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Title: Problems being faced by people of West Bengal due to erosion of the banks of river Ganga-Padma.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : No, Sir. We have not discussed it in the House. Today thousands of people are on *dharna*. This is a very important subject.

MR. SPEAKER: But the subject is, no doubt, important. That is why I am allowing you to speak.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, thousands of people from West Bengal have come to Delhi and they are holding *dharna* at Jantar Mantar.

The situation is very serious in West Bengal. The Government of West Bengal, to tackle the issue of erosion in the five districts, had sent a proposal to the Union Government. They had asked for more than Rs. 700 crore. But only Rs. 18 crore was released one year back. The Government of West Bengal has already submitted the utilisation report. But after that, so far, not a single paisa has been released for tackling the serious erosion problem in the State of West Bengal.

Sir, this is not a State issue. This is not a problem of a particular State.

It should be treated as a national problem. Hundreds of villages have been affected; a number of villages have been washed away. Hundreds of people have become homeless; they have lost their houses and their lands. The Central Government has not come forward to assist the State Government to tackle this problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, please sit down. Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Shri Rupchand Pal and Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh can associate themselves with this issue since they have given notices regarding this issue.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I demand that the Government should provide adequate funds to tackle this problem of erosion which is very serious in my district.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Acharia, please conclude. I have heard your problem and the other three hon. Members can associate themselves with this issue.

Okay. The next item is 'India's stand on war on Iraq', to be raised by Shri Prabodh Panda. Shri Panda, you can take only two minutes.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): Sir, the Government should respond to this serious situation. Hundreds of people are sitting on the roads. Their livelihood is lost. Their lands are lost. In such a situation, the Government should respond. Let the Government respond to this serious situation of erosion of Rivers Ganga-Padma.

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