manner would be subject to the overall ceiling of Central assistance for the Plan period as a whole. At the same time we feel that the provision of a reasonable margin in the forecasts of State expenditure should be considered as a legitimate charge on the revenue accounts of the States. We recommend the following annual provisions under "64-Famine Relief" for different States."

Then there is a list of States showing the amount to be allocated to them every year.

Now I would put my questions to the hon. Minister. It is the experience of the flood-prone States that the formula provided by the Sixth Finance Commission is too inadequate. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Government will consider reviewing or revising this formula for financing of relief expenditure keeping in view the factual position. Also I want to know what concrete measures Government propose or contemplate to take to implement the flood-control schemes in various States, including Gujarat. Lastly, will the Union Government give additional financial assistance to State governments over and above what they are entitled to in accordance with the recommendations of the Sixth Finance Commission and, if so, on what basis?

SHRI K. MALLANNA (Chitradurga): Sir, I must thank the hon. Member who brought up this discussion. Almost every year the country is suffering because of floods. Not only the States through which the rivers run, but other States also suffer, either because of over-flow of rivers or because of cyclone—as has been the recent experience of Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh. We have to face this flood situation almost every year, and you know the havoc that is created by floods—many thousands of

people, die, cattle perish, huts and houses collapse and thousands of people are left in a miserable condition. As has been our experience of the recent cyclone, the country faces a lot of trouble due to such calamities. In the circumstances, I will express some thoughts that have occurred to me and I would like to know the reaction of the Minister.

So far as funds are concerned, as my friend Shri Prasannbhai Mehta has said, when such disastrous calamities occur, the States have to run to the Centre for funds and the Centre take a long time to allot the funds because of administrative procedures. The States are very poor and cannot meet the expenditure necessitated by floods and will therefore have to depend on the Centre. So I strongly feel that a Central Fund is necessary. In the circumstances, may I know what is the loss we incur every year due to floods and how much area is covered by flood control measures? Is the Government thinking of comprehensive plans which will afford protection against floods and also for giving relief after such floods occur?

Lastly, our floods warning system is not in good shape; adequate and sophisticated measures should be adopted.

Sir, I would once again ask whether the Government is going to form a Central Fund immediately for the flood affected areas. I would add that there are certain anti-social elements which crop up during such a situation and misuse the money that is meant for flood relief, regardless of the human tragedy. I would therefore like to know whether Government is thinking of an effective machinery to see that the funds are used properly.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat) Mr. Chairman, Sir, out of the total flood-affected area of 250 lakh hectares in our country, only 95 lakh hectares have been provided with some kind of protective measures leaving a gap of 155 lakh hectares. I would like to know

[Shri Chitta Basu]

from the hon. Minister what broad steps the Government proposes to take to provide minimum protective measures for these 155 lakh hectares. Does the Government consider it desirable to formulate a crash programme for this and implement it as early as possible?

As we know, several Commissions have been set up all over the country and there was one such Commission in West Bengal, the North Bengal Flood Control Commission. May I know, whether the Commission have already made certain recommendations and if so, what broad steps the Government of India propose to take to implement those recommendations?

I would like to mention that the Government of India think that the flood control is within the purview of the State Government. It is a national problem as mentioned by Shri Mehta. Having this aspect of the matter in mind, will the hon. Minister kindly assure the House that the flood control measures will be looked after by the Central Government for the country as a whole, instead of shifting this responsibility to the State Governments whose resources are meagre and inelastic, but the needs are elastic.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to Shri Mehta for raising a discussion on this subject in this House, though this debate did not arise from the answer supplied to the question: Part (c) of the question was:

"the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to control the floods in the country."

And, it was appropriately replied. Now, the question raised is that the aid given to them has not been correctly mentioned and part (c) of the question was not satisfactorily replied. There was no question regarding aid given

to the flood affected areas and on that score, this discussion could not be raised.

Anyhow, the information now asked for is, what aid has been given to the flood affected States. In this connection, I would like to state that Central Teams were deputed to assess the damage in the various States. Immediately after receiving the memorandum from the States, which is done within a period of a week or ten days by the State Governments, a Central team is deputed for assessing the damage and loss in the particular State. The Central Teams were sent to Assam, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and now to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh; one Team has gone to Kerala. Immediately after the report is submitted, a high-level Committee which is headed by a Member of the Planning Commission considers the recommendations and then comes to a final decision. The following quantum of advance Plan assistance was sanctioned to the various States:

Assam Rs. 4,98,28,000 or say five crores.

West Bengal: Rs. 441 lakhs.

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA: What was the total damage against which this aid was given?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: That was provided to the hon. Member along with the question.

On the basis of the assessment by the Central Team and the decision taken by the high-level Committee, this assistance was given. Gujarat—Rs. 10.43 crores, Haryana—Rs. 11 crores, Rajasthan—Rs. 7.97 crores, Himachal Pradesh—Rs. 3.11 crores, Orissa—Rs. 8.52 crores and Uttar Pradesh—Rs. 10 crores. About Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, I have made a long statement yesterday. So I need not go into that.

In addition, the Food Corporation of India has been directed to make available 20,000 tonnes of wheat to West Bengal and 10,000 tonnes of wheat to Assam for distribution as gratuitous relief. The question of additional supply of 10,000 tonnes of wheat to West Bengal is under active consideration. The Government has also decided to supply 10,000 tonnes of wheat each to Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan and 5000 tonnes of wheat to Himachal Pradesh for distribution as gratuitous relief. So these were the steps taken for providing relief to these States.

Some information has been asked for by an hon. friend regarding the area and the damage. Flood-prone area in the country, as also mentioned by my hon. friend, Shri Chitta Basu, is 250 lakhs hectares. This is the area prone to floods in the country. Out of this area, as has been correctly stated, so far only 95 lakhs hectares have been covered or efforts made to save those areas and for that 10,260 kilometres of embankments have been constructed and 17850 km length of drainage channels have been prepared. 250 towns have been protected by various schemes and 4700 villages have been raised to a higher level. The total expenses incurred on all these things is Rs. 533 crores. These are the figures regarding the damage....

SHRI CHITTA BOSU: My basic question is: how are you going to cover the gap?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: The gap is a big one but we are doing it. Much more work is being done now than was being done before.

I might mention that upto the Fourth, Five Year Plan, only Rs. 347 crores had been provided and in the Fifth Plan alone Rs. 345 crores have been provided and this year we are spending something like Rs. 81 crores on this, in addition to the money that is being spent on these 2-2 States now.

Regarding the total damage, the figures are staggering sometimes, but these are natural calamities and not much can be done regarding this. For example, may I mention that in 1971 the total damage was Rs. 631 crores and fortunately, in the year 1972 it was only Rs. 158 crores. I call only Rs. 158 crores as compared to the other years. Again in 1973 the damage was to the tune of Rs. 569 crores, 1974—Rs. 569 crores, 1975—Rs. 471 crores and 1976 was a very bad year. The damage was Rs. 886 crores and unfortunately this year we do not know the total damage because of the grave position in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. So, we are not in a position to assess the total damage now.

In Gujarat also unfortunately this year has been very bad. In the previous years the average loss was to the tune of about Rs. 15.97 crores. This was the average for the year 1954 to 1976. So, all these years the average was Rs. 15.97 crores. This year the damage has been quite high amounting to about Rs. 53 crores.

It was mentioned that every year the damage is increasing and the loss is increasing. That is due to various factors. The prices are also increasing. So we are assessing the damage according to the prevailing prices. For example, in 1954 when we were assessing the damage, the average price level was much lower than the present level. For example, we are assessing the cost of houses, the cost of animals that had perished, the cost of crop damaged and the property damaged. All that has gone up and that is why the figures have become very staggering now.

Efforts are being made to find out a solution for prevention of these floods or for controlling the floods because prevention is not physically possible. We are just pitched against nature. For that purpose a National Commission on Floods has been organised. They have been asked to go into the

[Shri Surjit Singh Barnala]

various matters to evolve a co-ordinated, integrated and scientific approach to the flood control problems and draw up a national plan fixing priorities which could be implemented in the near future. The members of this Commission have gone to various States. They have also circulated a questionnaire for eliciting information from all the States. But, unfortunately, the response is very poor. The Commission has not received replies from most of the States.

They have visited many States. They have already held discussions with officers and also with the Ministers of those States. Because the Chairman is the Governor, he has the advantage of calling the Ministers also in those Conferences. The response was not as good as he expected.

We are trying to prepare a comprehensive plan and to fix priorities i.e. for which area which type of work could be started.

I myself visited Assam because Brahmaputra has caused heavy..

SHRI K. MALLANNA: Has a comprehensive plan been prepared or not?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: For this plan, questionnaire has been sent to various States for eliciting information and compiling a comprehensive plan. I discussed the matter with the Chief Ministers and various ministers and also the officers. They have different views regarding these embankments. Some said that that should be encouraged and this should be improved and some more embankments should be made. Some people were of the view that the embankments are not necessary. This was their thinking.

We are thinking to fix priorities and to start work. For that I was

given some suggestions—that dam should be constructed in all the rivers which fall into Brahmaputra. But dams are to be prepared in other countries which are not friendly and sometimes they are not willing that the dam should be built there. For example, for Bihar, we have to have a dam in Nepal. Sometimes they agree and sometimes they do not agree. Similarly for Assam, most of those rivers come from the neighbouring countries. We cannot do much in that. All the same we have made some proposals to tame these rivers and we are going ahead with it.

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SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA: I want to know whether any additional financial assistance will be provided by the Central Government over and above what the State Governments are entitled in accordance with the Sixth Finance Commission? Having in view the inadequacy of the assistance whether any proposal is under consideration to review the assistance to be provided to the States?

I have made one suggestion in regard to the two rivers of my district and I would request the hon. Minister to ask the authorities concerned to examine it.

19 hrs.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: So far as assistance provided is concerned, margin money was Rs. 4 crores 55 lakhs for Gujarat and in addition to that Rs. 10 crores and 43 lakhs have been provided this year. But there is no such proposal or thinking going on that this margin money assistance should be abolished or that some radical change in this form of assistance should be made. No thinking is going on. So far as these two rivulets are concerned, since my hon. friend has made some suggestions. I will have them examined to see how best we can help that area in preventing floods in that area.

श्री उग्रसेन (देवरिया) : क्या मंत्री महोदय इस प्रकार की व्यवस्था करेंगे ताकि विधायकों, एम० पीज और एम एल एज के पास नेशनल फ्लड कमिशन एक मिनी क्वेश्चनेयर भेज दे ताकि हम लोग भी अपने सुझाव दे सकें।

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:
I will request the Commission to send questionnaires to the Members of Parliament also.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: One question has not been answered. I would request the Minister to let us know the information regarding the North Bengal Flood Control Commission.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:
I have to look into it. We did receive some suggestions, but I do not know the details. I will find out.

19.02 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, December 8, 1977/Agrihayana 17, 1899 (Saka).