

Therefore, I demand from the Union Government that the responsibility of the maintenance of this Highway should be entrusted to either C.P.W.D. or Border Road Organisation and get this Highway repaired.

It is also demanded from the Ministry of Surface Transport that an amount of Rs. 10 crore should be allocated immediately for the repairs of this road.

(iii) Need for Construction of Bridges on Gomti River in Chandvak, Uttar Pradesh

SHRI VIDYASAGAR SONKER (Saidpur) : In Chandvak, under my constituency, the bridge over the Gomti river has been lying closed since 1986, as a result of which the free flow of traffic is obstructed. The Government of Uttar Pradesh made available funds for the construction of a bridge over Gomti river at Karakat Thana Gaddi Marg but these funds have been diverted to other places without taking approval of the Government. Both these bridges are urgently required in public interest. Shahi bridge located over the Sai river in Jalalpur on Janupur Varanasi Road is in a perfect condition but after the commissioning of a new bridge, this Shahi bridge had been closed. This Shahi bridge can be opened for the pedestrians and cyclists in public interest. The traders of Jalalpur are facing the problem of livelihood.

I, therefore, would like to make humble submission to hon'ble Minister that the Government should construct all these bridges and open them for traffic in the public interest.

(iv) Need to Take Steps to Bring Back Gandhi Memorabilia offered to Auctioners in England for Sale

[English]

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (Jorhat) : The news that a former employee in the office of Mahatma Gandhi has offered 458 handwritten notes and papers of Mahatma Gandhi to auctioneers in England for sale smacks of national shame. It is indeed inspiring to see that a number of alert and sensible British Members of Parliament, connected with Indo-British Parliamentary forum, intervened by giving a notice for a motion in the House of Commons to bar the auction and to demand that these treasures documents be returned to the Navajeevan Trust set up in 1929 to which Mahatma Gandhi had left by a will his property and copyright to all his writings, published or unpublished. The motion further demanded that the House should appeal to Phillips Auctioneer which advertised the sale of Gandhi papers. The quick intervention of these British Parliamentarians is in sharp contrast to the non-serious reaction of the people and the Government of our country. Even one auctioneer, the Sotheby's, aghast at this senseless commercialism, refused straightaway to put them on sale.

It is ironical that an Indian, whose association with Mahatma Gandhi helped him collected these papers, chose to put 'Gandhi on sale' in order to become richer, at a time when the country is all set to celebrate the 50 years of Independence.

It is imperative that the Government should take immediate steps to get this Gandhi memorabilia back to India. The Indian Parliament should also convey its deep sense of gratitude to these British Parliamentarians for their timely intervention.

(v) Need to Convert the Existing Low Power T.V. Transmitter into a High Power Transmitter at Sitamarhi, Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi) : Sir, in Sitamarhi district of Bihar, on UHF Band, Channel 28, a low power transmitter has been functioning as a result of which reception of television programmes is not clear. Moreover, because of Nepal being very near, so long as transmission from Nepal Doordarshan continues, the reception of television programmes remains blurred in the rural areas. Only one channel is functioning in the district as a result of which the people of this area are unable to view the programmes transmitted by the other channels of the Doordarshan.

Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to convert the existing low power T.V. transmitter into a high power transmitter in Sitamarhi and the height of the mast should be increased so that people in the rural areas are able to watch the Doordarshan programmes.

(vi) Need to open a Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Nawabbari Jalpaiguri, West Bengal

[English]

PROF JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jalpaiguri) : I like to draw your kind attention to the fact that it is a longstanding demand of the people of the jalpaiguri and its adjacent area to open a Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court at Jalpaiguri-Nawabbari. Jalpaiguri is the Divisional Headquarters of North Bengal and it has 153 tea gardens from which the Government is earning huge amount of revenue every year. It is an ideal place to open a Circuit Bench.

I do request the Government to take immediate necessary steps so that the Circuit Bench may be established at Nawabbari, Jalpaiguri at an early date.

(vii) Need to Lay New Railway Lines between Macherla and Raichur via Nagarkurnool and from Vikarabad to Krishna via Pargin in Andhra Pradesh

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) : A survey had been conducted for the laying of new Railway lines

from Macherla to Raichur via Nagarkurnool and from Vikarabad to Krishna in Raichur district via Pargin. These two lines pass through the very backward districts of Mahaboob Nagar, Ranga Reddy and parts of Guntur of Andhra Pradesh. Though the survey was conducted long back, no action had been taken yet by the Ministry of Railways. If these two lines are laid, there will be shortening of the distance between Guntur district and Meheboob Nagar District and time will be saved for the commuters from Guntur to Raichur and from Ranga Reddy district to Raichur. The transport facilities for the people will also improve. It will pave the way for industrialisation in Mahaboob Nagar district in my constituency of Nagarkurnool particularly.

I request the Government (Railway Ministry) to take up these lines immediately.

15.43 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Drought Situation in Orissa - Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we turn to Discussion under Rule 193. The total time allotted is two hours. Shri Bhakta Charan Das who initiated the debate has already taken 28 minutes.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal) : Yesterday the hon. Chair said that there would be no time limit for this discussion. Most of the Orissa MPs were present. Every State is affected by unprecedented drought.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us continue the discussion. We shall consider it subsequently. Shri Bhakta Charan Das will please continue. Please bear in mind that you have already exhausted 28 minutes and you should finish within three or four minutes and conclude your speech so that the other hon. Member also can take part.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS (Kalahandi) : Orissa drought situation is no less serious than the Andhra Pradesh cyclone situation.

SHRI JAG MOHAN (New Delhi) : Will the item relating to DDA Bill be taken up today? The hon. Minister is also sitting now. We have two hours up to six o'clock. If there is a chance, we should be told about it. What is your decision?

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member should know that we are discussing the drought situation in Orissa.

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Will the DDA bill be taken up today or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN : I cannot predict on that now. You can also very well share the view with me that I cannot predict nor can you also predict.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Yesterday I was suggesting some permanent measures to fight out the chronic situation of Kalahandi and Nuapara districts. I referred to some of the major and medium irrigation projects. There are many streams and rivers flowing over Kalahandi and Nuapara districts, but there has not been any irrigation project. There is one Udanti river which has flown along Sirapalli bloc and Khadiyal Bloc.

This Sinapalli block famine in 1965 was very much famous. But there has not been any permanent irrigation project for this block especially. So, I would suggest to the Government to include the Udanti river project to irrigate this dry-spell area.

The other one is about the Madanpur-Rampur block. There has been a proposal for setting up the Rahul-Utei complex which would be a major project. But no step has been taken so far to include this project either by the State Government or by the Government of India. So, I would request the Government that the Rahul-Utei major complex irrigation project should be taken up.

There are two other medium irrigation project potentialities in the district. One is the Sandul medium irrigation project and the other is the Ret medium irrigation project. I wanted to suggest some permanent measures. Unless permanent measures are taken, this district cannot recover from the drought situation.

Besides the other irrigation projects, the State Government-owned main roads are in extremely worst conditions, what to talk about the village and panchayat roads. There are block headquarters. But they do not have permanent communication facilities with the district headquarter. Sinapalli block people cannot go to the district headquarters of Nowpara because there are three bridges to be constructed and no step has been taken to construct the bridges, what to talk about the village and the panchayat. There are thirty villages each in many panchayats but they do not have any communication facilities with their panchayat headquarters. They do not have communication facilities with the district headquarters. So, I would request the Government of India to provide sufficient financial assistance to build the road system of Kalahandi district starting from the village to the district headquarters so that thousands of labourers can work in labour-intensive work and they can fight out this drought situation.

I would like to say about another sad part of it. The then Planning Commission which was headed by Dr. Mohan Daria passed the 54 kilometre Lanjigarh road to Junagarh railway line. At that time I was the Minister of State for Railways. It was included in the interim Budget of the Railways. Money was placed for that. But the progress of the work is so low that in the last five years only an amount of rupees four crore has been spent but the rest of the amount is not given. Even in this Budget also for this year only rupees one crore has been placed for this railway line. So, how to develop