

considered, and a Central Team will be deputed to assess the situation in the State, if necessary.

As the House is aware, scarcity conditions persist in the Western parts of Rajasthan. During the current year, a population of 72.34 lakhs, spread over 10,873 villages in 21 districts of the State, is in the grip of scarcity. The State Government have declared famine in four western districts of the State, and scarcity in other districts affected by the drought.

Large-scale relief works have been undertaken in Rajasthan to provide employment for the able-bodied persons among the stricken population. The number of persons employed on relief works has mounted from 1.81 lakhs in October, 1969 to 5.99 lakhs in April, 1970. A section of the labour force so employed is working on the Rajasthan Canal Project. 16,175 persons are in receipt of gratuitous relief.

The State Government have also introduced a Special Gratuitous Relief Scheme under which each member of a family is given a lean-cum-grant of Rs. 12.50 p. m. This scheme covers a population of 12.08 lakhs of beneficiaries in the three districts of Bikaner, Barmer and Jaisalmer, and large parts of Jodhpur district.

Elaborate arrangements for supply of drinking water have been taken in hand. The State Government have pressed into service a fleet of 50 four-wheel driven truck-borne tankers which serve about 520 villages. 62 tube-wells have been commissioned so far, and 60 reservoirs have been constructed near the tube-wells to facilitate distribution of drinking water. 15,000 wells have been deepened, and about 955 villages have been brought under a scheme under which drawal of water is subsidised.

Migration of cattle assumed large dimensions this year. About 8 lakh head of cattle migrated to the neighbouring States of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Punjab in search of pasture. Of this, 1.45 lakh head of cattle were taken to the forest areas within the State. The State Government set up 271 migration depots, and supplied free fodder at the rate of 4 kgs. per head of cattle and half kg. of wheat flour to each cattle breeder accompanying the cattle free of cost. It is estimated that nearly 1.50 lakh persons accompanied migrating cattle. Veterinary services were rendered at migration depots.

4.65 lakh quintals of fodder have been procured by the State Government and distributed through the net-work of 296 fodder depots. The State Government have also helped voluntary agencies to organise and maintain cattle camps, and have helped with a grant of 65 paise per head of cattle per day at these camps. Preventive health measures have been undertaken and the epidemic situation is under control.

Since January 1969, the Centre has released 4,12,000 tonnes of foodgrains for Rajasthan, which includes 1,00,000 tonnes of milo, 72,000 tonnes of maize and 20,000 tonnes of jowar. Following the removal of zonal restrictions, substantial quantities of foodgrains have been moved into the western parts of Rajasthan through the channels of private trade. Prices have remained generally steady.

The Centre released Rs. 53.50 crores by way of assistance to the Rajasthan Government during 1969-70. A Central Team visited Rajasthan in the first week of this month to assess the situation and recommend the ceiling on expenditure to be incurred over the relief measures during the current financial year. The Team's recommendations will be finalised shortly.

The Government of Rajasthan have undertaken, with the assistance of the Centre, measures to alleviate the distress caused by drought this year. The situation is under control.

STATEMENT RE : ADMISSIBILITY OF HOUSE RENT ALLOWANCE TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P. C.
SETHI) : I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the statement regarding admissibility of House Rent Allowance to Central Government employees.

Statement

Consequent on the treatment of a part of Dearness Allowance of the Central Government employees, as pay, from 1.1.68, such 'Dearness Pay' also counts for the determination of the pay ceiling of Rs. 500/- p.m. fixed for the admissibility of House

[Shri P. C. Sethi]

Rent Allowance without production of actual payment or rent. Accordingly, in effect, the pay ceiling has come down to Rs. 390/- of basic pay (i.e., pay exclusive of Dearness Pay), and employees in the basic pay range above Rs. 390/- and upto Rs. 500/- p.m. are now required to produce receipts of actual payment of rent before claiming house rent allowance. Government have received numerous representations from individuals, employees' unions, and Members of Parliament for restoring the *status quo ante* by raising this pay limit from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 620/- p.m., inclusive of Dearness Pay (i.e., from Rs. 390/- to Rs. 500/- p.m. of basic pay) on the grounds that :—

- (a) landlords are reluctant to issue rent receipts as a pre-condition of tenancy ;
- (b) it is not possible to obtain receipts from landlords where employees live as sub-tenants or as paying guests with their relatives and friends ; and
- (c) as the employees cannot produce rent receipts, they have, in effect, been deprived of House Rent Allowance which has resulted in a drop in their emoluments.

There should ordinarily be no objection to relating house rent allowance to the rent actually paid as it is in the nature of a subsidy. However, in view of the concern which the Hon. Members have shown in the matter through questions asked by them in Parliament, and the numerous representations and letters which they have addressed to Government on behalf of Central Government employees, Government have reviewed the matter and it has been decided to raise the pay ceiling for the admissibility of house rent allowance to Central Government employees without production of rent receipts, from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 620/- (inclusive of Dearness Pay) with effect from 1.2.1969.

13.11 hrs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION BY MEMBERS

श्री शशि भूषण (खारगोन) : अध्यक्ष

महोदय, 14 मई, 1970 की लोक सभा की कार्यवाही के पृष्ठ 36,312 पर छपे वाद-विवाद को पढ़ने से यह लगता है कि मैंने श्री एस० के० तापड़िया के सम्बन्ध में कुछ व्यक्तिगत आरोप किये हैं। वास्तव में श्री तापड़िया मेरे बड़े अच्छे मित्र हैं। उस समय जब श्री तापड़िया बोल रहे थे और अनेक सदस्य छोटकसी कर रहे थे। जिस संदर्भ में मैंने कहा था उस स्थान पर "व्यवधान" लिख दिया गया है। उसका श्री तापड़िया से कोई सम्बन्ध नहीं है, इसलिये आरोप को वापस लिया हुआ समझा जाना चाहिये।

श्री गुरचरण सिंह (फ़ीरोजपुर) : अध्यक्ष, महोदय मेरा पाइन्ट आफ़ आर्डर है। आज बजट सेशन खत्म हो रहा है। मैंने पंजाब के हालात के बारे में आप की सैक्रेटैरियट में क्वेश्चन भेजे, काल अटेंशन नोटिस भेजा। पता नहीं वह क्यों एडमिट नहीं हुआ। पंजाब में...

MR. SPEAKER : I am not going to allow.

श्री गुरचरण सिंह : पंजाब में सैकड़ों की तादाद में लोगों को जेल में रख रखा है...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : पंजाब का भगड़ा यहाँ मत रखिये।

श्री गुरचरण सिंह : अगर पंजाब के हालात खराब हो रहे हैं तो वहाँ का क्यों न नोटिस लिया जाय। पटियाला, लुधियाना,...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इस तरह से कैसे काम चलेगा। मैं मनाकर रहा हूँ और आप कहे जा रहे हैं।

श्री गुरचरण सिंह : पंजाब के हालात के बारे में मुझे एक मिनट कह लेने दीजिये।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : पंजाब वाले का पंजाब वाले से मुकाबला पड़ गया। क्या किया जाय।