

purposes before this House. A comprehensive debate has been conducted on this Bill with a limited objectives. If a comprehensive debate was to be held, it should have been on judicial system and judicial reforms or how to make the system cheaper for the poor. It should not be so that a Bill is used as a front to ventilate your personal views and to reprimand the judges and judiciary. Judiciary is performing its duty and we should perform our duty.

As regards to the amendment given by Shri George, I request the hon. Minister not to be in a hurry. Debate is going on. Perhaps it will not complete uptill the six O'clock which is the time fixed for it. This depends on discretion of the House and the Deputy Speaker. Who can take a decision on it. It is not necessary for us to trend on the beaten track and follow the bureaucracy. If you find it correct this amendment should be accepted it should be linked with the cost of living index and there is no need to bring it again and again in this House. One minute time of the House involved an expenditure of Rs. 50 thousand which may have become 70 thousand now as prices of every thing are going high.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Nitishji alright, please conclude now

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : In such a situation I will request you to admit this amendment and this amended. Bill should be passed here I support the limited objectives of this Bill. I thank you for allowing me to speak.

18.03 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Flood situation and Natural Calamities in Different parts of the Country

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, the House will take up further discussion under rule 193.

SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL (Ernakulam) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for inviting me to speak a few words about floods and natural calamities.

Many Members have expressed their serious concern about floods and natural calamities. This is a subject which attracted the attention of the entire House. Therefore, the Speaker, sensing the frustration and disappointment of the Members of Parliament, allowed this discussion.

The discussion has highlighted many salient features of the lacunae in relief works at site. 'Death keeps no calendar', so goes the saying. Every year, we are visited by this disaster. May I ask you, have we planned anything substantial in the form of preventive measures?

This is one spect which was not highlighted in the discussion. Therefore, I am bringing it to the notice of the House. What are the concrete measures that have been taken by the Government of India to cope with this crisis created by the natural calamities? This is a subject within the purview of the State Governments and which comes within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. However, the Central Government has a duty when any part of the country is affected by natural calamities. Today, there is no part in the country which is not prone to the natural calamities. There were references to flood, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides etc., etc. This is an inter-Ministrial responsibility. I am sorry to say that there is no proper coordination between different Ministries in coping with this crisis. I am citing one example. You may remember the Latur earthquake. How many had died there? Who were the people who came to their rescue? Who were the people who participated in the relief work?

Sir, the *Malayala Manorama*, a leading newspaper have built an entire village there. *(Interruptions)* Voluntary agencies have come forward. Why have the State Government not come forward? Why do the State Governments and the Central Government not have a coordinated, effective, correlated relief measures? *(Interruptions)* Therefore my first submission is that there should be proper coordinated interacting agencies for (a) the relief work, and (b) for preventive work. My hon. friend is waiting to speak on preventive measures. Various seminars and discussions were held. In 1970 a meeting of the Ministerial Committee of various State was held. The meeting was held in Delhi. There, they formulated a six-point programme to cope with the relief work of the flood affected areas. Are we short of reports? Are we short of seminars? Are we short of experts in this field? No, but unfortunately no willingness is shown either by the Central Government or the State Governments to cope with this crisis.

There is another aspect which is not highlighted here. What about the flood situation in the cities in the urban areas? Have we thought about that problem? What has happened in Mumbai? What has happened in Calcutta? All major cities are flood-prone. Now, the Central Government may say that it is the responsibility of the State Governments or the local bodies. But that is not the answer.

When a calamity occurs, it does not discriminate against the locality or area. We have a human responsibility to see that the calamity is met with proper effective measures. Funds are allocated according to the recommendations of the Finance Commissions. The Ninth Finance Commission has allocated Rs. 4,020 crore. It has now been enhanced to Rs. 6,304 crore. Is that enough? The figures were given to the House. Thousands of crores of rupees worth material, cattle, fodder, property and buildings were destroyed. Do we have an insurance policy of this? Why cannot we evolve a proper effective national insurance policy? This is one submission I have to make.

There is a Flood Control Board. Quite often, we wonder as to what its role is and when does it come for giving relief. It is after the flood has hit and it is after the relief work given by the voluntary agencies. So, it is to be monitored properly to make it effective. There is another committee called the National Relief Committee. There again, my grievance is that the relief is given after the flood or calamity has occurred.

Hon. Minister was replying to a question yesterday about science and technology. We are proud of their achievements. We asked: Have we transmitted the knowledge or information which we have received from the satellite monitoring system; and if the State Governments do not have the funds to meet the challenges and the crises, are we in a position to help them? The answer was given very vaguely.

This is the whole problem; we do not have answers to the questions; and we do not have solutions to the problems. We are good at talking, giving explanations, attending seminars and conferences and in giving reports. It is high time that we came to the reality. Please evolve some action plan, implement it, give them sufficient information and boost up the preventive measures. There, we have failed and therefore, Latur has suffered, Bengal is suffering and Punjab is suffering, every part of this country is prone to it and has to suffer from these calamities. We are talking about high progress. But what about the minimum programme of preventing the natural calamities?

Another point which I would like to bring to the notice of the House is this. Who are the people who are affected the most? It is the poor people. The rich people can afford it or they can go away from that area also. When the poor people suffer, they suffering silently? For how many years have they been suffering silently? Do we have a conscience to meet their daily misery and loss of property?

Therefore, my submission firstly would be to have a zonal system whereby these calamities especially earthquakes, floods, landslides, etc., are met properly by having preventive measures. Secondly, I would request you to have a national insurance policy wherein the poor people can meet some of their loss in monetary terms. Thirdly, a proper and effective communication system should be provided. Many villages do not have telephone connection even now. In that case, how can they communicate the information? So, we should have a proper communication system in order to transmit instantaneously, without any delay.

They were talking about the fishermen in the coastal areas who even at bad times go to the seas. They do not have enough information. These are the areas which should be looked after. ... (Interruptions) I am grateful that you are reminding me. Thank you very much.

I hope that these measures will be taken care of by an inter-ministerial coordinated apex body to monitor relief work, preventive measures and also about

information transmitting centres. If we take care of these things, at least we will be one step forward towards a flood-free and calamity free nation.

[Translation]

SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI (Bijnor) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the resumed debate which is going on since yesterday, all the Members have expressed their concern over the flood situation but so far no Government have given any assurance that upto when we will be able to solve this problem. It causes huge loss of life and property. Here money is considered as property but in floods loss of property is assessed by livestock. The third loss is that soil get damaged by it and it is a great loss to the Government or the country because population is increasing and soil is eroded by floods and this loss cannot be compensated in any way. A big area of land is eroded by floods every year. You can assess this loss by surveying some areas. Hon. Minister is present here. He might be knowing about the area of land damaged by floods in Bihar. He might be having those figures with him. I do not have those figures with me. ... (Interruptions) I admit that a number of canals and tributaries were dug in Western Uttar Pradesh and a big area of land was required for it, but these are of no use because so far no water has been released for last five years. Earlier it was said that there tributaries will have water by 1994, then 1995 was fixed for it and again 1996 was fixed for it but so far water has not been released for any tributary. The Government has spent a huge amount on these. The flood in Ganga can be curtailed if a little water is released in canals and these tributaries. My place is situated on the bank of river Ganga. All these districts are situated on the bank of Ganga. My district is surrounded by three or four rivers i.e. Ganga, Ramganga and others which cause flood in this district and whole area is submerged in water.

I have seen several such incidents. Once during floods, we were distributing food to the affected persons. We saw that a buffalo, its owner holding chain tied to the buffalo with child in her lap were floating in the flood water. I asked some persons who knew swimming to rescue them but when they were brought out we found that they all were dead. Another child of this women, who saw her mother swept in flood water climbed on the roof of his house. The child was immediately saved by using a boat. But on reaching the place the rescuers found that there was also a snake near the child and he was trembling with fear.

Sir, I request the Government to prepare a concrete programme to check the fury of flood if the Government is at all concerned about it. In my area canals were dug, tubewells which are lying wasted, were bored and land of farmers has been eroded. This land cannot be brought back but not a single drop of water was released in Western Ganga canal and its tributaries, which starts from Haridwar. Had some water been

released in those canals then I feel that the excess of water in Ganga causing flood would get subsided and it could not have been so devastating. But, it is not being done. At Haridwar Ganga is not very large but, the current of water spreads when it comes into the forest and land is eroded by it. I have been elected from Balawali city and there are about 50 villages on the bank of Ganga which have been displaced and re-settled for almost fifty times. Their land gets submerged in the river Ganga. Every year during this season and this session I raise this issue but, the Government pay no heed to it. If a survey is conducted on it, you will find that river Ganga is constantly changing its Course and some day it could wash away not only Bijnor or Moradabad but several other districts if effective steps have not been taken to check the flood problem. Bijnor, Moradabad and Sambhal these all will wash away because this flood water is eroding land of a mound which is moving towards the plain. There will be no other means to stop Ganga if this mound of sand is washed away.

Therefore, I appeal to you that the land in my area and other places which is being eroded due to floods should be saved. It is necessary to save this land in interest of farmers because during floods their crops get submerged and destroyed and the farmers grow sugarcane, paddy or groundnut in this season. The farmers watch this devastation and cannot do anything to save their crops.

He watches the devastation of his house and village as a mute spectator and finds himself unable to do anything. The Scene, when he moves in a cart with his family after everything having been lost, is really moving. Mr. Minister, you will not be able to have a glimpse of that scene. But if you do, may be that this problem is permanently solved and the country is saved from the devastating flood.

Therefore, I appeal to you that if you are unable to do anything, atleast save his land so that his village can be saved from submerging and then there will be no loss of life and property. Therefore, please chalk out a concrete programme to stop the devastation of flood so that recurrence of flood can be prevented otherwise, this problem will take an alarming shape in future. With these words, I thank you for providing me time to speak.

SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL (Jalore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to submit that no rescue work has been undertaken since 1990 till date to save my Parliamentary Constituency in Rajasthan from floods. Thousands of acres of land in western Rajasthan, my Parliamentary Constituency, Jalore and Sirohi districts becomes useless due to soil erosion done by rivers flowing from Aravali hills. As a result, the tillers are rendered jobless. So, problem of earning their bread and butter arises every time before the farmers besides other problems. Almost all the roads

of the area washed away. Therefore, through you, I request the Government of India to issue instructions to State Government for constructing embankments in my Parliamentary Constituency to check the soil erosion and carry out repair works on the damaged roads and sanction maximum amount for the purpose.

[English]

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the flood situation in the country. This is the seventh consecutive year when the country is experiencing a good monsoon.

I find two faces of Shri Chaturanan Mishra, our hon. Minister of Agriculture. On the one side he is jubilant to see the good monsoon and happy at the prospects of a good harvest; simultaneously on the other side of it, because of a good monsoon we are faced with an unprecedented flood situation in some parts of our country. So, the hon. Minister of Agriculture is at a loss to determine as to what is more preferable - a good monsoon or floods in some parts of our country?... (Interruptions)

Sir, serious concerns on the flood situation have been expressed by all sections of this House. Most of the hon. Members have concentrated their speeches on the prevention of floods and about the prevention of recurrence of floods in this country. Fifty years have passed since our independence but unfortunately no effective steps have been taken by the Central Government to formulate a perspective plan for getting rid of the floods, droughts and other natural calamities which occur very frequently in this country.

Sir, I would mainly concentrate on the prevention side of the floods because our respected hon. Minister, Shri Mishra, while replying to a Starred Question in this House on 10th July, 1996 about the relief measures undertaken by the Union Government - a report on which was subsequently supplied to all the hon. Members of this House - had given the details of the details of the finances for relief expenditure by the Union Government.

The reply, that he is likely to give in the House, would concentrate mainly on the report which we have already got. So, I will not deal with that aspect. The Agriculture Minister is only looking after the relief measures. According to the Tenth Finance Commission recommendation, whatever fund is required by the State, the Central Government has to provide its share and I think the Agriculture Minister would confine his reply to that only. If severity of flood or other natural calamity is there, after getting report from the State Government, a Central team is sent which assesses the subsequent relief measures. I will not concentrate on this point. I will concentrate on the preventive side of the flood. I would have been happy if Water Resources Minister was present in the House. When this discussion on

flood was started. I mentioned in the House that the Water Resources Minister should also present in the House. I now request the Agriculture Minister to kindly convey the feelings of the House to the Water Resources Minister.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI (Ghosi) : He should be present here.

SHRI ANIL BASU : The Agriculture Minister is likely to give reply to the discussion on flood. I request him to convey the feelings of the House to his colleague, the Water Resources Minister. The general feeling of the House is that the preventive side of the flood should not be neglected. I fully support the views expressed by my esteemed colleague, Shri Arakal. He said that an apex body should be set up at the national level to see that the natural calamities do not occur. That apex body should see that the preventive measures are taken. It should plan out the preventive measures and make available the resources required for prevention of such natural calamities. That apex body is the need of the hour - a cry of the country - and it should be formed immediately.

Now, wherefrom the resources would come? I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that there are about 3000 companies in this country which are making profit ranging from Rs. 10 crore to Rs. 300 crore and they are not paying a single paisa as tax. They are called the 'zero tax' companies. So, resources are there, but how to mobilise these resources is the question. A political will to mobilise the resources for the development of the country - to give a flood-free and drought-free India - is required. So, resources are there but they have to be mobilised through proper planning.

I come from an area which is a highly flood prone area. It is not because of nature but because of a Central project called the Damodar Valley Corporation, which was set up in 1957. At the time of its setting up, much publicity was given to it. It was said that the Damodar Valley Corporation was a multi-purpose project. It would prevent flood in the lower Damodar region. It will simultaneously provide irrigation water and will produce electricity also. But what has happened? No doubt, floods were there before this Damodar Valley Corporation came into being but they were not of such an intensity as they are now. A huge quantity of water is being discharged from the Damodar Valley Corporation barrages. There are four barrages, Panchit, Tillaya, Maithon and Konar, in the upper region of Damodar down to Chota Nagpur Hill.

Huge quantity of water is released from these barrages at a time. This water flows along the Damodar river and reaches my constituency through its tributary the Mundeswari. The whole of my constituency which includes the Khanakul Assembly segment, the Arambagh Assembly segment and the Pursurah Assembly segment, and Amta and Uluberia areas of my

colleague Member of Parliament Shri Hannan Mollah's constituency are flooded every year. The intensity of floods is growing year to year.

Sir, I would like to draw your kind attention to the fact that there is no planning done by the Central Water Commission which is under the control of the Union Ministry of Water Resources to assess the expected rainfall in the catchment area and the expected inflow of water at the barrages. No planning and monitoring of release of water is done. If the expected rainfall and incoming volume of water could be measured properly, planning the release of water from the barrages becomes very easy. If the releases are controlled, the intensity of floods can be controlled and the devastation caused by the floods can be controlled. Unfortunately, it is not done.

Sir, through you I request the respected Shri Chaturanan Mishra to tell his colleague, the Minister of Water Resources, to instruct the Central Water Commission to have the water released from the barrages in a planned manner. There are scientific methods to assess the possible inflow of water at the barrages. There are scientific forecasts through which one can gauge the probable rainfall. The incoming flow of water at the barrages can also be measured. If these things are done, planning and monitoring of release of water from the barrages can be done very easily. But unfortunately the Central Water Commission is not performing its duty in a desirable manner. They are releasing huge quantities of water from the reservoirs at a time causing floods in the lower areas. The intensity of floods is increasing with the increased silting in the river. Because of siltation in the reservoirs at the barrages which were constructed in 1957, their capacity has decreased considerably.

I fully agree with my friends who talked about deforestation and denudation in the catchment areas. It increases the pace of siltation. The deforestation and denudation that are taking place in the Chhotanagpur area, the place from where the Damodar river originates, are continuously eroding the capacity of the barrages that were constructed in the years 1957, 1962, 1963 and 1964 for containing 50 percent of the rainfall in the catchment area. They are not able to hold the quantity of water for which they were constructed.

Due to the continuous rainfall in the Himalayan areas this year an unprecedented landslide occurred in Kalimpong resulting in the death of 34 people. The whole area got disconnected from the rest of the country. Preventive measures should be taken to avoid recurrence of such landslides which result in loss of lives. The State Governments have already taken required relief and rescue measures.

I am not talking about the relief and rescue operations. Anti-land sliding measures have to be taken up in the Himalayan region because this year the land sliding was unprecedented in nature. Such a huge

magnitude of land sliding has never happened causing the death to 34 persons and cutting off the whole of Kalingpong area from the rest of the country. That should be taken care of.

Now, another State of the Eastern Region which is facing unprecedented floods this year is Assam. The Brahmaputra Board was constituted. But unfortunately no fund was given to the Brahmaputra Board making it toothless. The most turbulent rivers of our country, the Brahmaputra and the Barak Rivers in Assam Valley were supposed to be controlled by various barrages and for that purpose the Brahmaputra Board was constituted by an Act of Parliament, but till then, no tangible steps was taken by the Central Government, making whole thing a farce. You constituted a Board, you brought the legislation passed by Parliament; and subsequently no action was taken by the Central Government. So, before the Budget - which will be presented to this House - I would request the respected Shri Chaturanan Mishraji to see that some funds are kept for the Brahmaputra Board so that the survey work which is required to be conducted there - which is incomplete can be undertaken and the Brahmaputra Board can be given the funds and other help required by the Brahmaputra Board to plan the anti-flood measures in regard to these two turbulent rivers of our country the Brahmaputra and the Barak Rivers.
...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI ANIL BASU : Sir, I am very thankful to you. I am concluding.

Sir, my last submission is that each and every year we are discussing in this House the relief measures and other measures which have to be taken up. As per the Tenth finance Commission recommendations Rs. 700 crore are provided during the Ninth Plan period. All right, let it be there. But regarding the prevention of floods, nothing has been said. Even in the Water Resources Ministry Budget last year, the Budgetary amount was reduced.

In our district - in Chinsurah Town, which is situated by the side of the Bhagirathi River, a tributary of the Ganges - a serious erosion has taken place in Balagarh P.S. area, in Magra P.S. area, in the Chinsurah area, in the Sheoraphuly area. It is so serious that villages are being swept into the Ganges and the Bhagirathi Rivers. Anti-erosion measures, along the banks of the Ganges and the Bhagirathi River in the Balagarh P.S. area from Duttipara to Sheoraphuly in an urgent need. Necessary funds for this should be provided in the Water Resources Ministry so that the anti-erosion measures along the banks of the Ganges in my district could be undertaken in this year.

With these words, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI SURENDER SINGH (Bhiwani) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are well aware that when Haryana State was formed in 1966, it was a deficit State. It could not produce foodgrains to suffice the needs of the State. We had to purchase 1 lakh tonne of foodgrains from the Government of India but the same State made such a remarkable progress in the production of foodgrains that it became the second largest contributor State after Punjab to the Granaries of Government of India. The reason behind it is that Haryana has made optimum utilisation of rain water. The rain canals were constructed in Haryana to drain out the flood water from the flood affected areas to the dry areas. Some area of Rajasthan adjacent to our State is at higher level than our lands. Southern Haryana, sharing its boundary with Rajasthan and the Parliamentary Constituency to which the hon. Deputy Speaker represents, this part of Rajasthan is higher by seven to eight hundred feet. It is our bad luck that whenever there is heavy rain in Rajasthan the water flows down to Haryana. This time only on June 24-25, Rajasthan experienced 575 m.m. rainfall as against an average annual rainfall of 300-500 m.m. As a result, two dams of Rajasthan i.e. Ravali and Kamera collapsed. The Government could not repair them in time due to which crops worth millions of rupees were damaged. The people of the State are still feeling difficulty in their day to day life. There was loss of lives and livestock. We could not reach many villages despite our best efforts. We demanded about Rs. 44 crore from the Government of India as a grant but no money was released to us till date. Last year, the flood destroyed four crops of farmers resulting in loss worth rupees two thousand crore. There is 35 lakh hectare of cultivable land in Haryana out of which on three fourth of land, three consecutive crops could not be cultivated. We asked for Rs. 1004 crore from the Central Government as a grant but, they played a joke on us and gave only Rs. 39 crore. A loan of Rs. 300 crore was provided to us at the interest rate of 13 percent.

I would like to submit the hon. Agriculture Minister that the fiscal condition of Haryana is not good at present and we are expecting a deficit of Rs. 600 crore. The Government of Haryana could not pay compensation to the last year's loss and again this problem has come up.

Sir, through you, I would like to submit the Government that the land does not become cultivable only by draining out the water. Haryana is a drought prone State which is frequented more by famine than by the guests. The people of Rajasthan are more affected as compared to us. The land, which never experiences rain, though the water is essential for the cultivation, if comes in the grip of flood the under ground salts come to the surface rendering it non-cultivable for 10-15 years.

The hon. Agriculture Minister should note that the Haryana is experiencing the problems of salinity while

the other States are having water logging problem. That land cannot be made cultivable even after wasting four crops.

I would like to state the Government that in case of natural calamity, the ratio of 25 and 75 is un-bearable for the State like Haryana. This time the entire Budget of Haryana is not more than Rs. 25 crore. Whatever amount of loan is provided by the Government for natural calamity should be interest free and should not be a short term loan and it should be atleast for a period of ten years. Secondly, a master plan should be prepared for these problems of Rajasthan and Haryana. A proper water management and drainage system should be prepared through which extra water coming from Rajasthan can be canalised and lifted to the places which are higher than ours and where it can be properly utilised.

Honestly speaking, I belong to such an area and the hon. Members hailing from Rajasthan know it very well that, people did not like to marry off their children in our area and make relation. They thought that even if a girl is married to a man having enough land the children will suffer. People did not go there for marriage or for any other relation and they used to mock at us. There was such scarcity of water that not only animals sprawling on the ground but even the crows flying in the sky used to fall in the jungle.

I request the Government of India, to prepare a master plan, keeping in view the level of the land, so that the water which is logged during the rainy season, may be canalised to those far off places where it is needed most.

The State Governments do not have resources for reclamation. The Central Government has got quite big budget. I request to pay more attention towards reclamation.

One more request I have to make is that the grant in 25:75 ratio should not be provided for the States like Haryana and Rajasthan which are simultaneously frequented by floods and droughts. There, the Central Government should provide hundred percent grant. These were my suggestions.

[English]

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA (Guwahati) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak on the issue of floods.

All the Members of Parliament have expressed their concern and I also share their views. This concern is for the parliamentarian as an individual as we are not in a position to resolve this issue and also all the parliamentarians together in this Lok Sabha are not in a position to resolve the independent issues of their respective States. That is why the issue has been raised in this Parliament that the major issue of the floods faced by the whole country be resolved.

When I was a student in the school days, I used to learn a Sanskrit *sloka*, the meaning and content of which is like this:

"Na gau pradanam, na muhi Pradanam, na cha annadanam.

Hi tatha pradanam, yatha vadanti budhah sarva pradaneshu abhay pradanam."

[English]

Now the meaning of this *sloka* is that all the States have expressed concern 'that we are afraid of these floods'. All the different States have expressed their fear psychoses that as soon as the summer season starts we are faced with an unmitigable calamity. That is for this reason, this particular issue has been raised in this Parliament and this sovereign Parliament, this sovereign Government of India will come to the rescue of different States.

Unfortunately, nature obeys the natural laws, human beings seldom obey and the Government normally does not. That is for this reason, these calamities have not been resolved even though the country is entering into the golden year of celebration of its Independence day.

It is for this reason I would like to make a request to the Government of India through the hon. Speaker that while we express our concern for floods, we must have to evolve measures. And how these measures will be evolved should not be done through a Commission because we had the sad experience about the Commission. The Kothari Education Commission was hailed by almost all the educationists and the learned scholars all over the world but it was not put into action. The New Education Policy was created, where the human beings were called the resources. Now, there has been a Ministry called, 'Ministry of Water Resources'. I do not know whether, during the monsoon season, water has become a source or an article of tragedy. While I share the views expressed by many friends that floods will occur and the intensity will differ and the causes of floods all over the country will be different and, therefore, while tackling the floods, we have to utilise the applications of science and technology. Unfortunately, since Independence, science and technology have not been properly utilised in resolving floods.

I am very sorry to state that many of the States have already been reeling under floods and Assam is not an exception. Now, my point of taking a stand today is that floods in Assam have not been properly and duly understood by different authorities, who are in the management of floods.

The river, Brahmaputra, is one of the major causes for floods and probably, I do not know whether the learned Members aware of this or not and also I do not know whether the Government is aware of this or not. Brahmaputra river runs into a course of more than 2,945

kilometres; of this, more than 50 percent is outside India and nearly 50 percent, slightly less than 50 percent, is within India. Of which, 640 kilometres lie in the State of Assam. This Brahmaputra river is feeding as many as 43 tributaries.

When we discuss floods, we take floods within the region of 640 kms. running within the State of Assam and we forget that there are about 1,300 kms of the river lying outside. As it is at the rear portion, the intensity of floods in Assam will be much different from the nature of floods in Arunachal Pradesh or any other international area. That is why, while taking the measures for resolving floods in Assam, the entire length of the river should be taken into consideration along with its tributaries.

Sir, through the Speaker, I want to make the Government aware — our Minister for Agriculture is also taking part in this discussion — that during the summer, the whole of Brahmaputra Valley becomes a river and during the winter, its width is to the extent of two to fifteen kilo metres and during the summer, its width is more than 40 kilometres at places. While taking the flood control measures, one very important point — in the entire riverain area of Brahmaputra, at least to the extent of one-thirds of the banks of Brahmaputra were eroded; thousands of villages had been wiped out and many of the towns had already been embraced by the river, Brahmaputra - should be borne in mind. Therefore, the Assam State has a fear psychosis that Assam along cannot tame this river.

If this river is to be tamed, it must be tamed by the cooperation, help and assistance of the Government of India. If the Government of India alone is not able to tame this river, the turbulent Brahmaputra, then probably we may have to take the help and assistance of other international agencies.

I am very sorry to mention here that Dr. K.L. Rao, while he was a Minister during the tenure of the late Smt. Indira Gandhi, was asked to study the flood situation in China. On coming back, he mentioned in Parliament that the flood situation can be resolved through the help of the manpower and unfortunately, the axe had fallen upon him.

In our country, we have 95 crores of people. We can resolve this problem by our own science and technology. It cannot be resolved by the borrowed science and technology. That is why, my urgent request to the Government of India through the hon. Deputy Speaker is that we should develop our own indigenous science and technology. The technology should not be imported from outside. If we can do this, probably the floods can be resolved.

While taking into consideration the solutions available to control the floods, one very important point should be borne in mind. By an Act of Parliament, Assam was given a Brahmaputra Board. That Board is

not working. This is very unsatisfactory. So the Brahmaputra Board alone cannot resolve the flood situation in Assam. I desire that it can be done through the executive activities only, i.e. by the plan of action formulated by the executive bodies. Through the bureaucrats, I do not know whether these flood control programmes of Assam can be resolved or not. I believe that the flood control measures will vary from State to State.

I request, through the Deputy Speaker, the Government of India, more particularly, the Minister of Agriculture that he will have to have a close collaboration and close co-operation of the other Ministries also. He should request the Minister of Finance also to see that heavy allocation is made for flood control measures to almost all the States. For this, at first, three major important steps will have to be taken. That we must have to live with the floods and that we must obey to the natural laws.

The forests have been deforested. So there must be a law. A Bill must be introduced which would provide that all forest lands must be reclaimed and new vegetation should be allowed to grow. All the rivers that are flowing in Assam are all flowing over the land. Almost the entire river valley of the Brahmaputra, along with its tributaries, is now irrigated.

Assam is only having floods for five months and for the rest of the seven months, it does not have even a single shower of rain. As a result, Assam is drought-prone during the remaining seven months and during the rest of the five months, it is affected by floods, which are not there in the rest of the country. Therefore my urgent request to the Government of India, through the Chair, is that they should study the flood and drought conditions of Assam with a special policy and special measure. Probably the measures adopted for resolving the floods in Assam may not be similar to that of the flood-resolving measures that are adopted in Haryana, Punjab or in Kerala.

I do share the feelings of the people of Kerala because they have the problem of coastal erosion. I also share the feelings of the people of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Punjab.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR (Baramulla) : Please do not forget me.

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : I do not forget you because you are also very much a part of this Parliament and I do have honour for you and your State also. So my request to the Government through the hon. Deputy Speaker is that they should see that flood does not create a fear psychosis in the minds of the people of the country.

19.00 hrs.

The Government of India is just like the God to the people. They must come to the rescue of the people and this rescue operation must start before the floods

start and it should be a perennial tragedy to the people at large.

With these few words, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our country is called the cradle of nature. On the other hand, we also have to face the fury of nature in some parts of the country due to drought and in others due to floods. So, whereas nature is a boon for us in some respects it also becomes a bane when its fury is unleashed. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today the situation of flood is being discussed under Rule 193. Through you, I would like to state that this discussion should not be a mere formality or in other words this discussion should not take place just because people in our respective constituencies are affected by floods therefore we should discuss it as a mere formality. I want some concrete and substantial measures to be taken in this regard so as to yield results. I have been a Member of Parliament since 1989. I have observed that whenever it rains, the situation of flood is discussed and at the same time drought is also discussed. The Finance Commission has already fixed the shares of states in National Calamity fund. So, whenever some area is flooded, aerial surveys are undertaken and the food packets are dropped from the helicopters. Through you I would also like to say that "Leek leek gaadi chale, leek hi chale kapoot, leek chhod teenon chalen shayar, singh, sapoot" (The cart goes along the beaten track and so does the bad son but those who do not tread on the beaten track are the Poet, the lion and the good son). Mishra Ji is the new Minister and a new Government has been formed. I want that the Government should take some concrete measures to protect the nation from the fury of floods. As regards the droughts, I had expressed my thoughts in a quadruplet just now.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : You should also not tread on the beaten track. You should suggest some concrete measures. You are a very senior colleague and a wise person. You should suggest some way out.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Sir, I am coming to that. "Kahin baadh aur Kahm Sookha, Kaaran Yahi ki mera desh bhookha, aur Sarkar ka drishtikon rookha, isiliye peedita ka dil dukha." (At some places, there are floods and at some other there is drought, the reason being that my country is starving and the attitude of the Government is unsympathetic, that is why the sufferers are hurt) Such a situation has been prevalent

[English]

Indian budget is the gambling of monsoon.

[Translation]

Floods cause loss of crores of rupees and the livestock and the houses are destroyed as well. Droughts cause damage to crops. We had an irrigation Minister Mr. K.L. Rao who at that time had visualised the concept of linking the Ganga with the Kaveri so as to divert the flow of excess water from North to South and to collect it along the way in the event of flooding of Ganga. Its tributaries should be connected with canals so that the water flowing out to the Sea could be used throughout the year. By doing this, we won't have to face the problem of flood every year and the water table will also replenish.

Sir, we have had to face terrible floods this year in Rajasthan. The monsoon arrives there around 25th or 30th June. Rajasthan has an average rainfall of 522 mm. in a year and the average for the month of June is 49 mm but this year the wrath of nature was unleashed to such an extent that above average rainfall was recorded throughout Rajasthan. The unexpected rainfall in the districts of Nagar, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Alwar, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Churu and Sikar from 18 June to 26 June, 1996 has created a situation of flood. The rainfall recorded this year exceeds the normal annual rainfall by 400 to 1500 percent. This means that hundred year old record has been broken in Nagor because 478 mm. rainfall was recorded in a period of two days in a area which used to have 250 mm. of rainfall in a year. Even 14 year old children of Jaisalmer had never seen clouds but during the past 2-3 years the area has experienced flood many a times. There, the annual average shot up from 250 mm to 478 mm. The area of Pokfaran known for test explosion has had 175 mm. rainfall in a single day. 500 mm. rainfall was recorded in a period of two days in Kota Kasim Tehsil of Bharatpur and Alwar. Tehsil Deeg of district Bharatpur has had 526 mm. of rainfall. I have given all the statistics because our Hon'ble Prime Minister had undertaken the aerial survey of the areas of Alwar and Bharatpur along with the Chief Minister of Rajasthan. At that time he had admitted that heavy losses have indeed been caused by the floods.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the state has limited resources and is unable to bear the financial burden. That is why a request has been made to the Central Government for special assistance. The reason being that Rajasthan is suffering on both Courts. Part of the state is drought prone where drought relief work had been initiated in the last 3-4 months. 25 thousand villages were declared drought prone areas. There the drought relief measures were undertaken to provide employment to the people so that they do not migrate to the cities and make their living the villages itself. 300 crore rupees are required for providing employment in drought prone area. Then this fury of flood was unleashed for which the Government of Rajasthan had submitted a note which I quote :

[English]

"The State Government needs a sum of Rs. 300 crore to tackle the situation."

[Translation]

In response to that what the Government is giving us is just 100 crore rupees.

[English]

"Rs. 100 crore are required for immediate rescue and relief operations and for restoring infrastructure and civic amenities, and Rs. 200 crore for flood protection works to minimise the damage in future."

[Translation]

Which according to the Government is being given for relief. Last year Hanumangarh and Bikaner were flooded which had caused a loss of 300 crore rupees. A team had gone there for survey however, 21 crore rupees were offered as relief from National Calamity fund. That money has not been released as yet. Therefore, I request you to release the money at the earliest.

[English]

"It is, therefore, very urgent that financial assistance is sanctioned that for immediate relief, Rs. 100 crore and an additional sum of Rs. 200 crore is required."

[Translation]

The Government knows about it that's why I have stated the position. I also want to tell you about the losses suffered. The number of those who have died alongwith the names of the places where they have died would reveal the gravity of situation. Our Hon'ble Friends were telling us that flood water entered Haryana. This is the fury of the nature. The excess water of Uttar Pradesh from Mathura and Goverdhan side flowed and entered the area of Bharatpur through Agra and the excess water of Rajasthan flowed out to Haryana. So, an arrangement should be made by formulating a master plan for storing water by constructing small dams, small storage tanks or check dams. Afforestation should be taken up in these areas. The Government spends a lot of money on floods which could be diverted to afforestation. Efforts should be made to plant trees all along Aravali range. The desert of Rajasthan has extended up to Pushkar and Ajmer and if trees are planted and intensive afforestation is undertaken there, the situation could improve. The large scale felling of trees in the hilly areas has denuded the hills of Aravali. The mining activities in Aravali are affecting the ecological balance of the area.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Your State Government is responsible for it.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The Central Government provides grants for the activities related to

environment but it has enacted laws which restrict us to speak on these matters.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Please stop the felling of trees in your area. It falls under the purview of State Government.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : The hon. Member has rightly stated that he is not stressing on felling of trees but those who had been in power till now, did not inculcate such values after independence which may inspire people with national feeling to protect the trees. The hon. Member hailing from west Bengal would be happy to note that the people of Rajasthan, in a bid to protect the 'Khejari' trees in princely era, received bullets and hundreds of them embraced death. The people of Rajasthan sacrificed their lives to protect deer. It is their tradition. Trees are planted at the occasion of marriage and one full day's function is organised for this very purpose.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : We do not have such history in West Bengal but the State tops the list in regard to social forestry.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : You have extended a good suggestion that it would be better if the Central Government provides funds for social forestry. Aravali range starts from Delhi and touching some parts of Haryana Reaches Rajasthan. Many districts of Rajasthan have not been covered in Aravali Development Plan funded by Japan and world Bank. Timely funding and proper arrangements have not been done for the plan.

The flood affected areas in Rajasthan are Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Alwar, Nagaur and Bharatpur.

[English]

The following are the statistics :

Village affected	1,257	
Houses damaged	70,000	
Deaths-Human	70	(out of these 16 were washed away)
Animals	5,000	
Tanks damaged	300	

Roads : Extensive damage to the roads in flood-affected areas

Salt areas : Extensive damage rendering 15,000 labourers out of work.

[Translation]

Sir, the potable water for Jodhpur is mainly supplied from the canal. This 40 k.m. long lift canal has been damaged due to the silt piled up by the flood water.

[English]

I give further details :

Damage to drinking water sources and pipelines damaged in other places as well.

Power supply-many grid stations were affected.

[Translation]

I, therefore, stated that the relief work was undertaken by the Rajasthan Government with the help of its own resources. But, I would like to urge upon the Central Government, through you, to help the State Government by releasing Rs. 21 crore the earlier instalment and Rs. 300 crore for this from the National Calamity Relief Fund, keeping in mind the flood as well as the drought situation and the fact that Rajasthan is second largest as well as backward State of the country. Sir, with your permission I would like to say my last point on which the hon. Minister as well as all of us would agree to think. The flood Management Programme was started in 1954 and it was estimated at that time that out of total 3290 lakh hectare of land in the country the recurrence of flood is expected over 400 lakh hectare of land and the Government had estimated at that time that keeping in view the infrastructure, 320 lakh hectare land can be protected from the floods. But there is a great change between the situation of 1954 and of the present. A period of 40-50 years have elapsed since then, therefore, it should be evaluated again to find out how much land is affected by the floods every year and what measures can we take to prevent it. Sir, besides this Rs. 50 thousand have been provided to each of the families of the deceased. You said that you had released the amount from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. Some assistance has been provided by the State Government. I request you also to provide some assistance. After all you provide Rs. one lakh compensation to those killed in rail accident. What is fault of those who were killed due to floods or natural calamity. Special arrangement should be made to provide relief to the families of the deceased. There should be some arrangement for pumping out the flood water. The surrounding areas of Bharatpur are still inundated by the flood water. Now, it is going back towards U.P. When it was inundated, every part looked alike. Now, it is going from low lying areas to the higher areas and from there again to the downward areas. I request you to make some permanent arrangement to drain out the flood water from the flood prone areas to prevent of various diseases since the flood water generates many diseases. The arrangement should be made to protect the area from the diseases and the water collected in the ditches should be pumped out. Feeder canals should be constructed over the flood prone rivers and the water should be canalised to reservoirs so that in case of flood, the extra water could be canalised to these tanks through feeder canals. Arrangements should also be made to protect the cattle.

With these words, I would like to thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak. I would like the experts to ponder over it. It is equally important to pay attention towards afforestation and small irrigation schemes so that water can be stored and utilised at the time of need. The interlinking of Ganga and Kaveri rivers is like a dream but if this dream comes true, our

country may be transformed into green land and more fertile land.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I still have a list of 11 speakers. It is for you people to decide whether it is to be finished today itself or postponed for tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have requested time and again to speak only for 3-4 minutes but every speaker consumes more time. It depends on you.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTHÉS MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) : (W.B.) : Sir, I will finish my speech within one minute...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You are saying that you will take only one or two minutes but once you start speaking, I do not know how much time you will take. Do you want to conclude it today or continue the discussion tomorrow?

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : If it is to be continued tomorrow then we must discuss it till 7.30 P.M. today.

[English]

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES (Udupi) : We can finish our speeches today and the Minister can reply tomorrow...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAPAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, allot two minute's time to each speaker, and finish it today in a hurried manner.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It can be done if every speaker takes 2 minutes but, no one concludes in two minutes.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let us try it.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Oscar Fernandes, I am told that no arrangement has been made for interpretation from Kannada language. Therefore, I would request you to please speak in English.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES : I do not mind speaking in English. I would like to protest and then make my submissions in English.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Fernandes, you are well-versed in English.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES : Sir, when we speak in regional language, people back at home feel that we are representing the real masses.

Otherwise, there is no reason why we should speak in the regional language.

Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this very important debate. Year after year we raise this topic in this House. We have to find a permanent solution to this problem. So, my first suggestion is that apart from the debate in the House, there should be a natural debate.

Secondly, the Standing Committee relating to the Ministry of Agriculture should deliberate on this issue, invite suggestions from experts from all over the country and find a permanent solution to this recurring problem. Otherwise, it would be a ritual.

19.21 hrs.

(Shri P.M. Sayeed *in the Chair*)

Sir, we should apply whatever technology that is available today to find a solution to this problem. It is not merely a question of dealing with flood only, but it is also a question of dealing with drought. We have plenty of water and we still find people crying for water. This abnormal situation should be dealt with. As other hon. Members have suggested, we should definitely make use of the latest technology available in the country to prevent floods as well to find enough water to our people for irrigation and drinking purposes. The underground water also could be tapped for this purpose. My information is that the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has developed a technology where even the flowing water could be pumped back into the borewells, thereby raising the underground water level and that water should be made available to the people during lean months. We should be able to utilise this technology.

Sir, the method of paying compensation should be automatic. We should have an insurance scheme in which the nation should pay the premium and the affected people should get the benefit out of it. In the event of loss of property, especially when they lose their houses whether they are rich or poor, even the rich also become poor. So, the middle income group people should not be deprived of the assistance or the compensation that is given. So, I strongly suggest that we should develop an insurance scheme which can come to the rescue of the people in distress.

Sir, coming back to Karnataka, where I hail from, we have lost about 100 lives and we have lost a lot of houses. In my district - I come from a coastal district - we had a severe cyclone attack in which roofs of hundreds of houses were blown off. The Government had rendered assistance and there is no doubt about it. I am very happy that the Government had come to the rescue of the people. But we have a long coast like the State of Kerala and the severe sea erosion that is taking place is affecting the life and property of the people and especially the fishermenfolk are the biggest losers due to sea erosion. The infrastructure is lost, the

jetties are affected and the roads are washed away. So, I suggest that just as the Government of Kerala has developed the sea wall-cum-road, we should also develop a similar infrastructure in Karnataka to combat the menace of sea erosion.

Sir, if need be we could request for assistance from the World Bank for this. I am told that there is a proposal to get assistance from the World Bank and if assistance from the World Bank could come, I am sure, we will be able to handle the situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Fernandes, kindly conclude. You can mention the points so that the hon. Minister could reply.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES : Sir, I will take only two more minutes. In the cyclone a lot of coconut gardens have been lost and other agricultural crops have been lost. As I have already enumerated, a lot of fishermen are suffering year after year either on account of floods or on account of cyclones. The river banks have to be cleared so that we will not get floods frequently. This is another major programme that we have to undertake.

Lastly, many Members in this House have talked about Ganga-Cauvery link project. The question is about the money. We have been spending a lot of money of the Employment Assurance Scheme. So, the money is available with the Irrigation Ministry and the Ministry of Rural Development. These three Ministries together could mobilise some funds so that we can take up this major project which could be a boom for the country and it could wipe the tears from people's eyes.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Sir, tomorrow is Friday and I have some business in Rajya Sabha also. Therefore, please conclude it today.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Only four or five more Members are there to speak. I request all the hon. Members to take two or three minutes. You could just mention the points. The suggestions from the hon. Members could be given in points so that the hon. Minister could also reply. I understand he has to go to Patna tomorrow. Therefore, we have to conclude this discussion today.

DR. ASIM BALA (Navadwip) : Sir, the water is a precious material. At the same time it damages a lot. In 1995, havoc was caused by floods in different States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. Due to these floods, ten million people were ruined and crops worth billions of rupees were damaged. More than two lakh cattle and five lakh houses were lost. The damage in Haryana was worth Rs. 5.5 billion. During 1978, floods caused damages worth seven billion rupees in West Bengal. The most affected area in Assam is Brahmaputra region. In West Bengal, the most affected areas are Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, West Dmaj Pur, Malda, Nadia this year Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Kalingpong are the worst

affected areas. The State Government has sent 25 metric tonnes of food to Kalingpong. Money in the form of cash has also been sent there. In Jalpaiguri area, 100 MTs of rice, an amount of Rs. 2 lakh and tarpaulins numbering 2,000 along with other food materials have also been sent. But it is not sufficient for these affected people. So, it is essential on the part of the Government of India to extend help in this regard.

Sir, we have to find out the main reasons behind the casuse of these flood. Now-a-days, there are floods in the areas surrouning the Brahmaputra and the Ganga. In my area, for the last several years, because of siltation, the course of the river has been changed and a number of small streams developed out of it. The river-bed is also coming up and as a result, whenever there is a heavy monsoon, the flood water is not only eroding the banks of the river but it is also submerging the land, pucca buildings, school buildings and, sometimes, small towns are swayed away in these waters. This is the kind of damage that is being caused. The State Government has spent a lot of money, but that money has not been spent properly.

Eighty per cent of the investment has been made in the irrigation sector from the First Five Year Plan to Eighth Five Year Plan, but the work than has been done very minimum. Our former Prime Minister, late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, gave a picture in some Irrigation Ministers' Conference wherein he said that 'The situation since 1951 246 big surface irrigation projects had been initiated, by only 65 projects have been completed and others have not been completed? Floods, irrigation and construction of dams are related. For preventing the floods and for having water for irrigation and for generating electricity, we need a composite plan. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the floods, it is a perennial problem. So, we have to find out the origin of the floods so that the floods could be prevented

In the Brahmaputra area, as my hon. colleague has mentioned, three Master Plans have been implemented and, subsequently, they had spent Rs. 35,000 crore, Rs. 32,000 crore, Rs. 43.8 crore and Rs. 25 crore. Yet, we find that the same Brahmaputra is still affecting the people. So, as I have already mentioned, we should have a composite plan for irrigation purposes as well as for generation of electricity and for drinking water purpose. That is a must.

With these words, I urge the Government to take the initiative in this matter.

[Translation]

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL (Varanasi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir,

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please briefly State points only.

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL : Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all, I would like to thank you for providing an opportunity to a new Member to speak.

Sir, it would have been better if the hon. Water Resources Minister along with the hon. Agriculture Minister were present in the House but I think that if any Minister is present, it is considered that the entire cabinet is present since the cabinet bears the joint responsibility. Therefore, I want to conclude my point after giving some suggestions. The menace of devastating flood which caused many problems in many parts of the country, has been discussed in details in this House. But the attention should be paid as to how the flood can be prevented. I think that Ganga which was brought on earth by Bhagirath from Gangotri, has become shallow due to piling up of silts which is a result of thousands of years of continuous flowing. The bed of Ganga should be deepened by desilting it so that its capacity of water intake may increase. It may also prove a measure to prevent the flood which the Government should consider. Due to silt, the beds of dams have raised. It should also be dredged out. The linking of Ganga with Kaveri should also be considered.

Haryana has been successful in canalising the rain water. Likewise we can canalise the extra water of swollen rivers wherever there is such problem. For this purpose, a big plan should be chalked out after discussion on national level. The Government should consider over a master plan.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, after the last point I would like to conclude. The Government should think over diverting the extra water into built canals at the time of flood. The ignorance regarding release of water from the dams, is also a cause of the floods. Conscious efforts are not made in this regard. If such efforts are made, the floods caused by other than natural causes could be prevented. Last year the Chakiya area of my district was flooded because of sudden release of water from Rihand dam. The area of Varanasi has been badly affected by the heavy rainfall. The State Government has not given adequate compensation to the farmers because of which the farmers are suffering. If you could kindly draw the attention of the State Government towards their plight, I will be thankful to you.

With these words, I conclude and thank you for having given me the opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) : The district of Murshidabad in West Bengal is effected by floods every year. I am actually a victim of floods. My native town Kandi is in the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal and it was visited by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the year, 1956. The purpose of the visit was to assess the damage caused by floods every year and it was by his kindness that a Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Mansingh. The Mansingh Committee recommended for the protection of floods in this area. Forty years have passed. But still the Central Government could not adopt any measures for the

implementation of the recommendations on the floods by Mansingh Committee.

I would urge upon the Government to immediately implement the recommendations of Mansingh Committee on the protection of floods in my area. This is number one.

Number two is this that the hon. Members of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly unanimously decided and sent an all Party delegation under the Chairmanship of Shri Jyoti Basu, hon. Chief Minister of West Bengal and they were asked to place their demands before the Central Government for the adoption of anti-erosion schemes and for the protection from floods in my district of Murshidabad and in the district of Malda.

But the Central Government did not accord any approval to this anti-erosion scheme till today. I urge upon the hon. Minister and the Government to accord the approval to this scheme.

Sir, I will take only one minute more. My adjacent town, Balurghat, in the district of South Dinajpur has been badly affected by floods in recent times. The river coming from Bangladesh flows through this town and in the 'U-shaped' direction it flows again to Bangladesh. In this 'U-shaped' delta stage, Balurghat town is situated and that is surrounded by water. The people of Balurghat town are marooned till today. There is a border-fencing highway which is situated at so high a place that it acts as an embankment and people are marooned. So, I would urge upon the Government to immediately take up the relief and rescue measures for the people affected by this flood.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Syed Masudal Hossain to speak. You have to make only additional points.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as my friends have already spoken on the issue, I do not wish to repeat what has been stated earlier. I would put forth 2-3 points. Normally floods do not occur in West Bengal but is transferred from Bihar. Bihar gets it from Nepal and it is sent forth to Bengal. This happens every year. This time a part of North Bengal has been washed away in floods... (Interruptions) An hon. Member from my district has placed his demand in this regard. I want to say that this is a democratic country and in a democracy, the life of each and every citizen should carry the same value. Five lakh rupees are given in compensation for those dying in an air-crash, two lakh rupees for those dying in railway accidents. The amount of one lakh rupees is given as compensation in case of communal riots victims. Thirty to fifty thousand rupees are given if the deceased are from Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. Even road accident victims are given ten to twelve thousand rupees but what is there for those dying in floods.

A few days ago, some people had gone to a holy place on the occasion of Amavasya... (Interruptions) As there was a stampede, some people were killed and

compensation of Rs. one lakh was given. My submission is that if one lakh rupees could be given for these people, I would request the the Agriculture Minister to sanction the compensation of one lakh rupees for those, whose lives are lost during floods.

SHRI GULAM MOHD. MAGANI (Srinagar) : My. Chairman, Sir, I represent the Parliamentary Constituency of Srinagar. There are two districts in my Constituency-Badgaam and Srinagar city. Due to heavy rainfall this year, the rivers and canals were flooded because of which all the roads were damaged. The rivers and canals were already saturated. In the city area, Dal lake is completely inundated. Hon'ble Prime Minister visited Srinagar recently. He conducted an aerial survey of the flood affected area for two hours. He also called a meeting in Nehru Guest House wherein all the parties participated. The route to be followed for reaching the venue passed through the Dal lake area which was so inundated that all the members had to board buses as we could not have reached there by cars. This situation continued for seventeen days. The residential areas there have been flooded. The houses of those who had fled the area, have collapsed. The flood water did not find any outlet nor does the area have any outlet.

I belong to Badgaon district. In my area, the crops have been damaged. There are no crops, the tele-Communication system has collapsed, there is no electricity either. In short I would like to make a request and I have already requested Hon'ble Prime Minister on his visit to Srinagar that this is my area and as you can see, it is totally flooded and inundated with water and for God sake have mercy on these people. In these affected areas, the paddy planted by the land-owners has been destroyed, the roads have been damaged. Hence relief work should be started in these areas Jawahar Rojgar Yojana so that the hungry and the unemployed people of this area may be employed.

Secondly, I would like to state that Kashmir has already been affected for the last seven to eight years because of militancy. Unemployment is prevalent there; tourism is badly affected; there is nothing to fall back on, our youth are unemployed. Thus the Central Government should provide employment to them.

Work should be started under the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana so that the people may get remunerative work. My second demand is that the people in the affected areas who have suffered loss of property, paddy and crops should be given free ration for one month... (Interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You should give suggestions as to what the Government should do.

SHRI GULAM MOHD. MIR MAGANI : I have made a request to the Prime Minister for the supply of free ration for one month. For Srinagar, I have asked for the supply of free ration for six months. Ration should be made available in the rest of the areas as well.

SHRI PITAMBAR PASWAN (Rosera) : Sir, Flood is a natural calamity for the entire nation. But in my area,

there are approximately twenty such districts in North Bihar which are destined to get flooded and the flood water remains in the area for six months. These districts are-Darbhanga, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Jhanjharpur, Khagaria, Samastipur, Araria, Banka and Sheohar. All these districts have been flooded. The flood water flows in from Nepal. The Nepalese rivers are the Boodhi Gandak, Karer, Kamala, Jeevachch, Bhutahi balaan and the biggest havoc is caused by Kosi. Every year these rivers are flooded and these rivers originate from Nepal.

I would like to say to Hon'ble Minister that it is not possible for the Government of Bihar to solve the problem of floods. So long as the Government of India does not initiate dialogue with the Government of Nepal and the two countries do not talk on this issue, this problem can not be solved. I want to tell the Hon'ble Minister that presently the entire area is affected by flood.

Kusheshwar Sthan is a holy place visited by lakhs of devotees but at present it is unapproachable. I would request Hon'ble Minister who must be well aware of the situation as he too belongs to Bihar and his home is in the flood affected area, hence I would urge upon him to survey the flood affected area right now. The Central Government should release maximum money to the Government of Bihar for the relief operations. I would also like to make a suggestion that Darajia-Khunia dam should be constructed on river Kosi. This step can help in protecting the people of Kiratpur, Niroi, Hasanpur and Kusheshwar districts. Their lives and property can be saved and the loss of crops can be prevented.

DR. ARVIND SARMA (Sonapat) : Hon'ble Mr Chairman, in the event of floods or droughts, the worst affected are the farmers and the labourers. I would take only a minute to say something regarding the distribution of compensation amount in case of floods or droughts because my fellow members have not drawn the attention of the House towards that aspect. When the districts of Sonapat, Jind and Rohtak were flooded last time in Haryana, several poor farmers and labourers were affected but they were not fully compensated. When we visit our constituency, people ask us about the compensation amount for the losses suffered last time. If the Central Government sanctions compensation of 5000 rupees, the farmer gets only 200 rupees. Even now the poor farmers and labourers and the Harijans-Dalits have not been able to construct their houses which had collapsed in the flood last time. I would like to make a suggestion that M.P. of the respective area should be a member in the Compensation Distribution Committee. This would ensure a check on officers and the compensation amount would be distributed properly.

This time the district of Faridabad and Gurgaon have been badly affected by floods. The demand made by the M.Ps of Haryana should be fulfilled as soon as possible and funds should be given to Government of Haryana.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : After the floods cease, the Government gives compensations to the affected people in rural areas and the agriculture sector which undoubtedly should be given. However, the floods and rain cause damage in the urban sector also. There too the lower income group employees and shopkeepers having one 'marla' or two 'marla' houses suffer loss of their lives and properties. So just as the Government gives compensation in the agriculture and rural sector, it should also consider compensating the loss of shopkeepers, employees and labourers for they too suffer losses because of rains. The Government should also try to find out a permanent solution to this problem.

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh) : The area I belong to is in the grip of drought this time however, three years ago the floods had completely wiped out villages. The compensation amount is too less. At some places 200 rupees and at others upto 1000 rupees are given as compensation. I request that a new method of assessment should be introduced.

SHRI GIRDHARI YADAV (Banka) : So far we have heard about the floods occurring in northern part of Bihar. But, last year the area of Banka, which is in Southern Bihar was flooded in which 100 people lost their lives and 40,000 were rendered homeless. However, so far there has been no change in the situation. Rail line is still not operational and the bridge too has not been opened for traffic. The spate in the Chanan and the Rohini wiped out the entire area of Banka. 40,000 people were rendered homeless and more than 100 people lost their lives. Hence, heavy losses have been caused to lives and properties. The livestock too has been washed away in the floods, but, no rescue operation has been started as yet. I demand that an announcement be made to construct pucca houses in place of the 40,000 houses which have collapsed.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur) : Minister's reply should be scheduled for tomorrow. His speech is a very important one as the entire nation is affected by floods. So everybody would be able to hear him but right now nobody would be able to hear him. This is an insult to Hon'ble Minister... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister would give his reply today itself.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Mr Chairman, I am happy to note that several hon'ble members have expressed their views on this subject. What is more heartening is that their suggestions are quite useful which need to be considered seriously. I thank all the hon'ble members. At the moment I can only give an assurance to the members and they have a lot of expectations from me. I would be very happy to be able to fulfil your expectations but the situation is critical and all of you are well aware of that.

Sir, now I would like to put forth a few points. Rightfully I can discuss only those matters which are related to my ministry. Most of the members have(Interruptions)

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL : My submission is that it does not matter as to which Minister is present here. The entire Cabinet is collectively responsible. You are the Agriculture Minister...(Interruptions) You are representing the Cabinet so please don't just discuss the matter pertaining to your department. You should give a complete picture...(Interruptions)

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : You have inferred my point otherwise. Right now, I can speak on matters pertaining to the Ministry of Agriculture. It is not as if I have assumed the position of Prime Minister temporarily. That is not the way...(Interruptions) You are concerned about finding out a permanent solution and I fully agree with you in this respect. But you should give a notice for having a discussion on that particular subject and we can request the Chair to take it up so that it can be discussed seriously. As the concerned Minister would also be present, he could give you a reply and some solution could also be found. Some members have made a request to pass on their comments to the right quarters. Though the concerned officials are present here, even then I assure you that I would pass on your comments, your complete speech or the gist of your speech to the concerned Ministries. Even if your comments are pertaining to the Department of Water Resources, Environment or Finance, I will make sure that they reach the right quarters.

Secondly, I would like to take up the issues raised by you. The most prominent issue that has come out is that the money given by the Government is far too less. I think that there is a need to consider it and probably the Prime Minister has realised it that is why he has sanctioned 50,000 rupees for the deceased. It is evident that this amount is far too less. (Interruptions) The amount that was determined by the Government is what you term as compensation. However, in our country compensation is not given, only assistance is given. Compensation is a very big amount. The actual loss far exceeds the loss projected and if that loss were to be compensated, much more money would be required. Our economy is not in a position to cough out that much money. However 20,000 rupees should have been sanctioned out of Calamity Relief Fund in case of death and this amount was decided 2-3 years ago.

20.00 hrs.

This amount was too less. Therefore, the Prime Minister has added fifty thousand more to it ...(Interruptions) Now this amount can be up to one lakh rupees or even more than that. We have thought of making a separate provision for this. However at present this amount totals 70,000 rupees taking into account 20,000 sanctioned from fund. We should consider increasing this amount.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS (Kalahandi) : There is provision for those dying in floods however there is no provision for those dying in drought conditions.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We are discussing both the conditions. It happens in floods as well as in droughts. You have mentioned the situation in Kalahandi separately.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : 2500 people died from 1986 to 1989 however no money was given.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : It is very difficult to prove that a certain person has died of hunger.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Five persons proved it in the High Court and they were given 25000 rupees.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : No doctor would issue a death certificate mentioning starvation as the cause of death. He would only write that the person has had a heart failure. There is no disease called starvation. The old or the penniless are given Rs. five per adult and Rs. three per child. Leave alone the full meals, the amount is not sufficient for even a portion of it. Similarly if sand or silt is deposited in the fields of small farmers, they are given agriculture input at the rate of 2500 rupees per hectare in the name of subsidy. The rate was 500 rupees per hectare in case of plantations. Where land slides have occurred, Central assistance of Rs. 5000 per family is given. Eight rupees per day were given for the fodder. The old men get five rupees and the animal gets eight rupees. You should decide as to whose life is more precious for the society. I am only trying to make you understand. You are powerful enough to take a decision and whatever you suggest will be done. There are four thousand rupees for constructing a house. One can not construct a house in that much amount. So some such provision should be there as is available for construction of a house under the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana or Indira Awas Yojana. I am trying to bring it as close as possible to what you have envisaged. I shall make a provision...(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : The landless labourers have not got compensation.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I am coming to that point. You have spoken about the crop insurance and I have considered it. You have said many a times that it should be considered from a fresh angle. I may be old but my ideas are new...(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Who says you are old.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I have considered the issue of crop insurance. That is actually the loan recovery insurance extended by the Government. Those who have taken loans are covered under it so that the Government loans may be recovered. Crop insurance facility is not available for all the farmers. This facility is not available for those having one acre or half an acre of land...(Interruptions) I have not gone through the details of JRY. It would take about an hour to read it out.

However, I will take up the points raised by you. So far as the crop insurance compensation is concerned, I think that our economy is not strong enough. I only want that every farmer small as well as the marginal farmer should get the amount of money spent in process of planting crops. But the problem is that in this case premium is given by the Government and when loan is given, that amount is deducted. It does not give that money out of its own resources. If the money were to be given to everyone, we would have to pay same premium or else the company would be bankrupt. I want your suggestion on this. The Government is ready to consider over it. Somewhere we exempt the farmers from paying land revenue who have land upto 5 acres. I would like to know as to whether we should not ask them to pay that revenue so that we can make the crop insurance a success. For this, I have asked my Ministry to recover from them at least capital cost. I have asked to study the matter. One day, our hon'ble Prime Minister was saying that it would be better to ponder over this matter. In this regard, I seek your cooperation also. Hon'ble Members will be invited some time to discuss on that. Some of them have discussed that. Flood occurs every year and we discuss on it and it goes on as Shankaracharya ji has said that everyday passes as usual but you have started a meaningful discussion. We will find out a permanent solution to this problem by discussing it with other Ministries.

Hon'ble Members come to me with several issues but I do not want to reply by saying that [English] I am looking into.

[Translation]

I want to stop such a practice. My Secretary and Joint Secretary have come here, therefore, we can discuss it. Either a solution can be found out immediately or follow up action would be taken. We want to adopt such a method which needs your cooperation. Acknowledgement to your letter will be received within 15 days and reply to it will have to be given soon. In case we receive letter, we will try to send its reply as soon as possible. We will find a wayout by discussing it with you. We will not neglect whatever you have said. I assure you that Officers of my Ministry have agreed to it and if one or two of them do not agree, rules are there in this regard. They can be charged with dereliction of duty. However, all are cooperating.

I would like to ask from you as to what should be done if such a bad situation has emerged today? Tomorrow is 'Jaumma' (Friday), you will go to your areas. On coming back, please inform me about the areas which have been affected by floods. Rains are continuing. I would like to submit if the State Governments do not have resources, we will not let them feel of funds crunch but at the same time, I would like to say that there is no much money available in the

Natural Calamity Fund. A letter has been sent to all the State Governments in this regard to have detailed information. You have got its benefit and held a meaningful discussion. I am really happy with it. In future, we will provide you more information to hold a good debate so that we may be able to find its solution.

The hon'ble Members hailing from Assam have held a good discussion. Of course, the situation is very bad there. An amount of Rs. 18.75 crore is still remaining as the share of Assam State and you can get it as and when you want to get it but before that Assam Government should send a report to the effect that all the amount has been spent and it wants more funds. If we do not receive such report how can we send money? I tell you the names of those states which have sent their report. The day, the Government of Haryana made a request, we ordered to despatch a Central team there within two or three days. The another State which has sent its report is the Jammu and Kashmir. Perhaps our hon'ble Members of Jammu and Kashmir have left.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : They have left after delivering speech.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Floods also come and go. We have received a report from Jammu and Kashmir and have despatched a Central team there also. The remaining States have not yet sent their reports. Hon'ble Members of Rajasthan were saying that their Chief Minister had asked for Rs. 300 crore or Rs. 100 crore immediately. As far as money is concerned, it is all right but at the same time, they should submit a report explaining details of damage occurred to the crops and the area of land washed away due to floods. (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us hear the hon. Minister uninterruptedly. He is giving important information.

[Translation]

MR. CHATURANAN MISHRA : We have discussed with you about the drawbacks of the Crop Insurance Scheme but I am not able to understand as to why the States are not taking the benefit of this Scheme. Before occurring floods or drought, a notice is to be given that crop is expected to be destroyed at a particular place. After receiving the notice our Insurance Company prepares itself for that. I would like to tell you that Assam, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar have got Rs. 0.50 crore, Rs. 702 crore, Rs. 167 crore and Rs. 34-35 crore respectively during the period of 'Kharif' from 1985 to 1995. I will provide a detailed list to you tomorrow. I have told my Ministry that all these things are not secret. This is the property of the people and should be released to the hon'ble Members. We are the representatives of the people, we are the public servants. Parliament is the Supreme. We will provide you a copy of this note otherwise, it will take much time to read it.

out. I have just said that the States do not utilise the amount of money. We have given almost Rs. 1200 crore during the period of 'Kharif' from 1985 to 1995. If they had utilised that amount, they could definitely get some more amount. You will get the information in this note in respect of all the States whether it is West Bengal or any other State. It is not right to give information one by one. That is why, I have told you about the procedure being adopted in releasing funds. The amount which I have mentioned has been given to you. An amount of a little more than Rs. 33 crore of Rajasthan is deposited. You can take it anytime after submitting the report. We can also give advance to you. You get advance. If it is a little more, it can be adjusted in the fifth year. If any untoward incident takes place during the course of time it is a different thing. If you cooperate, our Government will last for five years.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : We will not cooperate you. We want you to be out of power as early as possible. My submission is that last time floods occurred in Rajasthan...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Why are you losing patience. I am coming to your point also. An amount of Rs. 21 crore is outstanding of Rajasthan...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : I have said that sanction has been given to that money. Therefore, you should release Rs. 21 crore.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : You are right. The outstanding amount is also of several States including Bihar. Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not pending with us, we have already approved and now it is pending with the Ministry of Finance. We do not have any treasury. A committee in my Ministry constituted for this purpose has sanctioned the amount, therefore, you should contact the Ministry of Finance in this regard. At present no proposal is pending with my Ministry for want of sanction. We will discuss about the States which have not sent the proposal. Now, we will discuss on those points in a hurried manner which have been raised by you and almost all the hon'ble Members of Kerala. The issue of sea-erosion does not come under my Ministry. Had it been so, we would have helped. The second question is also related to it which had been raised by the hon'ble Members of Maharashtra.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Sea erosion is taking place in Karnataka also.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : It is all right but it also does not come under my Ministry. It has been said about Kalahandi, Orissa that starvation has taken place there several times. Hon'ble Member has said that people are in panic. They are not getting employment. I will ask the Department of Rural Employment to take stock of the situation there. We have not received the report from your State. However, we will ask them officially to send the report, then we will try to see as to what can be done on the part of the Ministry. But I

would like to tell you that an employment scheme named J.R.Y. is being run under Department of Rural Development. We will request the other concerned Departments to cooperate so that action can be taken immediately.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : I would like to ask from the hon'ble Minister as to what would be done regarding construction of Pucca houses for the poor?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : As far as the issue of Pucca houses is concerned, as I have said earlier, we would write to the Department of Rural Development about those houses which comes under Indira Awas Yojna that if the houses are destroyed due to floods or in arson those people will be given priority under Indira Awas Yojna.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Sir, with your permission, I would like to give an information that Kalahandi and Koraput occupy second position in the total food procurement being done in Orissa. Even then, people die of starvation there. It means that proper land reforms had not taken place there and the land had not been given to the needy persons. This all relates to your Ministry, therefore, you should pay attention to it.

[English]

It is a right case in a wrong forum.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : No doubt, it relates to my Ministry but we can only make a request to them because it is a matter of land and Sir, it comes exclusively under the jurisdiction of the State Government ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Will there not be an end of starvation there? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : I am very grateful to the hon'ble Minister for the good suggestion he has given. Sir, you have said that you will issue instructions to accord priority to those people whose houses under Indira Awas Yojana would be destroyed but my amendment to it is that there are a number of persons who do not fulfil the criteria of Indira Awas Yojna. So I request you to provide them Pucca houses in order to give them relief.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I shall issue instructions to the Department as per your suggestion.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Relief fund is under you and you have to sanction relief.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We shall send money but the arrangement is to be made by you only.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Sir, you please give the directions.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : How can we give directions. We are bound by an article of the Constitution

of India. Similarly, the State Government is bound by another article of the Constitution.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Anyway, will you give suggestion to the State Government?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I am telling about suggestion. We cannot issue order...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Sir, you can atleast do this as you have said that this note or the advance should go to the State Government. You have sent it to the Ministry of Finance after giving your sanction. If the Ministry of Finance does not release it for a month then the people shall die by that time...*(Interruptions)* You must assure the House that you will get the money cleared by the Ministry of Finance.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Jain, you are a new member so I must tell you when you ask any clarification, the Minister has to yield to you. That is it.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We are yielding to the point raised by the members. Yesterday, they reached here to avoid the 'namaj' of 'jumma'...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Sir, will you ask the State Government...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have just told you that if the hon'ble Minister yields to your point then only you can ask for any clarification.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : As hon'ble member has suggested to import some devices for disaster control from United Nations, but I consider it shameful. The foodgrain reserve is in abundance in our country and there is no need to seek help from abroad.

We have already discussed on the issue of Rs. 21 crore. There was also a question raised by Shri Ram Kripal Babu regarding the diare land erosion. Suggestion regarding crop insurance was also given I will get it look into. I will find out whether the erosion comes under my Ministry or the other Department. The functioning of our Ministry is strange. The process from sowing to reaping of sugarcane comes under our Department, reaping to crushing of sugar comes under the State Government and when the sugar is prepared, it comes under the Ministry of Food. This is the problem. The issue of erosion is not under our Ministry.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : We want that all the three ministries should come under your control.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Sometimes you want more Ministries under him and sometimes want them out of power. After all what do you want?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : An hon'ble member has mentioned about the death of 22 fishermen but Our Department is not aware of this. If you mention the name then we shall conduct an inquiry about that.

So far as the suggestion regarding the crop insurance is concerned, if crores of people become its member then its premium shall decrease and if the number of people will be only in lakhs then the premium shall be high. Members have not suggested new policy and whatever has been said by the hon'ble members, has already been discussed.

So far as Brahmaputra Board is concerned, though it is not related to our department but I would like to say one thing to hon'ble members that it has been mentioned in the Common Minimum Programme prepared by us that we shall provide funds and resources for the plans which are pending for a long period. As per information we have received, Planning Commission shall provide assistance from this budget for all the schemes of Rs. 500 crore and above which are pending for a long time. The actual position will be made clear only after the Budget. At present I cannot tell you anything.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : Please tell us something about West Bengal.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : If the West Bengal submits its report to us-

[English]

I am as inclined towards West Bengal as towards any part of the country and more so, towards you.

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : That is your kindness. But you please say something about West Bengal.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I cannot take something out of my pocket and give it to West Bengal. You can send me the Report, show me the facts, I am ready to help you because our endeavour is to help the people all over India.

[Translation]

I have discussed about the Brahmaputra Board because

[English]

That is the most ravaged area and questions have been raised about it, time and again. That is why, I am telling you.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : After the discussion is over I have also a suggestion to make.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : I agree with your proposal.

MR. CHAIRMAN : During discussion some members have told that the country has to face flood every year.

and where there is no water there occurs famine. For this a scheme should be prepared in order to link the North with South. You are very able Minister. In this regard suggestion had come during the discussion so please think over this.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We are ready to think over it seriously therefore we have requested the hon'ble Members that if the same subject is brought through a calling attention motion or otherwise, then we will discuss on this with the officials of the Ministry. It will not be just to discuss about irrigation and water resources. We have no right to say on this. Similarly, the issue of apex body was discussed. These were the suggestions more or less.

[English]

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there was a memorandum sent from the hon. Chief Minister of Assam to the hon. Prime Minister indicating the very peculiar nature of floods in Assam. The amount so far allotted to the State of Assam was given as a loan. What happens is in a year say Rs. 20 crore to Rs. 30 crore are allotted to the State, most of that amount it cut at the Central level and the actual amount disbursed to the State is hardly Rs. 3 crore or Rs. 4 crore. It is adjusted against the loan burden of the State. So, it was requested that if this loan burden is waived, then only the real amount can go to the State in the form of grants for taking preventive measures.

[Translation]

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, no Government has the right to waive off the loan. We have the right that we can make the payment prolong if they wish. We shall arrange to convert the short term loan into long term loan. There is a provision for Rs. 700 crore but if no one is saying anything then why should we do it ourselves? If you wish, you may submit the report mentioning the quantum of loan and that you shall make its payment after five years, not now. You may submit it and then extension of time shall be given.

But it will be a matter of discrimination if we waive off the loan of one state and leave the other states. At present an amount of Rs. 18.755 crore of your state is outstanding with us. Please don't allow anybody to die for this. This amount will not be reduced. You all are omnipotent in this country. The number of such people may be less but this House has got right and it can raise its voice...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Please pray to the Almighty to free the country from the floods. My suggestion is that a motion may be passed unanimously and be sent to the God.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We do not go to the God and those who have gone there, have not returned. We also do not have address of the God...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : I would like to make a request to the hon'ble Minister. The discussion of today is over but the hon'ble Minister should have meeting with individual state separately.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon'ble Minister has suggested that you should send in writing about the state.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : We shall have discussion. If report comes from your state and no one complies then it matters. You should send the report from your state. We shall certainly have discussion with you as to what is to be done. With these words I respect the feelings of the hon'ble members and conclude my speech.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the House stands adjourned till 11.00 A.M. on 19th July, 1996.

20.30 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, July 19, 1996/Asadha 28, 1918 (Saka).