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COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

FOURTH REPORT

SHRI KHADILKAR (Khed) : I beg to present the Fourth Report of the Committee of Privileges.

12.43 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

TWELFTH REPORT

SHRI M. R. MASANI (Rajkot) : I beg to present the Twelfth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Excesses Over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations disclosed in the Appropriation Accounts (Civil) 1965-66 and Action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Forty-fifth Report (Third Lok Sabha) relating to Excesses Over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations disclosed in the Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1963-64.

12.43½ hrs.

STATEMENT RE : TUTICORIN HARBOUR PROJECT

MR. SPEAKER : Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao to make a statement.

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING (DR V. K. R. V. RAO) : Should I read it out or shall I lay it on the Table of the House ?

MR. SPEAKER : He can lay it on the Table of the House.

DR. V. K. R. V. RAO : I beg to lay on the Table of the House a statement on the Tuticorin Harbour Project. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1955/67].

12.44 hrs.

STATEMENT RE : EARTHQUAKE IN WESTERN INDIA

श्री जार्ज फरनेम्बीज (बम्बई दक्षिण) :
अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने कोयना के भूकम्प के बारे में स्थगन-प्रस्ताव दिया है।

श्री बेवराव पाटिल (यवतमाल) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने इस बारे में काल-एटन्शन नोटिस दिया है।

MR. SPEAKER : Yesterday there was a very shocking earthquake in Maharashtra and a large number of people died. Naturally, not only the Members of this House but the whole country is anxious to know what the details are. May I request the Prime Minister or the Home Minister to make a statement sometime today ?

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) :

May I just say a few words ? I do not have much information just now, but I should like to say a few words if you will allow me.

I should like to express my deep distress at the great human tragedy which has been caused by the earthquake in western India. It is one of the severest we have had and certainly the biggest ever felt in that area. It has resulted, as the hon. members know, in a high death toll. We do not, as yet, have the full figures because it is only as they remove the debris and the information comes in from towns and villages that the full extent of the loss will be known. But we know that there had been extensive damage to property. The Home Minister happened to be in Maharashtra when this news reached him and he flew immediately to Koyanagar. Yesterday when the news came to Delhi, our Minister, Dr. K. L. Rao, rushed immediately to the Koyana Dam. According to present information, no damage has been done to the Dam.

I should like to read out a report which has come from the Director-General of the Meteorological Department. He says :

'A major earthquake shock took place at 04 hours 21 minutes Indian Standard Time on the 11th December, 1967. The epicentre of this shock has been located about 115 kilometres south of Poona near Koyana. According to the records of the Delhi Observatory, the magnitude of the shock was 7½ in the Richter Scale, which will class it as a major shock capable of causing severe damage near the epicentre. Available reports indicate

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

that the shock has been felt widely up to Surat in the north and Bangalore in the south. Poona city was severely shaken. Radio reports indicate that 1500 people were injured and about 105 were killed, as far as we know."

I have received a piece of news just now and that is that the tremors were again felt in Bombay around 11.58 A.M. and in several areas, people came out of their houses, on finding their doors and windows rattling.

May I express my sense of deep sorrow at this calamity and request you to convey our sincere sympathies to the families of the bereaved? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: May I request the Prime Minister or the Home Minister that as and when they get any additional information on this today evening or tomorrow morning, whatever is received at a later stage, they may kindly apprise the House of this.

श्री जार्ज फरनेन्डीज : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं एक जानकारी चाहता हूँ। जब गृह-मंत्री अथवा प्रधान मंत्री यहां पर मालूमात रखेंगे, तो वे इस बारे में भी जानकारी दें। मैं शनिवार को उस इलाके में था। मुझे पता चला कि वहां पर एक महीने से माइनर अर्थ ट्रेमजें हो रहे थे। क्या सरकार ने इस बारे में जांच की थी ?

श्री रणधीर सिंह (रोहतक) : सोनीपत में तीन साल से लगातार ट्रेमजें आ रहे हैं।

श्री जार्ज फरनेन्डीज : क्या सरकार ने वहां के लोगों से कहा था कि वे अपने घरों में न रहें और उनको खाली कर दें ?

मैं इस सम्बन्ध में एक सुझाव के रूप में कुछ कहना चाहता हूँ। यह घटना महाराष्ट्र में सांगली के आस-पास के इलाके में घटी है, जिसमें सैकड़ों की तादाद में लोग मरे हैं और वहां पर बहुत बुरी अवस्था है। क्या मैं यह बिनती कर सकता हूँ कि कांग्रेस पार्टी वहां पर जो अपना अधिवेशन करने जा रही है, वह उसको वहां न करके और किसी इलाके में करने का प्रयास करे ?

श्री रणधीर सिंह : हरियाणा में सोनीपत में लगातार तीन साल से ट्रेमजें आ रहे हैं। वहां भी हज़ारों आदमी मरेंगे।

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Randhir Singh, may I request you not to repeat this? I appeal to you again not to get up like this every minute.

श्री रणधीर सिंह : वहां पर हज़ारों आदमी मर जायेंगे। मुश्किल यह है कि जब आदमी मरते हैं, तभी सुनते हैं, पहले नहीं।

MR. SPEAKER: May be so. Even then you should not get up every time. I think appeals are not heard by you.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH: Sir, I will submit to whatever you say, but you must hear me.

श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी : माननीय सदस्य ने जो प्रश्न पूछा है, उसके बारे में मैं यह कहना चाहती हूँ, कि हमको खबर आई थी कि कुछ छोटे-मोटे भूकम्प वहां पहले हुए थे। महाराष्ट्र की सरकार ने एक एक्सपर्ट कमेटी नियुक्त की, जिसमें इंजीनियर, जियोलाजिस्ट्स और सीस्मालोजिस्ट्स थे, इस बारे में जांच करने के लिए। यह जांच अभी भी जारी है।

श्री कंवर लाल गुप्त (दिल्ली सदर) : वहां पर क्या रिलीफ मेजजें किये गये हैं ?

श्री स्वतंत्र सिंह कोठा 1 (मंदसौर) : वहां के लोगों के रिलीफ के लिए क्या किया गया है ?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nath Pai.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA (Tumkur) : Sir, the Prime Minister has stated that so far as Mysore is concerned . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lakkappa, I have not called you. I have called Mr. Nath Pai. You cannot shout like that.

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) : Sir, the tragedy is too big to make any kind of partisan allegations. But there is a very important matter. Hon. members laughed when Mr. Fernandes asked whether there was any intimation. I do not know. Earthquakes do not issue warnings before they take place. Sir, there is some-