

12.13 hrs.

**SYMPATHY FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS**

**MR. SPEAKER :** Shri Manubhai Patel,

**SHRI HEM BARUA (Mangaldai) :** Before you take up the calling attention motion, may I suggest that we should stand up and pay our homage to the persons who were killed in the earthquake ?

**DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH (Buxar) :** It was precisely with that object that I have brought in a Resolution. Such a Resolution has already been passed in the Rajya Sabha. We should see that suitable measures are taken for providing relief to the earthquake victims. Government could accept the Resolution and take necessary steps.

**MR. SPEAKER :** We have a calling attention motion on the subject. I have also received a suggestion from Dr. Ram Subhag Singh. This will come side by side. Now Shri Hem Barua suggests that we should rise and stand in silence for a short while to express our sympathy for the victims of the earthquake.

**AN HON. MEMBER :** On behalf of the House, you could convey our sympathies.

**DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH :** Shall I read out the Resolution ?

**MR. SPEAKER :** On behalf of the House and also as suggested by Dr. Ram Subhag Singh and Shri Hem Barua, we express our sympathy and deep sorrow at the toll taken by the earthquake. On behalf of the House, I convey our sympathy to the victims.

12.15 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**EARTHQUAKE IN GUJARAT NEAR ANKLESHWAR OILFIELDS**

**SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL (Dabhol) :** I call the attention of the Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals and Mines and Metals to the following matter of urgent

public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

The severe shocks of earthquake in Gujarat near the Ankleshwar Oilfields resulting in heavy death toll and damage to houses.

**SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) :** There should be some kind of logic as to who answers the calling attention notice. I have no objection to my hon. friend Shri D.R. Chavan answering, but this is a national calamity. Just because there are some oilwells in the vicinity, should we ask the Minister for Petroleum to answer ? Either the Prime Minister or the Home Minister should have been here to answer the calling attention.

**SHRI N.K. SANGHI (Jodhpur) :** I had submitted a calling attention notice to be answered by the Home Minister, and I am really surprised to find that it is being answered by the Minister for Petroleum. This is a very serious matter. Wherever earthquakes have taken place.....

**MR. SPEAKER :** It is based on the Member's own motion. It is directed to the Minister concerned who is going to attend to it, in this case the Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals. As a matter of fact, there was some doubt about the Ministry concerned, and it was also suggested that though it concerns the State, the whole country is concerned with it.

**श्री मधु लिमये (मुंबेर) :** हिन्दुस्तान के एक हिस्से पर इतना गम्भीर संकट आया है, न प्रधान मंत्री का पता है, न गृह मंत्री का पता है और न एल्कावेटिकल नं० 2 का पता है ।

**SHRI S. KUNDU (Balasore) :** The office has to direct it to the proper Minister.

**SHRI N.K. SANGHI :** I addressed it to the Home Minister.

**MR. SPEAKER :** You have expressed your views. It is enough.



[Shri Manubhai Patel]

that in this particular area — Ahkleshwar oil field, Breach, Baroda, Surat, extending upto Bhavanagar — where there are oil fields, it is only after the oil field explorations started that these things had happened. Is there any truth in their believe? They feel that it started only after the shallow water drilling was inaugurated by the Prime Minister recently because of seismic operations and drilling activities. Here, in his statement, the Minister says that a detailed study of the earthquake will be carried out by the Meteorological Department and after the receipt of this report a detailed study will be made, but the question is whether they are competent to go into the causes of such earthquakes. Instead of dealing with this in a routine way, may I know whether Government will invite experts from all over the world as they did in the case of the Koyna earthquake when they deputed a UNO team which went into the details of that incident? They say that the Geological Survey officers at Ahmedabad have been asked to proceed. The question is whether they are competent to go into this matter. I want to know whether a high power team will be deputed to go into this matter. That is one thing.

Another thing is, in such a vast calamity by which a wide range of areas has been deeply affected, it is not only the State Government which would be competent to cope with relief and rehabilitation work. It is practically the Central Government's responsibility. So, may I know whether the Central Government will come out with an out-of-pattern help, not only the routine pattern help but out-of-pattern help, because it is not merely a question of 1,500 houses having cracked, it is about 30,000 people who are on the streets now. They do not sleep in their houses because the houses are cracked and there is constant fear that there might be another calamity, and that is why they are not in their houses now. I want to know whether, for these 30,000 people, the Central Government will come out with special assistance.

Thirdly, in giving such assistance, the Government should not have any political consideration. I think the State Government is not competent to reply to that, because, after all, it is a policy question,

especially in view of the fact that the Prime Minister is reported to have said, as has appeared in the *Hindustan Times* this morning that the "Union Government is awaiting details of the damaged caused by the earthquake in Broach." Prime Minister, Indira Gahdhi, "is said to have asked some of her party members in Gujarat to make an on-the-spot study of the affected areas and send a report." Is this a party matter, and will the report of the party members be considered as valid? Have they no independent agency? Do they not depend on the authentic report of the State Government? Only because certain State Governments do not toe her line, is this the attitude?

So, my specific question is whether any political consideration will not be allowed to be brought in by the Prime Minister or the Ministers concerned, while giving adequate help and whether a high-power team would be sent to go in this matter.

SHRI D.R. CHAVAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Member has raised two or three points in the questions which he has formulated, framed and put. First, he pointed out that there has been indifference by the Central Government. This is not correct. As a matter of fact, when the Prime Minister got the news, of this earthquake—

AN HON. MEMBER : She was shaken.

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN ...she immediately sent a message of condolence and immediately sent a sum of Rs. 51,000 (*Inter-ruption*) from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The reports are that a team of engineers is going round and making an estimate of the damage that has been done. This is a team which has been sent by the State Government of Gujarat. After the team goes round and makes an assessment, they will submit their report to the State Government. The State Government naturally will make a request to the Central Government for giving them some assistance for the earthquake-affected areas.

My hon. friend said that political considerations should not be allowed to come in. I can assure him that no politi-

cal consideration would be allowed to play particularly when human lives are affected. (*Interruption*).

**SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL :** Was that assurance given by the Prime Minister also ?

**SHRI D. R. CHAVAN :** No political consideration will be allowed. There is no political consideration. I can assure the Hon. Member that whatever assistance is necessary to the affected people will be forthcoming readily from the Central Government. Thirdly, he has tried to connect this earthquake with the offshore drilling in the shallow waters in Aliabet and the drilling so far undertaken in Ankleshwar where 200 to 300 wells have been drilled, I do not think there is any connection between drilling for oil and the earthquake. In my statement, I have said :

"The town of Broach is situated where the West Coast fault meets the Narmada Rift. Along the course of river Narmada, a number of earthquakes have been recorded in the past, on 27th March 1847."

I am sure hon. members will agree that no drilling was undertaken anywhere in India at that time. On 18th November 1865, there was another earthquake. Again on 2nd January, 1927 there was another earthquake there.

**SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL :** He has said in this case the epicentre was near Ankleshwar. All these past earthquakes he is referring to were not in Ankleshwar ; that was a different range.

**SHRI D. R. CHAVAN :** As I said, earthquakes have been there previously also when no drilling was there. To connect drilling with earthquakes is something fantastic, which I cannot understand. However, studies are being made both by the Meteorological Department and by the officers of the Geological Survey of India who have gone to the spot to investigate into this particular earthquake and its causes. Till their reports are available, nothing could be said.

**SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL :** I did not mention only drilling. I said the whole area—Ankleshwar, Baroda, Broach, Bhavnagar, etc. is affected and I asked whether a special commission will be appointed to make a special study there.

**SHRI D. R. CHAVAN :** Let us await the reports from the Meteorological Department and the Geological Survey of India. After studying those reports, if it is considered necessary for the Government to appoint a high-powered committee as suggested, certainly that will be considered.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU** (Diamond Harbour) : I join my friend, Mr. Patel, in demanding that the Government should tackle the matter on a war footing and rush relief and money to the people there. I feel that shrinking of the inner molten mass causes movement of the solidified surface crust. They slip at weak points known as faults and earthquake is caused.

**SHRI NATH PAI** (Rajapur) : This is *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU :** In Gujarat, an annual quantity of oil has been found at unusually shallow level. In other areas on the globe, it is at much deeper level. It may be a spill-over of a bigger deposit. May I know whether the Minister will tell us whether that his experts have gone into the matter the earthquake is due to intensive oil-drilling in that area ?

**SHRI D. R. CHAVAN :** As I said, in the last para of my statement, officers of the Geological Survey of India at Ahmedabad have been asked to proceed to Broach immediately and send a detailed report.

**MR. SPEAKER :** This last para comes to your help to answer all the questions :

**SHRI D. R. CHAVAN :** Until that report is available, I cannot say anything.

**SHRI LOBO PRABHU** (Udipi) : It is a matter of some importance as to who is the Minister in charge of earthquakes, of course leave God alone,

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : The Minister in charge of Tourism and Civil Aviation is in charge of earthquakes because he is in charge of the Meteorological Department.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : The Minister has just now stated that this is the concern of the Meteorological Department. I would like to point out that earthquakes do not occur in the air. The Meteorological Department is concerned with climatic conditions and forecasting of weather and the earthquakes are not occurring in the air. The question is important because now we have got to proceed to make an enquiry on how the earthquake occurs. This is not a casual earthquake. As the Minister has repeated, this area has a history of earthquakes. Therefore, first of all, let us make up our minds about which Ministry or which Department is in charge of this subject.

I may preface my further remarks by a little confession. I have some experience of earthquakes. I was Collector of Gorakhpur in 1935 when an earthquake occurred there. Though my friends still seem to be amused, I would like to say that an earthquake is a very serious matter.

SHRI HEM BARUA (Mangaldai) : What a profound truth !

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH (Rohtak) : Discovery.

MR. SPEAKER : Let us be serious when we are discussing a serious matter.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : I know the results of the earthquake on those who suffer and those who escape death. We have to consider this question seriously and sympathetically. Although the Gujarat Government is supposed to have done its best, although the Prime Minister has given funds from her fund for the rehabilitation of people, will the government give an assurance here and now that those whose houses have been destroyed and damaged will be compensated, because this is the kind of insurance which is due from government because no other agency could do it? It is a very important point. Secondly,

since earthquakes have occurred in this region in the past and are likely to occur in future...

SHRI NAMBIAR (Tiruchirappalli) : God forbid.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH (Pali) : Shri Nambiar invoking God? Does he believe in God?

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : In Japan in those areas which are subject to frequent earthquakes they have a special type of housing. I do hope that this will be an occasion for us to study the adoption of houses suitable to an area which is subject to constant earthquakes.

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN : About the assistance that has to be given, I have already said that the necessary assistance for the rehabilitation of those people who have been affected by the earthquake will be given.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA (Delhi-Sadar) : What is "necessary assistance"?

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN : What is demanded by the State Government.

Necessary assistance for the rehabilitation of the families which have been affected by the earthquakes would be forthcoming. I have said that more than once.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : Are you prepared to compensate those who have lost their houses? Are you prepared to give gratuity to the dependents of those who have lost their lives?

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN : The question of compensation does not arise. About the rehabilitation of those persons, I have made the position clear.

SHRI SHEO NARAIN (Basti) : Why not give some help out of the Rs. 175 crores that the Prime Minister has got?

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN : Necessary assistance for rehabilitating the persons who have been affected by the earthquake will

be forthcoming. As the hon. Speaker has just now announced, the Prime Minister is going to make a statement in the afternoon. Why not wait till she makes a statement? I hope, my hon. friend will get all the information then.

SHRI NATH PAI : We were all interested in the last part of Shri Lobo Prabhu's question. Shri Lobo Prabhu claimed to have some experience of earthquakes. The hon. Minister also has experience because he comes from the Koyna area. Shri Lobo Prabhu's last question was most important. He asked whether the Government would give consideration to his proposal to have houses suitable for areas which are liable to earthquakes as is done in Japan. Geologists say that the whole Western Coast is sinking and is liable to earthquakes of greater intensity. Will he give a reply to that?

SHRI D. R. CHAVAN : It is a suggestion which will be conveyed to the State Government.

SHRI SHEO NARAIN : What does he mean that it will be conveyed to the State Government? It is their responsibility.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : Sir, we in Rajasthan have seen human calamity and suffering due to famine conditions prevailing and people dying of scarcity conditions. We can understand the suffering of the people of Gujarat on account of the calamity that has fallen on the people of Gujarat. All our hearts go to those affected by the ghastly tragedy that has happened in that area. But before I come to the point I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it has come to his notice that none of the Cabinet Ministers of Gujarat State paid a visit to the affected area on the 23rd...*(Interruption)*

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Shame, shame.

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL : They could not do so due to the toppling activities of this Government. At this juncture this Government is engaged in toppling the Gujarat Government. If anybody is responsible, it is the Central Government that is responsible...*(Interruption)*

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : We should have this information so that we could be wise about it. The eyes and ears of the people today are very much agitated on account of the fact that senior responsible people have not paid a visit to the area when such calamity has fallen on them...*(Interruption)*

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मामूम नहीं उधर के लोगों को क्या हो गया है जो एक के बाद एक इस तरह से डिस्टर्ब करते हैं। मैं इस स्थिति से बहुत तंग हो गया हूँ और समझ में नहीं आता कि मैं क्या करूँ।

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL : He wrongly alleged that not a single Cabinet Minister visited the area and I had to give reasons why not a single Cabinet Minister could visit the area. But the Governor has gone there and the minister-in-charge has gone there.

DR. KARNI SINGH (Bikaner) : Why should he inject politics into a thing where human beings' suffering is concerned?

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : There is no question of politics. But whenever such tragedy takes place senior ministers of Government should visit the area and participate in people's sufferings...*(Interruption)*. It is not money or expenditure that can fill up the hearts of the people; it is consolation and a feeling of participation in their suffering that matters. It is such matters which can make the people feel of their sincerity...*(Interruption)*

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : Why had the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Shri Sukhadia, not gone to Ganganagar when there was firing there?

DR. KARNI SINGH : Why did Shri Sukhadia not go to Ganganagar?

SHRI N. K. SANGHI : I want the hon. Minister to inform us whether the Central Government would give any *ad hoc* grant from the provision of Rs. 175 crores made in the Budget

Secondly, we had an earthquake in Bihar in 1933, in North-east Assam in 1950,

[Shri N. K. Sanghi]

in Anjar in 1956 and in Koyna in 1967. We have seen that the phenomenon of these earthquake tremors are now accounting to this country with a shorter span, greater intensity and much earlier. Will they collect statistical data and examine all the facts to find out whether our country has become more liable to earthquake tremors? Can any scientific study be made in this matter so as to prevent this physical phenomenon and alleviate the sufferings of the people?

SHRI D.R. CHAVAN : As regards the second part of the question, as I said, we will have to await the report of the officers of the Geological Survey of India. Then, as to whether any assistance will be given, I would request the hon. Member to wait till the Prime Minister makes the statement in the afternoon today.

12.46 hrs.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

NOTIFICATIONS UNDER CUSTOMS ACT, 1962, ETC.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P.C. SETHI) : I beg to lay on the Table:—

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962:—
  - (i) G.S.R. 413 published in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970 together with an explanatory memorandum.
  - (ii) G.S.R. 414 published in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970 together with an explanatory memorandum. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-2975/70*]
- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962 and section 38 of the Central Excises and Salt

Act, 1944:—

- (i) The Customs and Central Excise Duties Export Draw back (General) Ninth Amendment Rules, 1970, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 416 in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970.
- (ii) The Customs and Central Excise Duties Export Draw-back (General) Eleventh Amendment Rules, 1970, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 417 in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970.
- (iii) The Customs and Central Excise Duties Export Draw-back (General) Tenth Amendment Rules, 1970, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 418 in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970.
- (iv) The Customs and Central Excise Duties Export Draw-back (General) Eighth Amendment Rules, 1970, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 419 in Gazette of India dated the 7th March, 1970. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-2976-70*]
- (3) A copy each of Notification Nos. G.S.R. 337 to 387 (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 1st March, 1970 issued under the Central Excise Rules 1944 together with an explanatory memorandum. [*Placed in Library. see No. LT 2977-70*].

12.47 hrs.

#### MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

SECRETARY : Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary of Rajya Sabha:—

"I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Supreme Court (Enlargement of Criminal Appellate Jurisdiction), Bill 1969, which was