

[*Translation*]

(II) Need to provide necessary assistance to the farmers of Lakhimpur Kheri, whose crops had been damaged by recent rains and hailstorm

SHRIMATI USHA VERMA (Kheri): Sir, the sudden rain, storm and severe hailstorm that lashed the Lakhimpur district on 22.3.90 have completely damaged the crops of all villages of Vijua, Bakejanj and Dhirara blacks in this district. The small farmers have suffered huge losses which cannot be compensated because the natural calamity has completely destroyed the crops of wheat, lahi, masoor and arhar. Now it seems well-nigh impossible for the villagers to feed even their children. They see darkness all around and are not finding any way to come out of this impasse. Therefore, I would request the Government to send a study team to assess the loss suffered by these villagers. In the meantime, the Government should provide immediate relief to the farmers in this area and orders should be issued immediately to stop the recovery of land revenue and advances in this area.

Thus the Government should immediately provide relief to these poor villagers.

[*English*]

(iii) Need for an additional Periodical Overhauling and Traction shed unit at Bitragunta in Vijayawada division in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI P. PENCHALLIAH (Nellore): Bitragunta Loco-Shed which is in Vijayawada Division of South Central Railway, Andhra Pradesh, is the third largest in Asia, built nearly 105 years ago.

A circular type loco-shed and a shed consisting of powerful mechanised cranes, which cost around Rs. 50 crores, are the salient features of Bitragunta Loco-shed.

Nearly, 150 loco enginers used to be repaired in this loco-shed.

After the electrification of Madras-Vijayawada Section, this loco-shed had been shifted to some other area. As a result, there is no activity here and the Railway property worth crores of rupees is lying idle since then.

Since Railway Department has not recognised Bitragunta, no other unit has been set up there. There is a lot of Railway property including quarters, schools, land etc. at Bitragunta.

Hence, I appeal to the Government to set up an additional Electrical Periodical overhauling and Traction Shed Unit at Bitragunta and make best use of all the facilities and machinery which are already available here.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): As the hon. Members are aware the Business Advisory Committee has allotted six hours for discussion on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence.

Yesterday, we had consumed half an hour and five and a half hours are to be consumed today. Since we have decided to sit upto 7 O' clock, we will be able to devote five and a half hours. The Prime Minister will intervene at 5.30 P. M. Soon after that, the Minister will reply and we can take the vote around 7.00 P. M.

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[*Translation*]

(iv) Need to take up some railway projects for development of Madhepura District in Bihar

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR RAVI YADAV (Madhepura): Sir, Madhepura dis-

[Sh. Ramendra Kumar Ravi Yadav]

istrict in Bihar is a very backward district from all angles. It is a flood-prone area. As such, the farmers and workers are living in a pitiable condition there.

The transportation is the most important and necessary source for industrialisation. Therefore, I request the Central Government that:

- (1) The railway line from Bihariganj to Simri Bakhtiyarpur should be revived.
- (2) The proposal for a railway line from Madhepura to Pratapganj via Sidheshwar should be implemented immediately.
- (3) The railway line from Katihar to Mansi via Madhepura Saharasa should be converted into a broad gauge railway line.
- (4) The Harihar Math Express train which runs from Saharasa to Sonpur should be diverted from Banmankhi junction to Sonpur via Madhepura.

[English]

- (v) **Need to decentralise Eastern Coal fields Ltd. and have a separate Coal company for Orissa**

SHRI BHAJAMAN BEHERA (Dhenkanal): The fall in production of coal and loss of Rs. 200 crore during the year suffered by the Eastern Coalfields Limited is a serious matter of national concern.

The Talcher and Ib Valley coal fields of Orissa have potential reserve of coal which accounts for one-fifth of the reserves of coal in the country and produce more than half of

the total production of coal of the ECL. Both the coal fields of Orissa have bulk buyers like power plants, steel plants and NALCO. Due to dispersed locations of the coal fields the management by the Divisional Office is far from satisfactory and results in pilferage and lesser despatches. It is therefore of paramount importance to decentralise ECL and have a separate coal company for Orissa for efficient management. By doing so the national loss of Rs. 200 crore can be saved and interest of the State would be served well. I request the Government to avert the loss and constitute a separate coal company for Orissa.

[Translation]

- (vi) **Need for financial assistance to Himachal Pradesh Government for flood control measures to save Una district from recurring floods in the Svan River**

PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL (Hamirpur): Flood in Svan river as also in its 75 small tributaries causes havoc every year in district Una, Himachal Pradesh. In 1988 flood caused incalculable loss of life and property in the district and the then Prime Minister paid visit to the State and assured the flood victims that the Central Government would provide maximum financial assistance to the State for flood-control measures in Svan river but it is a matter of regret that till now nothing has been done to save the area from devastation by floods.

Therefore I would request the Government that maximum financial assistance should be provided to the State Government to control the recurring floods in Svan river and to channelise it. Channelisation of the Svan river can help people retrieve large tracts of cultivable land and the district and state can be saved from the loss of human lives and property. By providing irrigation facilities in the retrieved land, the State will not only become self-reliant in foodgrains but will also be able to supply foodgrains to other States.