

About 8 thousand hectares of land is being washed away due to soil erosion every year and about 60 thousand tonnes of top soil is being destroyed. Consequently, the foodgrain production is falling at a rate of 36 tonnes every year.

Now I would like to make a submission about my district. Farakka barrage is causing havoc there. Due to wrong planning there is heavy soil erosion in Padma, Ganga, Bhagirathi, Bhairah and Jalangi rivers. About 30 lakh hectares of land has disappeared there. Last year, 6 villages of Bhagwangola block-II were washed away. As a result, the river which was flowing at the Indo-Bangladesh border has changed its course and entered the Indian side. This has caused some dispute between the two countries because a part of Indian land has gone over to Bangladesh. We give land to farmers but at the time of harvest, the people from Bangladesh take away the entire crop. It led to international border dispute. If I ask something in this regard, Shri Kotadia will say that it is a state subject. I would submit that it is not a state subject. It has now become an international border dispute. That is why it is no longer a state subject. Therefore, efforts should be made in this direction. Strange are the ways of the Central Government. When there is soil erosion, the Centre says, it is a state subject but when coal, gold or diamond mine is found in the same area, the Centre jump in immediately to grab it saying that it is under the Central Government. Please do something in this matter. I will not ask for money. I would appeal on behalf of my district to at least pay a visit there. I will be there and my colleague Zainal Abedin and comrade Nani Bhattacharya, former State irrigation Minister and now an M.P. will also accompany. You can see for yourself how even at Faizilpur, near Lalgola, where the distance between Padma and Bhagirathi rivers is just one kilometer, there is heavy soil erosion. 27 lakh cusecs of water flow in river Padma and the carrying capacity of river Bhagirathi is 40 thousand cusecs. If soil erosion continues and both the rivers become one, the cumulative flow of 27.40 lakh cusecs of water will wash away Murshi-

dabad district as well as upto Kalyani of Nadia district.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has to go to Rajya Sabha so you may continue your speech after the makes his Statement.

17.36 hrs.

[Translation]

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Situation Arising out of the Cyclonic

Storm in the Bay of Bengal Affecting Coastal Areas of Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA): Sir, I seek leave of the House to make a statement on the current situation arising out of the severe cyclonic storm in the Bay of Bengal and the steps taken by the Government for rendering relief to the affected population. I am deeply conscious that the Honouable Members are quite concerned about the hardship caused by the cyclonic storm and its after effects mainly in the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh and to some extent in some parts of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.

2. India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported about the depression formed in the south-west Bay of Bengal by the midnight of Friday-Saturday (4-5 May, 1990) which was lying centered at 600 kms. south-west of Madras at 0830 IST of Saturday, the 5 May, 1990. The movement of cyclonic storm was in the direction of north-west initially and it was expected to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm and cross the coast in between Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu and Nel-

[Sh. Upendra Nath Verma]

lore in Andhra Pradesh. However, with the passage of time, the storm took a more northerly course and skirting Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry crossed the coast yesterday night at the mouth of Krishna river in Andhra Pradesh, 40 kms. south of Machilipatnam. The storm is likely to move in the northerly direction weakening gradually. Under its influence, heavy rainfall has been experienced at a few places in the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Gale force winds of 200-220 kms. per hour and surge of sea to a height of 5 meters above the normal astronomical tidal level were predicted which are likely to inundate low lying coastal areas of Prakasam, Guntur, Krishna, West Godavari and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

3. The areas mostly affected by the storm are the coastal districts of Guntur, Prakasam, Krishna West and East Godavari of Andhra Pradesh. As a result of the storm and heavy rainfall, there has been distribution in the rail and road communications and damage to infrastructure like power have taken place. Communication system in the affected area is out of order. A fuller assessment is yet to be made by the State Government and further details are awaited.

4. Immediately after receipt of the storm warning, concerned State/UT Governments well contact and were requested to take all precautionary measures to minimise the loss to the life and the property. The developments are being closely monitored at the centre by the Crisis Management Group functioning in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. Various Ministries/Departments/Agencies of the Central Government have been keeping continuous touch with the State Government authorities and all necessary steps have been taken to ensure the availability of essential commodities in the affected areas. Similar action has also been taken by the concerned Departments/Agencies to carry out restoration works of damaged structures such as roads, bridges,

power transmission lines, railway tracts etc. at the earliest. Assistance of Army, Navy and Air Force has been extended whenever such assistance has been sought for by the State Governments.

5. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that about 1.5 lakh people have been evacuated from the low lying areas of coastal districts of that state. 201 relief camps have been opened where feeding has been organised. So far 22 deaths have been reported due to collapse of houses in the affected districts of Andhra Pradesh, U.T. of Pondicherry and the Govt. of Tamil Nadu have reported two and one deaths respectively due to electrocution.

6. Honourable Members may note that the Central and the State Governments have taken timely preparatory measures including timely warning but for which the loss to life and property would have been enormous.

7. According to the revised scheme for financing the relief expenditure which came into force from 1.4.90 based on the recommendations of the 9th Finance Commission, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have been allocated Rs. 86 crores and Rs. 39 crores respectively under the Calamity Relief Fund, 75% of which will be given by the Central Government as Non-Plan Grant. Ministry of Finance is taking action to constitute this Fund and work out the details of its modalities. State Governments can undertake relief operation out of the allocated funds. Under the revised scheme, State Governments have been given full power to spend the money out of these funds in the wake of any natural calamity. In case any State Government has ways and means problem, it can approach the Ministry of Finance for release of ways and means advance which can be later adjusted against the Calamity Relief fund as and when it becomes operative.

8. I would like to assure the House that the Government of India is keeping a close watch on the situation and the Crisis Management Group in the Department of Agri-

culture and cooperation is meeting regularly to take stock of the situation. Assistance required by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh is being extended. It will be our endeavour to extend all possible help to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for carrying out relief operations in the cyclone affected areas. Deputy Prime Minister and Agriculture Minister has already sent messages to the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu in which he has also assured them of all help as may be required by the State Governments.

17.40 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (General)
1990-91

[English]

Ministry of Water Resources Ministry of
Agriculture CONTD

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hussain, you may please continue.

[Translation]

SHRISYED MASUDLAL HOSSAIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was speaking about agriculture. One of the most important pre-requisite for agriculture is land reforms. The previous government enacted many laws in regard to land reforms but none of them were implemented. Merely enacting laws does not serve any purpose. There is need for a good intention in some good is to be done. If the political will is lacking, things cannot move smoothly. I would like to cite a small example. West Bengal constitutes 4 per cent of the total area of the country. One-sixth of the total area identified as wasteland in the country by the Central Government is in West Bengal. One-fifth of the total land distributed among the landless is in West Bengal. One-third of the total beneficiaries in the country live in West Bengal. Similarly, 50 per cent of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who have been distributed land belong to

West Bengal that is called political will. Besides, we got registered 13 lakh 90 thousand share-croppers. Consequently, the foodgrain production is increasing every year. So far as family planning is concerned, it is said that a person having 8-10 children cannot pay full attention to each of them, whereas a person having one child can do it easily. If his child falls sick, he can provide him best medical aid. Same is true of land also. If a farmer has a small piece of land, he can pay full attention to it and produce more. There is lot of hue and cry for the bonded labour of U.P. and Bihar. The subject of bonded labour has been brought under the Ministry of Labour. It would have been far better had it been under the Ministry of Agriculture. In fact, they still continue to be bonded labour as they have not been distributed land. Consequently, they are forced to go back to their old masters and beg for work.

In the capital in system, cooperatives strengthen the hands of capitalists only. But even then Lenin remarked that there was need for cooperatives because it is through them that the people would come together to fight capitalism. Today, we see cooperatives functioning in our country. It is said that India has to maximum number of cooperatives in the world. We have 3.5 lakh co-operatives in the country with a membership of over 15 crores. But in fact who controls these cooperatives? I would like to place figures before you in this regard. There were 2 lakh Primary Agriculture Cooperatives in 1970. The number came down to 93,496 in 1984 and further fell to 76,000 in 1987-88. On the other hand, more and more cooperatives are coming up in the field of sugar mills, weaving mills and oil mills. In fact, these cooperatives are in the hands of a few and they are benefitting the most.

Let me present a few more figures in this regard. Who does to NCDC provide funds to? It has released Rs. 19.14 crores to the LAMPS societies of Scheduled Tribes in a number of villages. On the other hand, it has released Rs. 586.78 crores for processing units and Rs. 87.58 crores for sugar mills. You may be aware that 57.5 percent of the