

[Shri Chengalraya Naidu]

know the importance of irrigation and electricity. In our country we should not think of the urban area and their economy and their civilisation and think that is India. We have to think of the rural India and in rural India 80 per cent of our population live. We have to think first of improving their economy and also producing more food, for, for any country food is more important than any other thing. Some one said, 'If you have got food, then you can think of the leadership and Government, that is, leadership and the Army'. First, unless we have got enough food, we are not safe in the country. There will be rebellions in the country. There will be strikes and commotion in the country.

12.55 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute. I would like to make a few announcements. Will the hon. Member kindly resume his seat?

The debate will conclude and the Minister will reply at 5 P.M. At 5.30 P.M. we will take up the Demands for Grants of the Food and Agriculture Ministry. The half-an-hour discussion fixed for this evening has also been postponed.

12.55½ hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1968-69— contd.

MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER— contd.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU: For agriculture we need water first and then comes seeds and fertilizers. For the plant unless water is there it will not grow and then after it grows only fertiliser is needed. We have to think of water first only for food production. The very existence of the plant has to depend on water. Perhaps the people coming from West Bengal and Assam might not have known the

importance of the water problem. They are getting heavy rainfall in West Bengal and Assam. I myself come from a famine-affected area, a chronically famine affected area and has scanty rainfall and I know the importance of water. We have rainfall for four months and we don't have rainfall for the rest of the eight months. When we have rainfall for four months, in scarcity areas we have to construct dams to store water and use this water throughout the year so that we can produce foodgrains throughout the year and not only one crop can be raised, but we can raise three crops. If we can thus plan to produce food throughout the year, we cannot be self-sufficient but also we can export rather than import foodgrains. Our lands are rich and fertile and we can produce more foodgrains.

In the Report of the Ministry of Irrigation and power, they have stated that we are able to irrigate only twenty-five percent of the land and the rest of the land has to grow on rainfall. For the last twenty years in this country we are having plans and we are taking up several steps. Government have taken up several steps in this direction and so much of pains, but still it is a wonder to think that we are only able to irrigate twenty-five percent of the cultivated land.

For cultivation and storing water we should not think of only small projects or big projects. Big projects as well as small projects, minor as well as major projects, both are important for the development of the country and we should have more of these major or minor irrigation projects. We should not have any feeling against the major irrigation projects and we should construct more major irrigation projects also in the country.

Now certain works are being slowed down on these projects. For the slowing down of the works on these projects I do not know who is responsible—whether the Central Government or the Planning Commission. I