

[Shri F. H. Mohsin]

- (3) The Indian Administrative Service (Pay) Thirteenth Amendment Rules, 1972, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 384(E) in Gazette of India dated the 21st August, 1972.

[Placed in library. See No. LT-3605/72.]

11.29 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI F. A. AHMED): I beg to lay on the Table a statement on drought conditions in the country.

Statement

The Hon'ble Members will kindly recall the statement made in the House on the 1st August, 1972, regarding the drought situation in certain parts of the country.

I am glad to inform the House that with the recent rains, the drought situation and the prospects of the *kharif* crops have improved to some extent in most parts of the country. However, as a result of the earlier dry spells, scarcity conditions are prevailing in some areas of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. In all these States, effective and adequate relief measures continue to be undertaken by the State Governments.

Central Teams have by now visited the States of Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura, U.P. and West Bengal for on-the-spot assessment of the situation. Such Teams would shortly be visiting Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mysore, Nagaland and Rajasthan. The request of the Gujarat Government for deputing a Central Team has just been received and is under consideration. Meanwhile, *ad-hoc* loan assistance to the concerned State Governments, wherever required, has been provided.

As part of the new initiative taken by my Ministry this year, a country-wide emergency production programme for retrieving the losses of the *kharif* crops and increasing the production of *rabi* and summer crops has been formulated and is being

vigorously implemented. Under this programme, arrangements are being made for immediate augmentation of irrigation facilities by commissioning of existing tubewells and construction of new ones, installation of pumping sets, erection of *kutcha* bunds for diverting water from rivers and streams, and completion of irrigation channels, etc. The supply of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, plant protection equipment, aerial spray and of short-term credit is also being arranged. Special allocations, over and above the Plan provisions, are being made to the State Governments for implementing the emergency production programme.

Altogether, Rs. 85.43 crores have been sanctioned by the Central Government so far to the various affected States as *ad-hoc* loan assistance for the relief operations, towards assistance for implementing the Emergency Production Programme and towards short-term loans for agricultural inputs.

My colleagues, Shri Shinde, Prof. Sher Singh and I, as well as senior officers of my Ministry, have visited most of the affected States and held discussions with the State Governments to ensure that timely and effective measures are taken for providing relief.

At the advice of my Ministry, the State Governments have strengthened and augmented the public distribution system to ensure the availability of foodgrains, particularly in the areas affected by scarcity. We have adequate stocks of foodgrains to meet all the reasonable requirements of the State Governments.

In the House, particular attention has been drawn by the Hon'ble Member Shri Shiv Shankar Prasad Yadav to the scarcity conditions in Bihar and to certain alleged cases of death due to starvation there. The drought has undoubtedly affected large parts of Bihar. However, the State Government as well as my Ministry have taken prompt and effective measures to provide relief to the people by opening relief works, organising gratuitous relief and undertaking the necessary public health measures. The State Government has also constituted an All-Party Relief Coordination Committee.

I visited the State recently and held discussions with the State Government. My colleague, Shri Shinde, and senior officials in my Ministry have also discussed various matters relating to the supply of foodgrains and organisation of relief operations and the special production programme with the State Chief Minister and his senior

officials. My Ministry has considerably stepped up the despatches of foodgrains to the State. The State Government has also strengthened and augmented the public distribution system. I assure the House that all reasonable requirements of the State for foodgrains will be met.

Regarding starvation deaths, the State Government has reported that no case of death due to starvation has occurred. The cases of starvation deaths pointed out by the Hon'ble Member have also been referred to the State Government for enquiry and report.

Particular concern has also been expressed by some of the Hon'ble Members regarding the scarcity conditions in Andhra Pradesh. The situation in that State is admittedly difficult because of insufficient rainfall successively over the last two years. However, the State Government and the Government of India have been fully alive to the situation. Adequate relief measures have been undertaken by the State Government. I recently visited the State and held discussions with the State Government on various matters relating to the supply of foodgrains, organisation of relief operations and the emergency production programme. By now, the State Government has been sanctioned an *ad-hoc* loan assistance of Rs. 45 crores for the drought relief operations. My Ministry has also sanctioned Rs. 2.06 crores for minor irrigation works and Rs. 10 crores for agricultural inputs under the emergency production programme.

The Hon'ble Members will thus appreciate that both the Central and the State Governments are fully alert and vigilant and have been taking, and will continue to take, all necessary steps to deal with the situation.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH (Nandyal): Yesterday, I wrote a letter to you with regard to the drought situation that is prevailing in Andhra Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute please. You could have got up at that time when I allowed others to make their submissions.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: No, no, Sir, please hear me.

MR. SPEAKER: You see, if you want to make a statement arising out of the Minister's statement, I will not permit it. But, otherwise, when I have allowed so many other gentlemen, you could have also taken advantage of that.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Yesterday, I said that I will seek certain clarifications from the Minister's statement when he makes the statement in the

House on the drought situation with particular reference to the drought conditions prevailing in Andhra Pradesh. So, I was expecting that the Minister will read out his statement. That is why I did not seek your permission to speak on this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: You first read that statement and then if you want to say something on your own, I will allow you on Monday for a minute or two.

How long is the statement?

SHRI F. A. AHMED: Two sheets statement.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been laid already. It is there. Kindly sit down.

MR. P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I want to seek some clarifications from the Minister. In view of the alarming situation prevailing in Andhra Pradesh...

MR. SPEAKER: After the Minister's statement, there will be no questions, nothing of that type. You can read that statement and, then, later on make a submission, independent of the statement, some other day.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA (Begusarai): He wants to seek some clarifications with regard to the statement which has been laid on the Table at the moment.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I would request you to ask the Minister to read out the statement so that we may seek some clarifications.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not allowing anything after the Minister's statement. You do not follow me. You kindly read the Rules.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I want to know whether these facts were brought to his notice with regard to the alarming drought situation prevailing in Andhra Pradesh. I will ask him now and he may give me the reply on Monday.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you can ask him.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Is he aware of the fact that there is an alarming...

MR. SPEAKER: A wrong time you have chosen for it. I have given enough time earlier.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: There are hungry marches of people in Andhra Pradesh. The entire State has been affected and people are migrating to the towns for employment and some of them are living on palm leaves.

[Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah]

Not even drinking water is available in some places and even a pot of water is sold at Rs. 3. They have no food and they have no water. The Central Government's assistance is not adequate at all.

MR. SPEAKER: You may go through the statement laid on the Table of the House. Part four relates to Andhra. Kindly read the statement and then you may take it up on Monday, if there is anything.

श्री हुक्म चन्द कछवाय (मुरेना) :
अध्यक्ष महोदय, मध्य प्रदेश, बिहार और राजस्थान में भी सूखा पड़ा हुआ है। मंत्री महोदय ने उन के बारे में क्या कहा है? आप मंत्री महोदय को कहें कि वह वक्तव्य को पढ़ें।

SHRI B. N. REDDY (Niryalguda): Andhra Pradesh Government has asked certain help from the Central Government. What amount has been sanctioned by the Central Government? At least this much should be answered by the hon. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not allowing questions on the statement.

11.31 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. ALLEGED HARASSMENT AND ILL-TREATMENT OF MEMBER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. C. PANT): I beg to lay a statement regarding the alleged harassment and ill-treatment meted out to Shri Ajit Kumar Saha, M.P. by the Railway Staff and Police at Asansol Railway Station on the 29th June, 1972.

Statement

A copy of the letter dated 1-7-1972 from Shri Ajit Kumar Saha, MP, addressed to the Speaker was forwarded to us for obtaining a factual report on the complaint made therein regarding harassment and ill-treatment meted out to him by the railway staff and police at Asansol Railway Station on the 29th June, 1972. The Ministry of Railways and the Government of West Bengal were requested to furnish a factual report on the subject. The Ministry of Railways obtained a report from the General Manager, Eastern Railway. The Government of West Bengal got an inquiry made into the matter by the Executive Magistrate I Class, Asansol. Copies of these

reports were furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat, who had made them available also to Shri Saha.

2. According to information received from the Government of West Bengal, one Shri Krishna Kanta Dutta S/o late Bijoy Gopal Dutta is being prosecuted under section 182 IPC for allegedly giving false information with the intent to cause a public servant to use his lawful power to the injury of another person and the criminal case is sub-judice in a court of competent jurisdiction.

3. Shri Ajit Kumar Saha has made some further observations on the reports received from the Government of West Bengal and the Ministry of Railways. Since a criminal case arising out of this matter is sub-judice, I would like to refrain from making any further statement on the subject.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA (Vishnupur): The Police has filed a case against Mr. Krishna Kant Datta and the matter is *sub-judice* and I do not want to say anything about Mr. Datta's action. But I made certain serious charges against certain railway officials and police who had harassed me beyond limit, who prevented me from making the journey and to fulfil Parliamentary assignments. But in the statement the hon. Minister has not said anything about these police and railway officers, what action has been taken against them.

SHRI K. C. PANT: In the statement I have explained the whole position. The letter has been written by Mr. Saha to you. We have made enquires and the report came from the General Manager, Eastern Railway. There was the report from the West Bengal Government.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: (Diamond Harbour): Do you take it as gospel truth?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The First-class Magistrate, Asansol has sent a report. All the reports were sent to you and you were good enough to send all these reports to the hon. Member. He has gone through the report. According to the information sent to us from the Government of West Bengal, one Shri Krishna Kant Datta is being prosecuted under sec. 182 I.P.C. for allegedly giving false information with the intent to cause a public servant to use his lawful powers to the injury of another person and the criminal case is *sub-judice* in a court of competent jurisdiction.

It is for that reason that I have said that at this stage I could not give any further facts.