

**COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS****FIFTY-SIXTH REPORT**

**Sardar Hukam Singh (Kapurthala-Bhatinda):** I beg to present the Fifty-sixth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE****EARTHQUAKE IN KUTCH**

**Shri Raghunath Singh (Banaras Distt.—Central):** Under rule 216, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon.

"Recent earthquake in Kutch".

**The Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Datar):** With your permission, Sir, I shall make a statement.

The House must have heard with deep distress the news of the earthquake which rocked parts of the State of Kutch on the night of the 21st July and in the morning of the 22nd. The shocks were of considerable intensity and the loss caused to life and property has been heavy. The tremors were most severe in the central part of the State between Bhuj and Bachau where the town of Anjar is situated. This town and the surrounding 22 villages including Dudhai, Ratnal, Dhamadka, Jaikadi, Galpadar, Dhaneti, Chirai and Bachau, have consequently suffered most. The town of Bhuj, the western Taluqas and the eastern and southern areas of Kutch seem to have fallen outside of the wave and have thus escaped damage. It is not possible to give final figures about the casualties and the extent of damage to property as the debris is still being cleared. According to the reports received from the Chief Commissioner till late last night, there have been 111 deaths, out

of which 102 were at Anjar alone. The number of injured exceeds 300, including 93 seriously. Nearly 1300 houses have been so badly damaged as to be uninhabitable. Of these 800 are at Anjar. About 2,000 houses have been slightly damaged and require repairs. Immediately on receipt of the information on the night of the 21st, the Chief Commissioner rushed to Anjar which was worst affected, accompanied by senior officials, and organised relief measures. The work of removal of debris and of recovery of persons trapped underneath, was taken in hand by the State Police assisted by a unit of the army, in which they have since been continuously engaged. For people who have been rendered homeless and destitute, a common kitchen has been established in the town, and temporary shelter has been provided in tents and other available buildings. For the injured persons, steps have been taken to provide medical relief. Medical parties have also been organised and despatched to the affected areas in the interior. As soon as the tragic news about this calamity reached here on the 22nd July, a sum of Rs. 25,000 was placed at the disposal of the Chief Commissioner for immediate relief. A further sum of Rs. 50,000 has been allocated from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

The work of distributing housing loans has already been taken in hand. Persons living in the town of Anjar will receive up to Rs. 2,000 while those living in the rural areas Rs. 1,500 per family, of which 25 per cent will be available as subsidy. Temporary tenements made of corrugated iron sheets are being constructed at Anjar for about 125 families. 70 tons of iron sheets have been offered by the Government of Saurashtra for this purpose. Assistance is also being given to small traders to enable them to rehabilitate themselves. Rs. 200 will be advanced as loan and Rs. 100 as grant for this purpose. To mitigate the suffering of people who have been rendered homeless, up to Rs. 30