

this month an engineer opened the sluice gates when the water level suddenly rose and consequently the bridge was washed away. Shri Virendra Singh paid a visit to that area on the 7th of this month. I would like to give the names of villages which are affected. Means of transportation have collapsed. The Engineer committed a blunder by opening the sluice gates. The capacity of the reservoir is 880. According to rules, some sluice gates should have been opened in the month of August. Had it been done the bridge would not have collapsed, and damage worth crores of rupees could have been avoided. The Engineer was careless and opened twelve sluice gates and as a result the bridge collapsed and several villages were destroyed. Some of the villages are - Bhairva, Khadia, Shaktinagar, Mishra Rehata, Vispur Purankhas, Jogichaurea, Dibulganj, Veena, Khadeeya, Kakri, Dudichua and Chilka Tad. Many other people along with me paid a visit to these affected villages and saw the ruined houses. They were once uprooted when the dam was to be constructed and now once again they have got uprooted. They have not so far got the compensation from the Project authorities. The Chilka Tad village has been destroyed for the fourth time. I would like to demand, through you, that the Harijan and Adivasi whose houses have been washed away should be provided more ration and fuel. Besides, the project authorities should be asked to provide them houses, education to their children, drinking water facility and electricity. Because of the collapse of the bridge of Rihand dam the entire population of Anpara, Shaktinagar, Vindhya Thermal power etc. and Bedan area of Madhya Pradesh are in dire need of foodgrains and fuel. Sir, I would request the hon. Minister of Railways to start a special train to Mirzapur and Varanasi so that foodgrains and other items could reach the needy urgently. The Central Government should take up the construction work of the destroyed bridge on a war footing. The people of this area have got a meagre compensation whereas those living in the area falling under Madhya Pradesh got a good amount.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta's name will go on record.

**SHRI BHUBANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA (Hazaribagh):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government, through you, to the lack of irrigation facilities in Bihar. Not even a single inch of land is irrigated through the dams which have been constructed either by D.V.C., Central Government or the Bihar Government in Chhotanagpur or Santhal Parganas district. So far only 3 percent of the total land in the State has got irrigation facility. Not even single person belonging to those families whose land has been submerged has got employment. Hundreds of villages have been submerged but nobody has got employment in lieu thereof. Siwane Reservoir Scheme, Devkali Reservoir Scheme, Donmashya Scheme and Tillaya Upper Canal Project in Hazaribagh district are pending with the Central Water Commission. There are pending unnecessarily and the commission is not approving them. Sir, I want to submit to the Government that Chhotanagpur, Santhal Pargana and Jharkhand are in Bihar are predominantly Adivasi areas and these have been neglected for quite sometime particularly in respect of irrigation I demand that a Master Plan be formulated to provide irrigation facilities to these areas and they should not be neglected anymore.

**SHRI SARAT CHANDRA PATANAYAK (Bolangir):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw your attention to the bridge connecting Bolangir and Kalahandi districts which is being constructed for the last 22 years but has not been completed so far. I feel there might not be any bridge in India or even throughout the world which might have taken 22 years and yet was incompleting. I do not know who is responsible for it - the engineers or the State Government but we have to face the consequences.

Secondly, there is an Ordnance factory in Bolangir where thousands of workers from Kalahandi district come and work. They earn their bread after lot of hard work

but at the same time they have to face lot of hardships also because they cannot return back to their homes in the absence of this bridge. That is why hundreds of people from Bolangir and Kalahandi districts are forced to go to Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in search of livelihood. They are forced to leave their home and hearth, their mother, sister, brother and children behind them. Therefore, I would like to submit to the Government through you, that the said bridge should be constructed at the earliest to ameliorate the sufferings of the people of these areas.

[English]

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE (Jhalawar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have seen from the newspaper that yesterday the Minister for Environment in a statement in Rajya Sabha said that 1,52,000 hectares of forest land was converted over a period of ten years from 1980 to 1990 and in one year, that is, 1989-90, 1,32,000 hectares of forest land was converted. I bring it to the notice of the House today because the Environment Ministry in particular has been a major block in the development of Rajasthan, particularly in the power sector. The Chief Minister of Rajasthan and the Members from Rajasthan, who are all present here, have brought this to the notice of the House and to the notice of the Prime Minister. If 1,32,000 hectares of land was converted in a year, I would like to ask the Minister why it was converted, how it was converted? And when a coal based thermal power station has been suggested for a particular area or gas based power stations have been suggested for certain areas for the development of the power sector in Rajasthan, why is it that the Environment Ministry time and again brings up excuses to block projects on grounds of environment?

I am sure that all Members of the House who belong to Rajasthan and who are sitting over here today, will join me in my appeal to the Prime Minister, who is present here today, that Rajasthan is suffering from acute power shortage and the Ministry of Environ-

ment cannot condone the blockage of projects, as it has been to do over the last ten years on grounds of disturbance of environment, and it should stand by the developmental projects not only in Rajasthan but also in other States. I would request the Prime Minister to give an assurance to us in the House that of the development of power sector in Rajasthan, he will do his very best to help us.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, an appeal was made by my capable friend, who comes from my neighboring constituency in Rajasthan, that all the Members of Parliament from Rajasthan should join her. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support her... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Your cause is just. All Members from all the States will join you.

[Translation]

SHRI BUTA SINGH (Jalore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you will be glad to know that today morning a group of S.C., S.T. Members of Parliament marched from the statue of Baba Saheb Ambedkar to Rashtrapati Bhawan and submitted a memorandum to the President in which attention has been drawn towards increasing atrocities on the Harijans. In the memorandum, we mentioned atrocities concerning distribution of land, usurpation of land, exploitation by the moneylenders in the name of debt, problem related to minimum wages and bonded labourers, atrocities regarding prevention of their entry in the temple due to untouchability, atrocities connected with not permitting S.Cs and S.Ts to draw water from wells or the police atrocities. About all these issues we submitted a detailed memorandum to the President and then we came back. After coming back I met the Prime Minister and I am very happy to know that the Prime Minister agreed to discuss these issues with us. He has given assurance that the orders and directions in this regard would be issued by the Government.