

[Mr. Speaker]

ed the following persons as Members of the Panel of Chairmen:—

1. Shri B. P. Kadam
2. Shrimati Parvathi Krishnan
3. Dr. V. A. Seyid Muhammad
4. Shri Jagannath Sharma
5. Shri N. K. Shejwalkar
6. Shri M. Satyanarayan Rao

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: They have issued this Ordinance just four days before this House is going to sit. Are they showing any respect to Parliament?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not for me to decide. It is for the House to decide. (Interruptions).

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I beseech you to read . . . **

MR. SPEAKER: Don't record. (Interruptions) **

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Surjit Singh Barnala.

12.30 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. RECENT CYCLONE IN ANDHRA PRADESH AND TAMIL NADU AND RELIEF MEASURES TAKEN

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): Hon. Members of the House are aware of the calamity, in the shape of a cyclonic storm of rare severity with a core of hurricane winds that hit the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Tamil Nadu on 12th May, 1979.

Although the cyclone did not cause any serious damage in Tamil Nadu as per reports of the State Government, it resulted in great havoc including heavy loss of human life, livestock and enormous damage to public and

private properties in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. The districts of Prakasam and Nellore were the worst affected. Considerable damage has also been reported in the districts of Guntur, Krishna, West and East Godavari, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Mahabobnagar as a result of the torrential rains which followed the cyclonic storm.

The Andhra Pradesh Government has reported 706 human lives lost out of which 579 and 75 were in the districts of Prakasam and Nellore respectively which are the worst hit. Similarly, the maximum number of houses damaged out of a total of 7.35 lakhs has been in Prakasam and Nellore, the figures being 3.13 lakhs and 3.67 lakhs respectively. The loss of livestock is 77,000 cattle, 1.79 lakhs sheep and goats, 1.77 lakhs pigs and 1.49 lakhs poultry units. About 72,000 hectares of crop valued at about Rs. 2,164 lakhs has been damaged. The State Government has also reported damage to 15,600 tobacco burns, more than half of these being fully damaged.

In Tamil Nadu, the State Government has reported loss of 21 human lives, 772 heads of cattle and damage to 7212 houses and huts. They have also mentioned that the extent of damage is not serious and can be managed by the State Government. Hence no Central Team was sent there.

As soon as the warning of the approaching cyclone was received, the Central and the State Governments had taken necessary disaster preparedness measures from the 10th May onwards. Nearly 1.5 lakh people living in low lying areas were evacuated to places of safety. Joint Control rooms were set up in the State and district headquarters. The Defence Services were alerted and fishermen warned about the approaching storm.

**Not recorded.

Immediately after the cyclone the State Government took steps to provide relief to the affected people which included payment of gratuitous relief to the families of persons who lost their lives, as also for those whose houses were damaged. The relief measures included cash assistance and free supply of foodgrains and clothings to cyclone victims. Medical teams were rushed to the spot. The State Government has sanctioned subsidy to small and marginal farmers, assistance to weavers, fishermen and artisans and also postponed collection of land revenue in the affected areas. A sum of Rs. 10.75 crores was sanctioned for repairs, restoration of irrigation works, roads and buildings damaged by cyclone.

I visited the cyclone affected areas at the earliest possible opportunity on the 24th and 25th May. The Prime Minister visited the affected areas on

the 3rd and 4th June. The President of India also visited the affected areas on 9th June to acquaint himself with the magnitude of the devastation.

A Central team was deputed by Government of India to visit the State, make an on-the-spot appraisal of the extent of damage and recommend assistance for the State. The team visited the State from 20th to 23rd of May, 1979 and submitted its report.

On the basis of the report of the Central Team and the recommendations of the High Level Committee on Relief, the Government of India have agreed to the following ceilings on additional expenditure to be incurred during 1979-80 on serious items of relief, rehabilitation and repair and restoration of public works, for purpose of grant of Central assistance:—

Rs. in lakhs

1. Relief including free supply of food, clothing and medicines etc.,	575
2. Rehabilitation including housing subsidy, subsidy for agriculturists, assistance for Tobacco growers, fishermen and cattle/poultry owners and assistance to cottage and small scale industry	1090
3. Repair of public works including assistance to Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board	3406
TOTAL	5071

In addition 75,000 M.T. rice valued at Rs. 11 crores has been released under Food for Works Programme over and above the normal quota. Part of this valued at Rs. 7.50 crores will be used for meeting 50 per cent cost of repair and reconstruction of irrigation and road works. Rs. 10 crores short-term loans have also been released for raising a kharif crop.

Ministry of Health have rendered medicines, disinfectants, veterinary medicines, disinfectants, veterinary drugs worth Rs. 10.66 lakhs as on 1-6-79.

At the request of the Agriculture Department, the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) has been requested to send an expert team to the affected areas for an on-the-spot study of the situation and make recommendations about the nature of assistance to be given. The team has since submitted its report which is under consideration of the Government and necessary assistance, as deemed fit, will be provided to the weavers who have been rendered jobless as a result of the cyclone.

Agricultural Finance Corporation and Indian Banks Association drafted

[Shri Surjit Singh Barnala]

four teams of A.F.C. and Bank officers to visit the cyclone affected districts of the State. The teams were also represented by officers from the concerned Departments of State Government and State Co-operative Bank. The teams have since submitted their report. They have recommended, among other things, conversion of short-term loan to medium-term loan, rescheduling of term loan, opening of camp branches by Banks to dispose of applications for 1979 kharif loans, etc. ARDC is being requested to give loans on soft terms. These steps will help in rehabilitation of farmers in the affected areas.

Any action taken by the Central Government is inadequate if the State Government does not come forward to meet the challenge imposed by such calamities. I must say that the State Governments have acted promptly to meet the situation. I express my appreciation of the efforts made by them.

I would also like to record a note of appreciation for the assistance given by the Members of the Armed forces in giving relief to the cyclone victims. The Army and Air Force did a splendid job in reaching the marooned villages and air dropping food, providing medical supplies and medical aid in adverse conditions. We are indeed very grateful to them.

Any efforts by the State and Central Governments cannot succeed unless there is a spontaneous response from the people and other voluntary organisations engaged in relief work. I would like to express my appreciation for the fortitude and courage shown by the people of the affected areas in facing the calamity. I hope and pray that they will be resettled soon in their normal vocations and will be able to overcome the tragedy which has befallen them.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH (Nandyal): Sir, this cyclone has caused

greater havoc than the previous cyclone and thousands of acres have become unfit for cultivation. These recurrent cyclones are more devastating in that part of Andhra Pradesh. The State Government has proposed to construct a wall as a preventive measure so that these areas will not get damaged from time to time, whenever there is a cyclone. This involves expenditure, and they have approached the Central Government for adequate financial assistance to prevent these areas from getting damaged by the effect of such cyclones. They have asked for more funds. I would like to know whether such a request has come.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, a case has been made out by the Tobacco Board . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Now we take up Statements under Rule 377.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I will take only half a minute.

MR. SPEAKER: No, I am not allowing it.

12.42 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) REPORTED SHORTAGE OF POSTAL STATIONERY AND STAMPS IN AGRA DISTRICT AND REFUSAL BY BANKS IN AGRA TO ACCEPT CURRENCY NOTES OF LOWER DENOMINATIONS.

SHRI SHAMBU NATH CHATURVEDI (Agra): I wish to mention the following matter of urgent public importance.

There is virtual famine of postal stationery and stamps in the Agra District and elsewhere because of which the public is very much exasperated and business is coming almost to a standstill. Envelopes and inland letters had been in short supply—virtually non-available—for the last four months. Postcards followed suit