

ent because out of fear they came away from that place—LTTE.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Well, LTTE is an organisation of the militants in Sri Lanka and there is some understanding now I assume between them and the Sri Lankan Government so that they both seem to be working towards restriction of peace.

SHRI ERA ANBARASU: Every Tamilian should hang his head in shame to hear that there is no place for the Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu which is ruled by Tamilian. The reason being that LTTE is the adopted son of Karunanidhi.

MR. SPEAKER: You put a question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ERA ANBARASU: Both EPRLF and TULF are peace loving people; they are committed to democracy; they want to live peacefully in Tamil Nadu; they will feel at home if they are settled in Tamil Nadu.

MR. SPEAKER: You want to extract some reply from the Minister.

SHRI ERA ANBARASU: I heard a rumour that on the advice of the LTTE Leader, Mr. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, refused to give an asylum to Tamil refugees in Tamilnadu. Is it a fact? If it is not a fact, are you proposed to bring them back again from Orissa to Tamilnadu so that they will feel at home in Tamil Nadu?

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: My hon. friend might keep one thing in mind that Tamil Nadu and Tamil Nadu Government are already bearing a big brunt of the situation. About 91,000 refugees are already there. Therefore, to accuse the Chief Minister of not helping Tamilians is unfair.

Assistance to Farmers in Drought Prone Areas

*248. SHRI BALGOPAL MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the drought prone areas in different States;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to assist the farmers in those areas to grow alternative crops; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) to (c). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) 615 blocks in 91 districts of 13 States have been identified as drought prone areas for the purpose of the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP).

(b) and (c). In the drought prone areas, the main crops grown are coarse cereals, pulses, oilseeds and cotton in accordance with agro-climatic conditions. However, crop yields are low and production fluctuates from year to year due to a number of constraints such as inadequate and erratic rainfall, undulating topography, poor soil fertility and low level of investment in farming practices. With a view to ensure ecological upgradation and achieve agricultural stability. Central Government have been implementing the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), National Watershed Development Programme for Rainfed Agriculture (NWDPA) and the World Bank aided Rainfed Farming Project. These programmes envisage adoption of an integrated area development approach taking watershed/micro-watershed as a unit of planning and management wherein farmers are assisted in developing their land, conserving moisture, storing and harnessing rain water and adopting more rational land use plans.

Help is also given to farmers under various crop development programmes for supply of improved seeds through mini kits, plant protection measures on a subsidized basis, besides crop demonstration being

taken up on their lands. Technological support is extended to farmers for adopting suitable cropping pattern and appropriate land use practices by the extension agencies.

SHRI BALGOPAL MISHRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the DPAP was started in 1980-81 in the country and backward districts all over the country have been included in this programme. Till now a sum of Rs. 764 crore 83 lakh have been spent under this programme but in spite of spending such a huge amount on it, the condition of these districts remains as it was. In Orissa, 14 blocks in Kalahandi, 11 blocks in Bolangir, 8 blocks in Phulbani and 6 blocks in Sambhalpur districts have been included in this programme. Since the commencement of this programme in 1981, the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi paid several visits to Kalahandi but till now no improvement has been made there. Even today girls are sold in Kalahandi area. Even today starvation deaths are taking place there as a result of which people are migrating from the area in large numbers. Last year also, girls were sold in Bolangir district. Sir, through you I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether some permanent assets have been created there with the funds allocated by the centre under DPAP. Till now Rs. 600-700 crores have been spent there, so I would like to know as to how much many acres of land have been brought under irrigation and the value of permanent assets that have been created there till now.

SHRI DEVI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the question asked by the hon. Member, I would like to say that identification of drought prone areas is done on the basis of average rainfall in the area. Accordingly 615 blocks in 91 districts spread over 13 states have been declared as drought-prone areas and assistance under DPAP is being provided to them. They are being provided assistance since 1972-73.

SHRI BALGOPAL MISHRA: Sir, I have not received any reply to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: It is alright, now you

please ask the second supplementary.

SHRI BALGOPAL MISHRA: Sir, an amount of Rs. 600 crores has been spent under this programme. So I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will make any arrangement for monitoring this fund. I would like to know about Orissa in particular because I do not know as to what is being done in other states. The entire funds allocated for this purpose to the state have been misappropriated.

[English]

Ninety-five per cent of the money has been misappropriated by the Government officers of Orissa. Some seasoned politicians, bureaucrats and many others are involved. Will the whole affair be investigated by CBI?

Secondly, instead of spending money on the so-called water harvesting structure because water harvesting structure are very old structures in our area, the money should be better utilised. We have three types there, *Bandha*, *Katta* and *Munda*. *Bandha* means a pond, *Katta* means structure and *Munda* is also a small structure which is constructed for irrigation purposes. So, in these last 10 years the structures have been renovated and this matter has been raised in the Assembly also. We have written to different forums of the Government of India, without any result. Will the Government take a decision to spend the entire amount on lift irrigation as that would be better utilised. Or, will the entire money be spent on recreation ponds and diversion ponds on the perennial and semi-perennial Nalaoas?

SHRI DEVI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, many questions have been asked particularly about Orissa, so I would like to inform that under the Seventh Five Year Plan Rs. 419 crores have been spent under DPAP till December 1989. An amount of Rs. 7.2 crores has been spent on maize and coarse grains.

SHRI BALGOPAL MISHRA: Sir, my

question is quite different from the reply being given.

SHRI DEVI LAL. I am giving reply to your question. The Government is paying full attention to the development of barren land in Orissa, which is totally dependent on rain. The seeds of the crops best suited for this land are provided to the farmers.

SHRI SATYNARAYAN JATIYA. Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to natural calamities, the farmers in Madhya Pradesh have been facing difficulties for the last three years and on this account the State Government has demanded Rs. 320 crores from the Central Government for waiving short term loans of farmers. Now the Central Government has also announced the waiver of farmer's loan as a result of which the recovery of loans have been stopped. Under these circumstances, the farmers are not in a position to sow their crops till fresh loans are granted to them. Therefore, through you, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would make a provision to grant loans to the farmers for sowing *kharif* crops from NABARD and other Central Government Financial Institutions?

SHRI BHAJAMAN BEHERA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are only two sources of irrigation in drought prone areas in Orissa—first the utilisation of rain water and second the utilisation of underground water. Therefore, I would like to know about the scheme of the Government to provide irrigation facilities there. What is the total drought prone area in Orissa and what decision the Central Government has taken for providing relief to these areas?

SHRI DEVI LAL: In Orissa, 14 blocks in Phulbani district, 11 blocks in Kalahandi district, 8 blocks in Bolangir district and 6 blocks in Sambhalpur district, which means a total of 39 blocks have been declared as drought prone areas and assistance is given to each block taking into account average rainfall and quality of land in the respective areas. Possibilities are also being explored as to how the water can be provided to them

from the catchment areas. Seeds are provided to them as per their requirement assessed on availability of water and quality of land so that they may increase their production. Therefore, the Government is providing all possible help to the farmers.

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not a question of Orissa or the question of drought alone. The farmers all over the country are suffering losses due to natural calamities like drought, flood and hailstorm. The loss suffered by the persons engaged in other vocations are compensated by the Government through insurance etc., so I would like to know whether the Government have any scheme to compensate the farmers if 50 per cent or more crops are damaged due to natural calamities?

SHRI DEVI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government is going to help such farmers but at present criterion of 50 per cent cannot be fixed but efforts are being made that the Centre and State may bear the burden at the ratio of 2:1. The Government is ready to assist the farmers as per the needs of their land.

SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD SHASTRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a scheme was formulated for the drought prone areas during the period 1971 to 1981 and some drought prone districts were included in that scheme. But there are certain districts which have not yet been included in the Drought Relief Scheme. I would like to know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government has any proposal under consideration to include those drought prone areas under DPAP which have not yet been included in it? I would like to inform that Rewa and Satna districts in Madhya Pradesh have been experiencing drought for the last six years. Similarly, 26 districts of Madhya Pradesh have been experiencing drought situation for the last five years. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government have any proposal to bring these districts under DPAP programme?

SHRI DEVI LAL: The hon. Member has

asked a good question. The drought prone areas, whether they are in Madhya Pradesh or in Rajasthan or in Orissa, are being identified by the Inquiry Committee. The Government is endeavouring to provide maximum assistance in those areas which totally depend on rain and efforts are being made to provide irrigation facilities in such areas.

[*English*]

SHRI KOTLA VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY: Sir, Rayalaseema area in Andhra Pradesh is known for drought for centuries. The statement of the Minister is vague. The relief which has been mentioned in the statement will not give any benefit to the farmers. In addition to this, for further development, he should also industrialise this area. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he is thinking of having any plan of industrialising the drought prone areas particularly Rayalseema area?

[*Translation*]

SHRI DEVI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not a question of Rayalseema area only but it is the question related to entire country. The Government has to see as to what sort of assistance should be provided to the farmers in different areas. For this purpose, the Department of Agriculture has appointed committees to make on the spot study and submit recommendations to the Government. The Government will act according to the recommendations of these committees.

Electronic Telephone Exchange at Aonla

*251. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capacity of the existing telephone exchange at Aonla in U.P. is inadequate to meet the demand of the telephone subscribers;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to set up an electronic telephone exchange

at Aonla; and

(c) if so, when; and if not, the reasons therefor?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKISHNAN): (a) No, Sir. The Exchange has a capacity of 100 lines Auto, with 89 connections working and there is no waiting list.

(b) and (c). However, it is planned to provide an electronic exchange when the demand builds up.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the reply it has been stated that there was a capacity of 100 lines in the Exchange, out of which 89 lines are working and there is no waiting list but my question is as to how many subscribers have disconnected their telephones because of the poor service and by which time the electronic telephone exchange would start functioning there? It has been stated that 'electronic exchange would be set up' whereas my question is by which time it would be completed. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many subscribers have surrendered their telephone connections because of poor service?

[*English*]

SHRI K.P. UNNIKISHNAN: I would require notice on this particular aspect as to how many have disconnected telephones because of poor service. However, I shall try to find out and lay it on the Table. I can assure the hon. Member that according to the information available, there is no waiting list and that is the criterion which we have to apply. As per the norms, at the moment, there is no justification for an electronic exchange there. But as hon. Members are aware, our plans are to have electronic exchange everywhere and we will certainly consider the suggestion given by the hon. Member.