

MR. SPEAKER: That is a State matter.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): But it concerns the Prime Minister of another country. Our Prime Minister herself went to the Embassy and conveyed her condolence.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Jagjivan Ram If the statement is long he can lay it on the Table.

12.07 hrs.

STATEMENT ON PATNA FLOODS

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM): I beg to lay a Statement on Patna Floods on the Table of the House

Statement

Floods of 1975 in Patna The monsoon depression which originated in the Bay of Bengal on 17th August, 1975 moved into the Sone catchment on 19th August, 1975 causing heavy rainfall between 19th and 22nd, August. Consequently a rainfall of 271 mm was recorded at Pandra and 591 mm at Umaria both in Madhya Pradesh and 371 mm at Chopan in Uttar Pradesh. Following this heavy rainfall the Sone started rising from 19-8-1975. It reached a peak level of 128.07 m at 01.00 hours on 23-8-1975 at Japla, exceeding the level recorded in 1971 which was 127.89 metres. At Indrapuri, it reached a level of 108.85 m against the warning stage of 108.204 m on 23-8-1975 at 05.00 hrs. It crossed the warning stage of 55.525 m at Koelwar on the afternoon of 21-8-1975. The maximum level reached at Koelwar was 58.81 metres on 23-8-1975 between 10-14 hours. This level was only slightly less than that of 1971 when it had reached a level of 58.884 metres which is the maximum on record.

The Ganga was above warning stage of 46.6 m at Patna on 22-8-1975. It continued to rise further and reached a level of 49.989 metres at 18 hours on 24-8-1975 at Gandhi Ghat (Patna). This level was 0.35 metres higher than the level recorded in 1971 and is the highest on record so far. Its level at Digha surpassed the level of 52.15 metres recorded in 1971 and reached 52.52 metres at 8 hours on 24-8-1975. However, this did not exceed the level of 52.585 m recorded in the year 1923.

As a result of the extremely high flood level at Digha, the combined waters at Ganga and Sone overtopped most of the road from Digha to Maner, to the extent of about 30-60 cm and there was a sheet flow from Sone Ganga towards the low lying area in the country side towards Patna and Digha. There were seven breaches on the road during this flood. The water started flowing over this road from the night of 22-8-1975 and continued for a few days. In addition to the overtopping of this road, there were 11 breaches/cuts in the Maner distributory through which substantial flood flows from Sone travelled towards Patna. Due to over-topping and the breaches on Bihta-Maner road Bihta-Maner embankment and Khagaul-Danapur road the waters ultimately gravitated against the left bank of Patna canal in its lower reach. The water headed up gradually till it reached a level of 53.34 metres on the evening of 24-8-1975. This resulted in over-topping the left bank of the Patna canal and ultimately breached both of its banks. Since there is no barrier against the flood waters after Patna Canal, the combined flood waters of the Sone as well as the Ganga entered Patna in the night of 24-8-1975 resulting in the deluge.

2 Damage due to floods: The catastrophic floods in August, 1975 in Patna caused extensive damage to both the Government as well

as private properties. Damage to private properties has not been assessed by the State Government so far, according to the information available with us. However, rough estimate of the damage caused to Government buildings, roads and other public utilities as indicated by the State Government is about Rs. 10.15 crores. A total population of 3.7 lakh was affected by the floods. Almost all the roads including Ashok Rajpath were submerged to a depth varying from 0.67 m to 2.1 m for more than a week. 36 roads in a length of 89 km were damaged in various degrees. 90 office buildings, 2640 residential buildings (under the public works Department) and colony roads in a length of 145 km were also damaged. Within the limits of Patna Municipal Corporation 37,514 holdings were affected, sustaining partial or full damage. Heavy damage was also caused to the properties of the Municipal Corporation, Public Health Department, Housing Board, Electricity Department and a number of other departments.

According to the State Government, 5 human lives were lost, and about 8 persons were missing. 66 cattle heads were also lost.

It has been stated by the State Government that it is very difficult to assess the huge loss sustained by Private persons. However, the persons in lower income group, suffered maximum loss as their houses mostly collapsed and their belongings got submerged. The middle income group with single storey house also sustained heavy loss as their houses were completely submerged involving considerable loss to their properties. Even in the case of upper income group people having double or multi-storied buildings suffered damage as the ground floors were submerged for a period of 5 to 7 days. Thousands of vehicles both Government and private were submerged involving considerable loss.

3. Flood Protection Schemes.—Immediately after the floods, a High Level Expert Committee was set up by the Bihar Government to enquire into the Patna floods of August, 1975 and to suggest measures for future protection against similar catastrophes. The Committee is headed by Member (Floods) Central Water Commission and consists of the Chairman, Ganga Flood Control Commission, two Chief Engineers of the State Government Irrigation Department and two Members of the Bihar Legislative Assembly. The Committee submitted its interim report in November, 1975 recommending flood protection and drainage works which have to be taken up on a priority basis. Its final report is awaited.

The main items of works, recommended by the Committee to be taken up on first priority are:—

- (i) Construction of an embankment/masonry wall on the south bank of Ganga from Digha to Maner along with revetment at vulnerable places;
- (ii) construction of a new embankment from Maner to Katesar and from Katesar to Saidabad along the right bank of Sone;
- (iii) construction of an escape channel from Patna canal upstream of Naubatpur through Khajuri distributary and Panchahua Nalla;
- (iv) raising and strengthening of Danapur distributary; and
- (v) improving and remodeling the existing urban drainage in Patna.

The Committee has also recommended that the remodelling of the drainage system in the rural areas and raising and strengthening of the left embankment of Purnun along with construction of new embankments in its upper reaches to be taken

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

up as works of second priority. The first priority works have been roughly estimated to cost Rs. 8.68 crores, and those are planned by the State Government to be completed before the floods season of 1976. The State Government have accepted the recommendations of the Committee and have already initiated action on these works. They expect to incur an expenditure of about Rs. 2.65 crores till March 1976. The Government of India have agreed to give advance Plan assistance covering this amount to the State Government during the current financial year.

The Committee in its interim report has stated that it has not been possible for it to go into details of the various causes that led to the floods of the magnitude experienced in 1975. The Committee hopes to submit its final report to the State Government by the end of January 1976.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI K. RAGHU RAMAIAH): With your permission, Sir, I rise to announce that the Government Business in this House during the week commencing 19th January, 1976, will consist of:—

- (1) Consideration of any item of Government Business carried over from today's Order paper.
- (2) Consideration and passing of the Regional Rural Banks Bill, 1976.
- (3) Discussion on the Resolutions seeking disapproval of the maintenance of Internal Security (Third Amendment) Ordinance, 1975 and the Maintenance of Internal Security (Fourth Amendment) Ordinance, 1975 and consideration and passing of the Maintenance

of Internal Security (Amendment) Bill, 1976.

- (4) Consideration and passing of the following Bills, as passed by Rajya Sabha:—
 - (a) The Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill, 1976.
 - (b) The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Bill, 1976.
 - (c) The Equal Remuneration Bill, 1976.
 - (d) The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 1976.
- (5) Discussion on the Resolution seeking disapproval of the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Ordinance, 1975 and consideration and passing of the payment of wages (Amendment) Bill, 1976 as passed by Rajya Sabha.
- (6) Discussion on the Resolution seeking disapproval of the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (Amendment) Ordinance, 1975, and consideration and passing of the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (Amendment) Bill, 1976.

- (7) Consideration and passing of the Standards of Weights and Measures Bill, 1976, as passed by Rajya Sabha.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): Will all these items be taken up in the same order in which they have been announced, or as it suits the Governments?

SHRI K. RAGHU RAMAIAH: The list is there, but the order is not there.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: If the order is not followed, it will be inconvenient, as it happened the other day.