

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Kindly do that. That is relating to announcement of bonus. I hope he gives the decision before we disperse.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkal) I have also done that. Please consider.

(vii) FAMINE LIKE CONDITIONS IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : I like to draw the attention of this House and the Government about a very serious matter involving the life and death question of poor, small and marginal farmers of Andaman Nicobar Islands residing in various Islands. Everyday I am receiving number of letters which, state that the small and marginal farmers including men, women and children are under starvation. The reason is that last year due to heavy pest attack the earlier variety of paddy crop was damaged. In the same year in the month of December due to a heavy devastating cyclone, the late variety paddy crop which was harvested and some which were about to be harvested were completely washed away by flood water and cyclone. Even the rabi crop too was badly damaged. The damage was of such nature that one lakh of rupees were sent to the Chief Commissioner from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The farmer in this Union Territory is completely depending on single crop and that too depends on the rain water and no irrigation facilities are available here.

These farmers even could not produce any early crop this year for want of timely rain which could have solved their problem partially. As they could not clear the cooperative or bank loans due to such crop failure, the fresh loans in spite of repeated assurance made by Andaman Administration was not granted resulting in untold miseries.

The villages in Diglipur and Mayabunder Tahsil of North Andamans, Rangat Tahsil in Middle Andamans, Havelock, Baratang and villages near Port Blair in Port Blair Tahsil and villages in Ferragunj Tahsil are worst affected. The Reserve Bank wanted certificate for natural calamity from District Authorities but this was not issued whereas individual certificates were issued which could not satisfy the Reserve Bank and Short term/medium term agricultural loan through State Cooperative Bank was denied. Many villagers as reported to me particularly from Ramnagar, Jagannath Dara, Nabagram, Parangura, Tugapur, Chaitpur etc. and many other villages, farmers have left and still

are leaving villages in search of food. Many have started eating various jungle leaves, roots etc., deaths to starvation are also reported. The territory is not self-sufficient in food. The coarse rice in the market is sold at Rs. 4-5/- per k.g. Long queues are formed even for a kilogram of wheat. The officialdom in all levels is not serious about the problem and paying no importance in such a grave situation. The Revenue officials are playing with the poor farmers and causing much distress and hardship to the poor people.

The mazdoors are too suffering as their buying capacity is limited. The condition of landless agricultural labourers are worst than any body else.

Sir, I have seen food crisis in Andaman even before but not such a grave situation in any of the earlier occasions.

I, therefore, appeal to all sections of this August House to extend all cooperation to save the poor farmers' life in this farflung tiny territory of our great nation.

MR. SPEAKER : Now we come to Discussion under Rule 193.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Before that I rise on a point of order. I want to know from the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to correct his statement regarding the Badal enquiry that he made that day. He had stated categorically that there was not question of withdrawing the cases from the court. I hope he maintains that. In the answer it is stated that the State Government accorded permission for making the cancellation reports in three cases which were accepted by the court. So, I would like to know if you are correct; if you do not, then I will have the right to move a Privilege Motion.

Therefore, I am giving you an opportunity under Direction No. 115 to do so on your own.

MR. SPEAKER : No such notice was given to me under 115. I therefore disallow it. I am sorry the rule requires it.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : I know. There was no time to give this notice as we are ending the session on Monday. That is why I am giving this notice to the Home Minister before I bring the Privilege Motion.

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry the rule requires it. Now we go over to the next item.