

Mr. Speaker: Let him say that all these points are useless, I have no objection.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: They are very useful, but not of so much use to us

Mr. Speaker: Very well Let us proceed.

12.48 hrs.

#### STATEMENT RE BREACH IN DVC CANAL

The Minister of Irrigation and Power (Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim): Shri Muhammed Elias moved an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha on the 11th August, 1959, about the serious situation caused in the Districts of Howrah and Hooghly (West Bengal) due to the heavy floods occasioned by the Navigation Canal of the DVC overflowing and destroying thousands of bighas of paddy cultivation and forcing the people of the locality to abandon their homes and livestock. On an enquiry by the Speaker about the availability of information on the subject, I promised to make a statement in the House after collecting the required information. The facts have now been ascertained.

**Breach in the Navigation Canal.**—On the evening of the 4th August, 1959, water level in the Navigation Canal at the regulators at Bomchee and Hoyra in the District of Hooghly rose above the full supply level of the canal and breached the left embankment of the left bank main canal near chainage 4006. As a result of this breach, an area of 3 to 4 sq miles in the district of Hooghly was flooded with hardly any residual damage. Some residents of the

neighbourhood vacated their homes on the 4th August but returned on the following day when the water level receded. The DVC have reported that having regard to the heavy precipitation which occurred in the first week of August, they reduced the discharge of water in the Canal very much below the quantity indented for. Despite this precaution water level in the Canal rose above the full supply level at Bomchee and Hoyra owing to the unprecedented rains between the 3rd and the 5th August, 1959—a rainfall of 5.64 inches was recorded on 3rd August, 1959 alone in the Burdwan area. The regulator gates at Bomchee and Hoyra were opened to their maximum extent but owing to the great pressure one gate at each of these regulators slipped from its position, thereby restricting the flow of water down-stream. This resulted in the breach. The breach was caused primarily by exceptional concentrated rainfall and cannot be ascribed to an act of omission or commission on the part of the DVC. The flooding occurred only in the district of Hooghly.

**Breach in the Cut from the Kunti to the Hooghly.**—Another flood was caused in the Hooghly District during the 1st week of August, 1959, due to breaches in the Cut from the Kunti to the Hooghly. There are two regulators on this Cut—the head regulator is at Bagdanga and the tail regulator at Baidyabati. Owing to heavy rains in the latter part of July and in the first few days of August the head regulator gates were overtopped on the night of 4th August, 1959. One pair of gates was displaced under heavy pressure of water. The overtopping rapidly filled the cut down-stream of the head regulator and also began to overtop the embankments. On the morning of the 5th August, the District Magistrate, Hooghly, visited the area and under his direction, the tail regulator gates were opened in order to let out the water accumulated in the Cut. The

[Hafiz Mohammed Ibrahim]

outflow was not, however, sufficient on account of the high level of the water in Hooghly itself.

On the afternoon of the 5th August, 1959, a group of about 125 local villagers assembled at the head regulator at Bagdanga, overawed the gate Khalasi and forcibly opened the remaining gates as a result of which the volume of water that had been held back on the upstream side of the regulator rushed down the Cut and breached the embankments on both the sides. On the Southern side of the Cut, there is the Dankuni drainage basin which had already received its share of the heavy rainfall and being a depression, could not drain out quickly in the weather conditions then prevailing.

Attempts to close the breach were made immediately and the local people gave whole-hearted cooperation in this task. Closure was effected on the 9th August.

According to the estimate of the West Bengal Government, the maximum extent of flooding was 12 sq. miles which came down to 6 sq. miles on the 10th August. The final residual damage is estimated to be about 3 sq. miles including areas in the nearby Dankuni drainage basin which drains independently into the Hooghly. No loss of life or houses has been reported.

**Shri Muhammed Elias (Howrah):** The residents of the area who have lost their paddy fields have made representations for help and loans. May I know whether Government is giving any help and loans for re-cultivation of their paddy?

**The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi):** It is for the West Bengal Government to look into that.

**Shri Muhammed Elias:** They have also sent it to the D.V.C.

**Shri Hathi:** But that should be considered by the West Bengal Government.

**Shri Prabhat Kar (Hooghly):** Even now, as late as today, after one month, the water is still on the field, and up till now no steps have been taken. May I know whether any efforts have been made by the D.V.C. to clear the fields of the water, because even after one month, in hundreds and thousands of acres the water is still in the fields?

**Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim:** As far as the information received by us is concerned, there is no such mention anywhere that still water is collected in any area which was flooded as mentioned in the statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Very well. If that is so, steps will be taken either by the D.V.C. or by the local Government.

**12.45 hrs.**

#### KERALA APPROPRIATION BILL

**The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha):** Sir, on behalf of Shri Morarji Desai I beg to move:\*

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Kerala for the services of the financial year 1959-60 be taken into consideration."

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Kerala for the services of the financial year 1959-60 be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

\*Moved with the recommendation

of the President.