

employment, and that we have concentrated in one sector. In fact, UTI has concentrated not only on the private sector, but on the public sector also.

Now about the question whether we have provided for any job opportunities. When we invest in cement companies, man-made fibre units or textiles, are we not doing something for the nation, and creating jobs for the people? We have to think about this.

We talk about poverty here. Government of India's economic policy has also been criticized. I would say that Government's entire economic policy is meant to promote savings and investment. We have also to reduce the disparities, social and economic. So, we have to intensify our direct attack on poverty. How could that be done? By providing job opportunities to the masses of our nation. That is why we have to give more opportunities for the weaker sections by providing them more jobs.

Our concept of socialism has also been attacked. The secrets of our concept of socialism is that we have to reduce disparities by giving more job opportunities for the masses.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : But you have given more facilities to the affluent classes.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : That is the thinking of some people, unfortunately. We say that we are not in a position to create job opportunities. We also sometimes say that the public sector is not in a position to create job opportunities. When the private sector is coming forward to create job opportunities, I do not know why we should grudge it. Let us allow them also to invest in the system ; and let them create job opportunities for the people of this country. After all, ours is a mixed economy. We cannot ignore it. I think hon. Members will be very happy to know that even the Chief Minister of West Bengal has gone in for accepting this theory.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : Because you

are not investing anything, and we do not want to die, we do it.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : The reality is that we cannot ignore the private sector. Their contribution to the country's economy is also there. We cannot shut our eyes.

16.00 hrs.

And here also, when the opportunities are not coming these cannot be created by the public sector alone ; let them also create them. After all, it is for India, for our own people, and let us give economic strengths to the people of this country. That is our objective. For that purpose, I am only suggesting it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, we shall stop here because there is a discussion under rule 193 at 4 P.M. You may continue your speech tomorrow.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Our friend, who is initiating the discussion has undergone heart operation. He may be permitted to speak while sitting in his seat.

16.01 hrs

DISCUSSION RE : SITUATION ARISING OUT OF FLOODS, DROUGHT AND OTHER NATURAL CALAMITIES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the House shall take up discussion under Rule 193. Shri B.V. Desai.

SHRI B.V. DESAI (Raichur) : Mr. Chairman, the subject on which I am going to raise a discussion is such an important and urgent one that it is being selected on the first day of the session itself. When I just think over this subject, my memory goes back to recent flood in Tamilnadu where lakhs of people have been rendered homeless and so much human lives is involved. If you read the headlines of the paper, you will find that it is terrible. For

[Shri B. V. Desai]

example, four lakh people have been rendered homeless in Madras and death toll due to rain risen to 63. Again, if you see the drought affected area in Karnataka, you will find that it is about 15 million hectares. That is how things go on. Instead of just cataloguing all this, it will be enough if I just mention what is the actual loss, average loss per year from 1953 to 1981. A table has been given there. The total areas effected by floods in million hectares is about 8.1 ; that is the average per year which has been taken from 1953 to 1981.

16.02 hrs.

[SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN
In the Chair]

The total population involved is 27.1 million per year. The damage to crops in million hectares is 3.7 ; in Rupees it is 2483 million ; it is the average of every year that I am talking of. Cattle lost in thousands—97.4 thousands ; human lives lost in thousands—1.4 thousand ; damage to public utility is Rs.1103 million ; damage to crops, houses and public—4069 million. It is not only happening in one year ; both these calamities are recurring aspects in our country. Therefore, instead of cataloguing human suffering and how it is to be worked out, I would suggest some remedial measures which are to be taken on a long term basis as well as short term basis. In regard to measure on short term basis, our technology has so improved that these floods can be forewarned and precautionary measures can be taken instead of remedial measures. Supposing by INSAT B we are shown in the T.V. that a cyclonic storm is being formed in the Bay of Bengal, precautionary measures ought to have been taken because the intensity of the flood can be gauged from the concerned instrument. So, my understanding is that such measures are not being taken and human suffering becomes still more miserable ; that is how the recent floods have occurred ; in the same way, in north also, floods have taken very heavy tolls especially in the north as well as eastern parts of the country.

So, a second measure which is most important is the relief works which are

undertaken and the aid which is given by the Central Government and the State Government augments it with its own resources. Whatever the works that are taken up they should be complementary to the measures that is, if certain amounts are to be spent in the drought-stricken areas, the amount that has to be spent in that area should be complementary to what the State Government is already spending. Take the example of Karnataka, which will be applicable to the other States also. For example new constructions or canal digging, let us take. Every year drought is there. And every year help will be there from the Centre as well as the State Government. They spend crores of rupees. But if the same amount is spent for canal digging it will be better. For example, Ghataprabha, Mallaprabha and Upper Krishna — all these areas can be taken up. And in the Cauvery basin also the position is the same. All the dams are full of water. Unfortunately due to lack of funds or lack of proper management the canal digging has not been taken up. Therefore, I would like canals to be dug in all the drought stricken areas. This measure should be taken into account while spending the amounts both by the Central Government as well as the State Governments.

Another very important measure for the flood affected areas is the denudation of forests. One has to just understand what type of denudation has taken place in the Himalayas. Just if one goes across by the tract to reach Badrinath up to Jyotir Mutt, which is now called Joshi Mutt, one will understand what it was 20 or 25 years back and what it is today. It is like as though it has become a barren land. You will find at different places, different forests being cut for hydro-electric projects and like that the denudation of forests has taken place and the cumulative effect is the incidence of floods in the Northern part of the country. In the same way in the Eastern parts in the Brahmaputra basin also not only the felling of trees should be stopped, for afforestation crores and crores of trees are to be planted at different places which will prevent the denudation, that would also help the afforestation. Therefore, steps have to be

taken on a priority basis. Otherwise these two things cannot be controlled.

One important aspect in this respect is the Famine Code which has been there ever since the British Raj. Now also the same thing is used. It requires to be amended. Remedial measures are to be taken in all the drought affected areas. In fact, in most of the places, practically just to avoid the responsibility the State Governments and the Central Governments would declare it as a famine infected area. It is quite unfair. In fact, in a welfare State, as we proclaim ourselves, it is not correct. Therefore, the Famine Code which comes as an inheritance from the British Raj should be immediately re-drafted. This is my request.

Another one important measure which comes to my mind is the aid. The aid given to the drought affected areas and the flood-affected areas, if they are examined, there is little qualitative difference between the two. The aid given to flood affected areas is taken as grant, whereas drought affected areas are given aid which is deducted from the Plan allocation. So, on the notional assumption that drought-affected areas get the funds from the Plan allocations, the funds are utilised for famine relief, whereas it is not the case in the flood-affected areas. Both are natural calamities and they have to be considered as such. There may be a little change in the names. The Eastern and Southern areas are always hit by these calamities, they are drought prone and they recall Northern and the Eastern parts of the country are flood-affected areas. So there is an imbalance in the working of the plan also. From that angle I strongly feel that the aid given to the drought affected areas should be taken at par with the aid given to the flood affected areas. There are some of the short-term measures.

To tackle the flood and drought situation in the country on a permanent basis we have to take some long term measures. The only thing which we have to do for solving this problem, is the formulation of an all India water grid. Unless it is done on a priority basis, I do not think these two problems can be solved. We can understand the anxiety of the entire House that this subject has been allotted top priority in

taking up this subject on the first day itself. Our Prime Minister is intending to take this country to the 21st century technologically. But this is one of the most important items. Unless we form an all India water grid and the entire country is not taken out from recurrence of floods and droughts, I do not think it will be worthwhile. Therefore, my request is that the national water policy should be taken on an urgent basis and before the turn of the century we must be somewhere near in formulating the all India water grid. I know that formulation of this grid is not an easy one because there is clash of interests among different States. The Prime Minister has already taken steps in formulating the national water policy. We have already taken steps in formulating the national water resources council. Only last month its first meeting has taken place wherein, of course, divergent views have been expressed by different Chief Ministers. The council consists of Prime Minister as the Chairman, Vice-Chairman is the Irrigation Minister and all the Chief Ministers are the members of this council. Naturally different States have different views and especially so when so many inter-State water disputes are still pending. In that background I feel very frankly that given the goodwill among different States, every State will gain in declaring water as a national asset. So many give and take have to take place in this calculation, because our Constitution is a little vague on this aspect. To declare water as a national commodity and inter-State rivers as national rivers, it requires some constitutional amendment because resource utilisation is part of the State subject whereas inter-State water projects are the Central subject. Unless all the Chief Ministers take the national interest in view, this cannot be done. Therefore, in the first meeting itself, the hon. Prime Minister has taken a right step in making a group of the Chief Ministers from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Punjab to formulate a national water policy. It is a step in the right direction. Unless surplus water is not taken out from the water basins and supplied to the arid areas where water is a scarce commodity, these two problems can never be solved fully. And it requires a fund of goodwill from different States.

[Shri B. V. Desai]

Therefore, the panacea for these two ills is an all India water grid. For this there are so many schemes which are lying in the library like the garland canal or Cauvery-Ganga link or whatever name you may call it. But the basic fact remains that the surplus water from the river basin has to be drained out and supplied to the arid areas in drought prone areas mainly in south as well as west. The eastern and the northern parts of the country are always affected by floods and the other two parts are always affected by droughts.

One more point I would like to mention and then I will conclude. When I say national water grid, of course, there is an emotional integration also in this because as a citizen of India whether from south or from north, everyone has got an emotional thinking, emotional feeling that in his life time he should try to bring some water from a pitch from Rameshwaram and put it into Ganga and again take some water from Ganga back to Rameshwaram. So, that emotional integration will be strengthened if it is backed by inter-basin water grid giving an economic content to that emotional integration. With these words I thank you.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, India is a big country. In one part of the country we are witnessing severe floods. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat are affected by drought these days. For the last three years we have been witnessing the same phenomenon. Some other States like U.P., Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Tamil Nadu, and even the east coast also, are witnessing floods these days, but the Government of India is not taking proper interest and immediate care of these States. They are taking time in fulfilling the formalities. When a person is hungry, he needs something to eat immediately. It is no use giving him food after two or three days. The same is the situation with regard to Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is witnessing drought for the last three successive years, that is, 1983-84, 1984-85 and this year also. During 1983-84 our State Government requested for

Rs. 369 crores but the Government of India gave only Rs. 54 crores, and this year they have requested for Rs. 462 crores but with great difficulty and after great pressure, the Government of India have sent a team only. The people there are suffering but the State Government has got no communication from the Government of India so far, as to how much amount they are going to get. They will give some money in the month of February or March and then they will ask the State Government to spend the entire amount within the financial year itself and later on they will say they have given so much amount but the State Government has not spent the whole amount. This is the State of affairs of the Government of India. Though Andhra Pradesh is being ruled by Telugu Desam, it is a part and parcel of the country. The people there are suffering for want of drinking water, fodder and other things. They are sending their cattle to the slaughter houses because there is no fodder for them. The State Government has so far spent Rs. 440 crores. With the meagre resources that they have, they cannot spend more. The Government of India have not taken any action so far. They have only sent an official team to Andhra Pradesh. Actually they have not intimated to the State Government as to how much amount they are going to give or what is the report of the team. Only recently, in the first week of October, we have had some stores here and there and when the Central team visited the State, they visited only these stores. But during the months of August and September, there was actually a severe dry spell and the entire *Kharif* crops have been damaged. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister that though the State is ruled by Telugu Desam, but irrespective of the political considerations, he should release more funds for our State. Not only our State but even Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat are also witnessing the same situation.

Shri Desai has also suggested that permanent solution should be found for these things. The problem before us is that the Centre is not giving its timely clearance for the projects we want to

construct. We want to construct Polawaram and Eichapuram projects, but the Centre is dodging and delaying their simple clearance to enable us to take up their construction. Same is happening in the case of Karnataka and Maharashtra or any other State. My suggestion is that irrespective of which party is ruling a State, the Centre should not take much time in clearing the projects. Timely action is more important.

Soil conservation and efficient water management are two permanent measures. You have to look at them on national basis. You are giving money for social forestry, but it is not being utilised there because they are not having proper technology. If you select an appropriate technology and combine agriculture and forestry departments, then only the problems can be sorted out.

My next suggestion is that Meteorological Department should be strengthened. It should be able to tell us well in advance about the natural calamities that are likely to occur enabling the State Governments to take timely action.

In regard to power my suggestion is wherever there is possibility of generating power, hydro-electric boards should be constructed without delay and electric power generated. Their distribution to the farmers should be on priority basis because 70 per cent of the population depends on agriculture. Then only our country will prosper.

Before I conclude, I would once again request the hon. Minister to consider Andhra Pradesh request sympathetically and order release of the amount requested by the State Government immediately. It should not be that you release the amount at the fag-end of the financial year and then charge us that we have not been able to spend the amount.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Rajasthan has been struck by the worst drought of this century in our country and western

Rajasthan is the worst-hit area. We have to grapple with the drought conditions and it is with this objective that a central study team has been sent there to study the situation and its report is expected shortly. I would like to request in this regard that Rajasthan should be sanctioned relief amount within fifteen days of the presentation of the study team's report on the basis of the recommendations of the Eighth Finance Commission.

There is the serious problem of drinking water and fodder in the State even today. Besides, there is acute shortage of foodgrains. I would, therefore, request you to immediately provide these things. Such a terrible drought had also struck the State in 1966-67 and after that the State has been affected by serious drought now. The Rajasthan Government is not able to cope with it and therefore, the Centre should allocate more funds to grapple with the situation.

The Central Government is helping the State by sanctioning the grants and loans on equal basis under the Advance Plan, but it is not adequate because Rajasthan is facing grave situation and we can cope with this worst drought only if we get the entire amount as grant.

The border areas of the State are facing serious problem of fodder. Sometimes the cows go astray into the Pakistan territory and they are butchered there. We shall not tolerate that our cows should go astray and get butchered in Pakistan for want of fodder. The Central Government should, therefore, immediately rush fodder from Punjab and Haryana to Rajasthan and end the acute shortage of fodder in the State. Whatever fodder is supplied there should be made available to the people on subsidized rates. There is also the serious problem of drinking water, but no provision has been made so far for transportation of drinking water through tankers.

Military tankers should be immediately pressed into service for the transportation of drinking water to the border areas. Needless to say that the Rajasthan Government do not have such tankers as

[Shri Virdhi Chander Jain]

could transport drinking water to those areas. It is absolutely necessary to provide military tankers there. A permanent solution to the drinking water problem cannot be found out till the water of Rajasthan Canal reaches the remote rural and desert areas of the State.

Many tube-wells have been drilled in many areas under various schemes so far, but either the drinking water is too saline or it is not available at all in these areas. Therefore, this scheme could not serve the purpose. If a permanent solution to the drinking water problem is to be found out during the Seventh Five Year Plan period then there is no other alternative but to provide it through Rajasthan Canal.

Irrigation schemes are required to be given priority. Again the water of Rajasthan Canal is the only source through which water could be made available for irrigation.

I would like to suggest that besides the schemes in hand now constructive schemes should also be launched. The Rajasthan Canal has reached Mohangarh. The desert areas between Mohangarh and Ramgarh and between Ramgarh and Gadra Road from where this Canal passes is famine-stricken and is facing acute famine situation. There is acute water shortage there. Work should be taken up in this areas under Famine Programme.

The Minister of Canals in Rajasthan is pursuing his own schemes. The earth work on the Laluk branch can be taken up this year when the State has been struck by famine. Priority should be given to this earth work and the pace of progress of the work should be increased during the Seventh Five Year Plan period.

Besides, I would like to point out that equal amount of relief for the famine and flood should be sanctioned. After the floods, there is generally a bumper 'Rabi' crop, but famine brings death and destruction and it destroys the economy. 75 per cent of non-planned aid is sanctioned during the floods. The same amount should be sanctioned during the famine also.

Though the provision of funds for the Advance Plan helps in the construction of roads in western Rajasthan, the eastern Rajasthan remains neglected. People express their resentment about it and often complain about lack of development in their area. There is a constant tension between the eastern and western Rajasthan on this account. Therefore, this problem needs to be solved.

Fodder banks should be set up. There should be permanent arrangement by setting up fodder banks and national grass farms which would help in solving the fodder crisis if it ever arises. With these words, I support this Motion.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsganj): Mr. Chairman Sir, just now my colleague Shri Virdhi Chanderji has given very constructive suggestions to check floods and famine. I welcome those suggestions. I would also like to give a few more suggestions to the hon. Minister.

The fury of floods has shown its fangs recently in Uttar Pradesh. Sir, 42 of the 57 districts in the State were badly affected by unprecedented floods this year. The Ghagra, Gomti and Ganga rivers unleashed such devastation that the poor farmer has been ruined completely. I would like to point out that the amount of relief for floods and famine is not equal. During floods and famine in 1982-83 the relief amount sanctioned was far from adequate. This year also the situation remains the same. The Hon. Prime Minister was kind enough to pay a visit to many affected areas. Our new Chief Minister had asked for aid to the tune of Rs. 1000 crores, but only Rs. 50 crores were sanctioned. How can a vast State like Uttar Pradesh, certain areas of which are very backward, face these natural calamities in the absence of adequate funds? I would like that the Central assistance should not be withheld on any technical grounds, instead it should be allocated equally in the case of floods and famine.

It is most unfortunate that Uttar Pradesh is affected both by floods and

by famines. So far as the southern and eastern parts of the State are concerned, they are the worst hit. The Central Government had launched DPAP, programme to check it. It is sad that the funds required for the Seventh Five Year Plan were not sanctioned. As a result, the irrigation schemes which were taken up in Uttar Pradesh and other States under DPAP were left incomplete. The States do not have adequate resources and the capacity to complete these schemes. During the Janata regime, some DPAP schemes were abandoned. Two blocks—the hill block and Manihan block—in my constituency were excluded from the DPAP programme. The result was that the sanctioned amount went down the drain. I would like that those blocks which were earlier listed under DPAP should be again included in it and work on them be completed.

I would like to say a few words about drinking water. The scheme which was taken up in 1972 to provide drinking water throughout the country is still incomplete. 29 projects were taken up in my constituency in 1972, but none of them has been completed. I would like those drinking water schemes to be completed on priority basis. Besides, the work on the roads and canals which is yet incomplete, should be completed.

The late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi had approved many irrigation schemes in our district, like the Kanhar project, the Sone lift project, the Bakhar and Ban Sagar project, etc., but all of them are incomplete because the Central assistance is not available any more. The State Government do not have enough resources to complete them. I would like the Centre to complete the incomplete projects. I would also like to suggest that separate departments should be created to deal with the floods and famines during the Seventh Five Year Plan period. The State Governments are not able to fully utilise the funds allocated to them by the Centre. There is need for monitoring the utilisation of funds and, therefore, a cell should be created to monitor whether the funds allocated are being properly utilised or not.

The code for drought affected areas which was formulated by the Britishers, does not hold good any more in the present day conditions. As a result, the State Government and the Central Government are hesitate to declare a particular areas as drought prone area. The farmer does not get any assistance as a result of this and his crops perish (Interruptions) I conclude and request you to direct the State Governments to exempt the farmers in the flood affected areas from repaying the balance amount of agricultural and other loans which are due from them for years...**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whatever he says will not go on record. Now Shri Suresh Kurup may speak.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam) : Mr Chairman, Sir, on the 11th of October this year and also last week of this month, several parts of our country witnessed natural calamities like flood and cyclone. The flood which affected Tamil Nadu is something unprecedented in the history of that State. Even the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was forced to change his residence. I express my deep sorrow and grief to the people of Tamil Nadu.

In the last October cyclone, two States which were worst affected are West Bengal and Orissa. In West Bengal, some of the districts were affected by flood or landslide or cyclone. Three districts which are worst affected are 24 Parganas, Midnapore and Orissa also witnessed the effects of cyclone. Orissa is a State which affected by continuous drought also. This State is also famous for being the victim of the callous attitude of the authorities, callous attitude of the Government, to all these natural calamities such as flood or cyclone or drought.

Andhra, Pradesh is another State which is affected by cyclone. When the cyclone moved to Vishakapatnam coast, it affected thousands of people and rendered thousands homeless. Coming to

**Not recorded.

[Shri Suresh Kurup]

Tamil Nadu, the North East Monsoon has struck Tamil Nadu with vengeance. In Tanjore, South Arcot, Chinglepet and Madras, lakhs and lakhs of people are rendered homeless. According to a rough estimate, paddy fields of about 1.12 lakh hectares are under water. Rail and road communication is disrupted. The areas worst affected by this flood are the hutments and poor peoples' colonies on the bank of river Adyar in Madras. This Kotturpuram area which, is on the bank of river Adyar is repeatedly affected by flood year after year. With the result, poor people of these hutments are forced to be evacuated. My request to the Central Government is that they should go into it as to how this can be dealt with. I request the authorities to appoint a high-powered scientific committee, if necessary, to go into the details of this and how this can be prevented.

I would also request that the drawbacks in the drainage system in Madras city should also be looked into.

In connection with the floods in Tamilnadu, I would like to mention that the attitude of the Government in reacting to the situation was rather smooth and, when the relief measures started functioning, it should lack of coordination.

Year after year, different parts of our country witness either drought, floods or cyclone or something or the other in one or the other part of the country.

There should be some permanent machinery to give relief in such emergencies. In almost all these cases, relief is delayed. Delayed relief is practically denied relief. So, prompt relief should be given. In situations like this, people who are affected by these calamities should be given prompt and proper relief as early as possible. That is what the situation demands.

In Kerala, two or three months back, we witnessed the worst floods and we are grateful to the Agriculture Minister who came all the way from Delhi to Kerala and visited our State and acted promptly.

In the connection, I request the Agriculture Minister that besides the Prime

Minister he should also go to Tamilnadu and make an on the spot study of the devastating floods.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY (Puri): Sir, from the figures that I get from the Government of India, I find that in Orissa 22,000 villages have been affected and 1,17,000 houses have been damaged on account of floods, land-slides and heavy rains during the year, 1985. Not only that, Heavy damages due to drought have also taken place.

In this background, I would submit to the Agriculture Ministry that they should take a very liberal view so far as backward areas are concerned. Orissa is a backward State and it is a land of natural calamities since centuries.

I would submit to the Agriculture Minister that the first thing that he should do is that the Study Group which the Ministry is sending should have liberal guidelines. The present guidelines under which it is working are not adequate because the economic environment has undergone a change. Therefore, the guidelines of the Study Group should be changed. It should be specifically mentioned that the backward States should receive special attention so far as allocating funds for floods and cyclone are concerned and for repair work.

Another point that I want to make is relief guidelines. In the Question Hour today, the Agriculture Minister has said that they have sent new guidelines. But the Government of India have issued the guidelines for drought and flood management and also guidelines for preparation of the relief measures.

My submission would be that the guidelines must be to be very liberal. The entire house has been damaged and the maximum financial assistance being given is just Rs. 500. What does it mean? Does it mean that he can raise the construction again with that money? My submission would be that the financial assistance given must be very liberal. I know, the Agriculture Minister will be tempted to say that it is the State Government's responsibility. But, all the same, he has to coordinate the relief activities. On the guidelines, whether they are being implemented or not, we would like the

hon. Minister to enlighten the House as to what is the state of affairs in different States.

Another submission I want to make is regarding flood control. So far as flood control is concerned, the Irrigation Ministry in its Annual Report says that it often happens that projects requiring urgent attention are neglected because the allocation of money is being done by the State Government. The Minister can tell us which are the projects which are not receiving proper attention from the State Government. Why not have these things coordinated and sorted out, if not at any other State level, at the National Development Council level?

Another thing I would submit is that the Agriculture Ministry and the Irrigation Ministry should examine the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act. This enacted in the year 1956, but during all this period the inter-State river water disputes have not been settled. My submission would be that the entire Statute must be removed; they should give a new look to this matter so that we can go ahead with speed for settlement of the inter-State river waters disputes.

In Orissa there are three or four major rivers which are creating havoc. In this House I had raised the matter about Hirakud and the Irrigation Minister promised that the Mahanadi flood control problem would be looked into. The Hirakud Dam reservoirs are being silted up and their life is being reduced to one-third. If it was planned, say, for 21 years, now it is being reduced to seven years. We need a technological answer for this. The other rivers creating havoc are the Subarnareka, the Brahmini and the Baitarini. As I said, the Irrigation Minister promised in this House that he would look into the matter about Mahanadi flood control. He should coordinate with the State Government and do something tangible so that it does not create a havoc. The Irrigation Ministry has not taken any steps in the last two or three years. This has to be looked into.

Now coming to tornado, that is a new phenomenon which is taking place in

Orissa repeatedly. It is said that the new generation radar can detect it. I do not know whether the Government of India has got such a radar system. In Orissa, tornado is taking place repeatedly. My submission would be this. Why not have that type of new generator radar so that early information will be available and people can be alerted? We understand that the Agriculture Ministry is negotiating with the USA for super computers for this purpose. I want to know whether it has materialised or not.

Let the Agriculture Ministry be generous to the poor people of Orissa and give adequate financial assistance to that State.

[Translation]

*Shri C.K. KUPPUSWAMY (Coimbatore): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you must have seen in the newspapers that Tamil Nadu is reeling under unprecedented floods. Madras, Chingleput, South Arcot, Thanjavur and some other parts of Tamil Nadu are the worst hit in the recent floods. Several thousands of people are floating on flood waters. Our hon. Prime Minister air-dashed to Madras and made an aerial survey of the flood-hit areas of the State. His visit to the State has brought instant consolation to the suffering people. Our hon. Prime Minister has earned the gratitude of the people of Tamil Nadu by sanctioning on the spot a sum of Rs. 15 lakhs from Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund for flood relief work. The standing crops on about 84,000 acres of land have been damaged. Thousands of cattle have perished in these floods. Several thousands of people have lost their hearths and homes. I suggest that relief work should be undertaken on war footing. It is really unfortunate that so far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the apathy of the Government officials towards the problems of flood-hit people has resulted in tardy implementation of flood relief works. While thousands of people are lead, the Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu Government has stated that only about

*The speech was originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri C.K. Kuppuswamy]

100 people have lost their lives in the recent floods. This is to be condemned.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobichettipalayam) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to raise a point of order. He is making allegations against the State Government with regard to the relief measures taken up by the Government of Tamil Nadu. If he is to make allegations, then he should substantiate it. Immediate steps have been taken by the Government to give relief to the people in distress. The hon. Prime Minister has already appreciated the Government of Tamil Nadu for having taken immediate steps.

SHRI C.K.KUPPUSWAMY : I suggest that immediate financial assistance should be given to the people of Tamil Nadu who are facing manifold problem due to the floods. The Central Government should also ensure that the financial assistance given to the afflicted people for their rehabilitation reaches them. I am compelled to repeat this because the IAS Officers of the Government of Tamil Nadu are not considerate to the woes of the people. After the visit of the hon. Prime Minister, some relief work has been undertaken. I know that a Central Team would be visiting Tamil Nadu to assess the extent of flood damage. I would like to point out that this is not enough. After the money is sanctioned, I demand that a committee should be constituted to supervise that the allotted money is actually spent on flood relief works. It should be ensured that the assistance reaches the people in distress. I appeal to the hon. Minister of Agriculture that immediately flood relief assistance should be sanctioned to the afflicted people of Tamil Nadu. On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu who are undergoing unprecedented suffering, I would repeat that a supervisory committee should also be constituted by the Central Government so that the flood relief assistance reaches the suffering people. With these words I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have to congratulate

the Prime Minister of India for having taken immediate steps for alleviating the sufferings of the victims of flood affected areas and for making an air dash to Tamil Nadu in spite of his heavy schedule on that day.

As a token help also, on that day itself, he announced about Rs. 15 lakhs to the State Government in order to have some relief measures and he gave an assurance on Saturday i.e. about two days back when he was there in Madras City that an Expert Committee will be appointed immediately and that the names of the Expert Committee would be announced on Monday. Today is Monday and it is not yet announced. I, therefore, request the Government of India and the Prime Minister to take steps immediately to announce the names of the members of the Expert Committee and ask them to go immediately to the spot in order to make an assessment of the damages which have been caused by the floods.

The Karnataka Chief Minister Shri Hegde came to the rescue of the victims. He has also given Rs. 10 lakhs. We have to congratulate and appreciate the charitable mind of Shri Hegde.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Prof. Ranga is saying 'Hear, hear'.

SHRI PRIY RANJAN DAS MUNSI (Hourah) : He belonged to the old Congress Party. So he has inherited the Congress cult.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : Due to the repeated rains for about 10 days, Madras, city and around, Chingleput, Thanjavur and South Arcot districts are seriously affected by floods. As you know, Sir, Thanjavur District is the granary of Tamil Nadu and there more than 3 lakhs acres of land have been submerged in water with the standing paddy crop and the farmers have been put to very heavy loss and they are unable to harvest the paddy which is ready for harvesting.

Another thing is that even in South Arcot and the very same thing happened in Madras city, in Kotturpuram and other

areas which have been flooded, the first floor of almost all the houses have been flooded.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur) : Even your Chief Minister's house has been flooded.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : As you said, even our Chief Minister could not stay in his house which was flooded and he had to shift to a hotel.

My submission would be — I am also thankful to Mr. Kurup for making that suggestion with regard to floods in Madras and other areas, though he is not from Tamil Nadu.

With regard to other things, I want to say that the times of floods, the water goes waste. It is a well-known fact that Tamil Nadu and other States are pressing for a national water grid. It has not yet been formed and this is the right time for the Government of India and the hon. Prime Minister to come forward to form a national water grid.

Another thing. We are also asking for more powers to the States and Sarkaria Commission has already been appointed and it is going into this matter. Whenever here is a natural calamity like flood or drought or cyclone, we have to come to the Central Government with a begging bowl and this sort of thing has to be stopped once for all. More powers being given to the States means that we can spend money on the relief of victims of floods or drought, whatever it be and here in Tamil Nadu we have not only floods but some districts like Ramanathapuram are also facing drought. Such is the situation there.

We have already given a report with regard to the damage caused by rain in Tamil Nadu to the Prime Minister when he visited Tamil Nadu and the Tamil Nadu Government are asking for a grant of Rs. 120 crores for this. I think the Prime Minister is satisfied with it and he will grant it immediately.

With regard to the funds, my friend,

Mr. Kuppuswamy was making an allegation. Actually no funds have yet been given by the Government of India for relief to the affected areas. But he says that proper spending must be done and accounts submitted to the Centre by the State Government. The hon. Member may not be knowing the impact of what he says in this august House. Anyhow I think proper spending is being done by the State Government and implementing the 20-point programme we stand first among the States. So we will do it and we will save the property and also human lives. Already we have lost 100 people because of the recent floods. Moreover, about 350 tanks have been breached and most of the villages are in floods. Most of the roads and railway bridges are damaged. Government of India has to come forward immediately in order to save the victims.

17.00 hrs.

[Translation]

DR. G.S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would conclude within two or three minutes. Mr. Ghafoor is not present here at the moment. Had he been here, it would have been better. During the Budget Session, when the issue of famine was being discussed, Mr. Ghafoor had said that when snow would melt in the Himalayas, there would be more water in the rivers and the famine would automatically end. The water did come from the Himalayas in Mr. Ghafoor's area of Bihar, but it was in the form of an unprecedented floods. As Rajasthan is affected by famine for the last many years, similarly, Mithila, the northern part of Bihar is affected by floods. Six to eight months in a year the people of this area remain in the grip of floods.

17.02 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

I am surprised that the people in other parts of the country are unaware of the difficulties faced by the people of Bihar.

[Dr. G.S. Rajhans]

Kosi, Kamala, Adbara and many other rivers flow from the Himalayas and bring destruction for the people of northern Bihar. Lakhs of people in this area are ruined every year, but there is none to listen to their tale of woe. I would request that some of the hon. Members of this House should visit northern Bihar during the time of floods next time and see for themselves the fury of the floods. It is most unfortunate that some of the citizens of this country have to live for more than six months in a year on the *Machans* or in the flood-affected areas. There is no one to raise voice on their behalf. What right do you have to give them such a treatment? Every year lakhs of people face devastation due to the floods, but no one understands their plight. This time also they suffered the onslaughts of the floods, but no Minister from the Centre visited them. The Ministers of the State Government simply paid formal visits. In the last session, when Shri Shankaranand was present here, I had said in my speech that unless the rivers of Nepal were controlled, the north Bihar could not be saved from the fury of the floods. I wish he were present in the House. He has informed me through letter that talks are going on with the Government of Nepal in regard to controlling those rivers. How long would the talks go on? Will the talks conclude in our life-time? By controlling those rivers, not only Bihar but Nepal will also be benefited. The water can be used for irrigation. Barrages and reservoirs should be constructed there, which can help in the generation of power on a large scale. This would also help in the establishment of industries in Nepal and Bihar. A complete transformation can be brought there. The north Bihar, which has turned into a hell due to the flood waters of these rivers, can become heaven by harnessing the same water. Do you want that the people of north Bihar should lead a life of hell? Sir, you cannot even imagine that the people use and take bath in the same water and the cattle also live and dip there. Due to this Malaria epidemic breaks out. Diseases like Kala Azar and jaundice spread. No one can imagine how the people lead their lives

there. You can get an enquiry conducted for the period of last ten years. Crores of rupees have been spent in Bihar in the name of relief for the floods. I would like to ask openly in the House as to where that money has gone? If you get an enquiry conducted into the whole affair, as I have told you earlier and now there is nothing to hide, you will find that the money spent in the name of relief for the floods in Bihar has gone to "divided by four", in which contractors, engineers, bureaucrats and politicians are included. The same thing is being repeated today which used to happen there 15 years ago. There is no one to change the fate of the flood victims of north Bihar. Sir, when such a problem is there, then for how long the people will bear the unfortunate situation. I would like to request you that this problem should be taken up seriously and some remedy to the devastation caused by the floods in the north Bihar, and particularly in the low lying areas of the Himalayas should be found out.

SHRI C.P. THAKUR (Patna) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Mr. Speaker has allotted time to have a discussion on the problem of floods and drought on the very first day of the Session. It shows the importance of the problem. Sir, my constituency is Patna. Thousands of years ago Lord Buddha had said about Patna that Patna would be destroyed by fire, floods and internal strife. Not much damage has been caused by fire, but floods and internal strife have played a great role in its devastation and Lord Buddha's forecast about Patna proves to be true.

Today, the problem of floods is not limited to the Bihar State alone. The whole of India has been affected by it. Every year the floods cause devastation on a large scale. Though Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and the coastal areas are facing floods, yet the irony is that besides the floods, a number of States have to suffer from drought also. In one area people suffer due to the floods whereas in an other area they suffer from drought. I would like to suggest that efforts should be made to solve the problem caused by the floods and the drought simultaneously. Our Hon. Prime

Minister has envisaged a National Water Policy and the Drought Policy and laid stress to maintain clean environment. This will help us to solve those problems.

The problem of floods does not arise due to the more flow of water in the rivers alone. At some places, floods are caused due to the heavy rains. Now, a new problem has emerged. A lot of water is collected around those places where major dams are built. It causes a lot of hardships to the people. The problem caused due to the breach in the embankments is another problem. It is a man-made problem which is caused due to the negligence on the part of some people. It is seen in our country that in the flood prone areas, the land affected by the floods is increasing in terms of acreage. The reason behind it is that the depth of our rivers is reducing and forests are being denuded. The forests in the Himalayas which were 50 per cent earlier have been reduced to less than one third. Now, due to all these reasons the problem of floods is becoming more and more acute. We shall have to think over it. Now I will say something about Bihar.

As Dr. Rajhans has said there are a number of rivers in north Bihar like Bagmati, Kosi, Gandak, Burhi Gandak and so on, but despite that poverty persists there. As an expert of the Ford Foundation had said that the land of Bihar was very fertile and water was also available there, but even then the people were poor, because crops worth billions of rupees was destroyed there every year.

Therefore, unless thought is given to construct dams across these rivers, no development of north Bihar can take place. A Gandak project is under execution there. No one knows for how many years this work is going on and when it will be completed. There is doubt whether it will be completed or not. Similarly, Vaishali district is surrounded by rivers from three sides. Now I shall deal with Ganga river. It flows through the middle of Bihar. This river can give salvation to the people of Bihar, but it is not benefiting them otherwise. If a dam is constructed across the river near Buxar,

then probably it can provide some benefit to the State.

Now I shall deal with Patna. As I have already said, I do not know whether it is due to the curse of Lord Buddha or due to some other reason, the people living there have to pass through a number of crises. There is a Punpun River in Patna, but embankment has not been constructed thereon. Many years ago, the Britishers had thought of constructing a dam on the River Sone to benefit the people of Bihar and that was why they constructed a dam across the Sone River and now it has become 110 or 115 years old, but the Government never cared to look after it. Now that dam has breached and it has caused a miserable situation there.

In the last Session, the hon. Minister of Irrigation had said that if the Government of Bihar submitted all the files and information regarding this dam to the Centre, then the Central Government would accord their sanction immediately to the Rs. 1200 crore project formulated with the assistance of World Bank. Now the hon. Minister should fulfil his assurance. The Bihar Government have been allotted meagre funds, so they are unable to carry it out from their own resources. I would, therefore like to urge the Government to pay immediate attention in this regard.

Now I shall deal with Chota Nagpur region. It is facing drought. Bihar is a State which abounds in mineral wealth that is used by the entire country. But when the State is struck by calamities then no one comes forward to help it. If there exists backwardness in India, it is more so in Bihar. Bihar is also affected by all the calamities like drought and floods that occur in the country.

In the end, I shall urge the hon. Minister of Irrigation to at least clear immediately the project for construction of a dam across the Sone River in Bihar. Similarly, action should be taken about other projects in regard to the rivers in north Bihar and clearance be granted to them immediately.

[English]

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER (Bengaluru South): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, all those who have been affected by the floods and droughts will be grateful to this House because this House has given top priority to this burning problem in our country. But, mere discussion is not enough. I am sure, the Central Government will take adequate relief measures for those who are affected.

I personally feel that such natural calamities in any part of the country should be viewed as national calamities. I admire the way in which the Prime Minister air dashed to Tamil Nadu the other day and the way in which the Chief Minister of Karnataka gave a token grant to the affected people in Tamil Nadu. It has given a great moral boost to the State Government there. Our Prime Minister along with Sri Lankan Prime Minister air dashed to Bangladesh some time ago when there was a natural calamity and it was appreciated all over the world. If there is a drought or flood in any State, all the States must feel that it is their concern also and not the concern of the affected State alone.

Now, I come to my own State. Already the hon. Member, Shri Desai, has stated the position in brief and I would not like to repeat what has been stated already. For the third consecutive year, my State has been facing drought, but this time, it has been more severe than it was during the previous years. The South West monsoon started very well but it became erratic and completely duped the people of Karnataka. The State Government has taken all steps to give adequate relief and it has geared up its machinery. You will be surprised to know that one of the 19 districts in Karnataka, 18 districts have been affected. Even the Malnad region which usually gets copious rains is affected. Out of 175 taluks, 146 taluks have been affected and nearly 50 per cent of the population in the State of Karnataka have been affected by the drought. You can well imagine how the State Government can cope up with the situation. I am very happy to say that with the assistance of the legislators and local leaders, the State Government is doing its best. But their main trouble has been the

financial constraint. I must acknowledge my thanks to Shri Buta Singh. When he visited Bangalore recently, he realised the severity of the drought situation there and he was good enough to sanction Rs.53 crores during this year as against a demand of Rs.151 crores. But during the last two years, 1984 and 1985, central assistance has been very meagre. Out of a demand of Rs.209 crores, the Central Government's assistance was limited to Rs.32.5 crores or so. Our State Government is estimating the loss to the state exchequer on account of the two consecutive droughts at about Rs.2000 crores and the loss on food production and loss on revenue is almost equivalent to one year's revenue of the State Government. How could the State Government work? What about their developmental plans? All the developmental works this year have been affected on account of the drought. You know, in Karnataka, most of our power projects and hydel projects. On account of this drought, there has been nearly 70 to 75 per cent power cut in the industry and the industrial production also suffered.

So Sir, I once again support the stand taken by Shri Desai that the central assistance and the guidelines given by the Centre to assess the drought situation should be thoroughly changed. The hon. Minister has assured the other day that there would be a change. It should be a change for the better. It should be realistic and that is what I say. Take the calendar year alone. The State Government has spent nearly Rs.100 crores out of which only Rs.53 crores have been given by the Centre. Like this, every year the State Government has been spending out of its developmental budget a huge amount to meet the drought situation.

I know that the time at my disposal is very limited. I will take only one minute more. We know the places which are chronically drought-prone. I have been a legislator nearly for 16 years and every year I have been speaking and also listening that the State Government and the Central Government measures for drought relief. But unfortunately, steps taken in this direction both by the State and Central Governments have been negligible. There should be per-

manent measures. We know, for example that Kolar is always a chronically drought-hit area. Now I am very happy to announce that the State Government of Karnataka have taken up certain measures by way of dry land farming about which the hon. Minister for Agriculture knows. They require massive funds for that. This exercise calls for crores of rupees. The State Government cannot cope up with it with their own resources. I request the Centre to give top priority for the permanent measures and I support the stand taken by Shri Desai in this behalf. Many people in Tamilnadu have been affected by floods and many others in other areas have been affected by drought. The Central Government should come to their rescue and it is the duty of the Central Government as also the State Governments to see that proper relief is given to the people so that their tears can be wiped out.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Many members have given their names to participate in the discussion. In order to accommodate all the members, I request the members to be brief and mention the exact point. They want to express their concern about the difficulties being faced by their constituencies. I request them to be brief so that more members can be accommodated.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar) : Sir, according to the report of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations Organisation, the production of foodgrains in the world has doubled. But even now about 50 crore people are affected by the scarcity of foodgrains. The man has made tremendous progress in science, technology and in other fields, but even then the human energy and human resources have failed to face the natural calamities. The history of India shows that in India famines hit the country as many as 24 times between the year 1850 to 1900. So, a conclusion emerges that in India there is famine in some part or the other of the country after every two years.

The State to which I belong is afflicted with natural calamities. I am pained to

inform the House that Rajasthan is facing a situation of scarcity and famine for the last seven years continuously. There the famine and scarcity are not limited to foodgrains only, but there is scarcity of fodder and drinking water also. I would like to submit that the year of 1985 is a year of natural calamities for India. In the month of January 1985, the northern India and the central India were in the grip of cold wave and much damage was caused thereby. The coastal areas of Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh were hit by cyclone and excessive rains. There have been no rains in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and in some parts of Haryana after the second week of August. And this year the people are facing acute famine there. At the moment in Rajasthan itself more than 30000 villages are in the grip of famine, more than two crore people are afflicted with famine and three crore cattle heads have been affected by famine. There is no fodder and drinking water available for them.

The economy of western Rajasthan is based on pastoral cattle. Previously, in such situations of famine the cattle of Rajasthan were used to be taken to the neighbouring areas of Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh where fodder was available, but I am sorry to say that Malwa which is in Madhya Pradesh is also in the grip of famine. In the case of Malwa it was said "pug-pug roti, dug-dug neer" (bread and water are available everywhere). But even there is scarcity at the moment. As a result, the farmers and villagers of that region do not allow our cattle to enter their territory.

Similar is the case of adjoining areas of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The Central Government should provide financial assistance for the schemes formulated to supply drinking water from the Rajasthan Canal so that drinking water arrangements could be made.

Besides, the water of the local rivers should be used to construct reservoirs to end the drinking water crisis. The need of the hour is to make drinking water available to the people. The proposed projects to draw

[Shri Ram Singh Yadav]

water from the Indira Gandhi canal in the westren Rajasthan to make drinking water available to the people should be completed. Besides, the Banas river project for Jaipur city should also be completed immediately. Cent percent assistance should be provided to Rajasthan for that. The funds for the advance plan should not be adjusted in this plan. The Rajasthan Government have submitted a demand for Rs. 500 crores. I do hope that the hon. Minister of Agriculture will provide full assistance to the Rajasthan State to cope with the famine.

[English]

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY (Kanakapura): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir : I rise to participate in the discussion on the situation arising out of floods, drought and other natural calamities in various parts of the country.

Floods, droughts and other natural calamities like cyclone have become a common feature in our country. Drought occurs due to failure of rains, whereas floods and cyclones are the outcome of the fury of Nature. But Government of India are spending a huge amount of money on these things; e.g. in the 6th five year plan, they have spent about Rs. 1045 crores just to control the floods and for meeting the damages due to it.

I may be permitted to quote the damages due to flood in various parts of the country during the last three years:

1980-81 Rs. 1182 crores;

1982-83 Rs. 1714 crores;

and 1984 85 Rs. 2460 crores.

This is the magnitude of the damage we are facing due to floods. Even though Government of India have formulted a flood policy in 1954, and laid a time-bound programme just to eliminate damages due to floods twelve years back, nothing has been done in this regard. Even Mr. K.L. Rao who was the Irrigation Minister at the Centre had suggested various proposals, and had submitted a comprehensive report to control flood and

drought in all the parts of the country, But nothing has been done in that regard also.

The aim of the drought-fighting programmes should be to create the infra-structure in the States themselves, just like the proper management of water resources, proper expansion of irrigation facilities, that too minor irrigation, and proper use of ground water and a proper crop pattern. States should provide fodder banks and buffer stocks. This infra-structure should be built by the States. It is very unfortunate that even after 38 years of freedom, the States have not come forward to develop the infra-structure, to face these natural calamities.

Central Government have formulated a number of schemes, e.g. DPAP, NREP, dairy development programmes, RLEGP and IRDP. These programmes are particularly meant for the weaker sections and affected araas, but are to be implemented at the State level.

I will now come to my State, viz. Karnataka. As the earlier speaker had suggested, we are facing drought successively for three years now; that too, this year it is very severe. Nineteen districts are reeling under severe drought; 146 talukas are affected by it; 21,000 villages and about 16 million people were affected. Just imagine the magnitude of the problem prevailing in parts of Karnataka.

As it was said earlier, Central Government have come forward and given sufficient funds. They may not be sufficient to tackle the situation, but they have given sufficient funds.

I would like to draw the attention of hon. Minister to the pattern of financing of drought, flood affected areas and States. Usually, for these drought affected areas, finance is given out of the money allocated from the plan allocation for a particular State whereas the flood affected States are given assistance under the non-plan expenditure. Since both areas are alike, I would request the hon. Minister that he can suggest to the Planning Commission that this drought

affected assistance should be treated as non-plan expenditure and it should not be deducted from the plan allocation of a particular State. This is my sincere request to him.

Has the Government proposed to create a separate Ministry or a separate central agency to assist and help the concerned States which are affected by drought, floods as well as cyclonic storms? According to the Seventh Five Year Plan, nothing has been mentioned to tackle this problem and no money has been allotted. I request the Minister to allot sufficient money to tackle this situation.

There is a hue and cry throughout the country about the issue of fund. Has government got any proposal to supervise the money allotted for the affected States? With these words, I request the hon. Minister to give more aid to Karnataka so that they can tackle these problems more effectively.

SHRI D.P. JADEJA (Jamnagar) : This is a very important subject and there are many members who want to speak on this subject. There are members who have given their names for speaking, but their names are not on the list of speakers. I request you to give some time to those members also to express their views.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore) : My State along with Orissa, Tamilnadu and other States, has become a victim of floods and cyclonic storms. We are suffering from floods and cyclonic storms in every part of India. As we know, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and even portions of Orissa are reeling under severe drought. I must bring it to the notice of the government that it is nothing but a revenge of nature. Successfully, we have been able to control rivers, but the drainage of the rivers has utterly failed. The river bed throughout the country has become higher and the carrying capacity of the rivers has become less and less with the passage of every year.

Whereas we require to cover up to 33 per cent of land by forests in the entire

country, in some parts it is only 12 to 10 per cent. The average of the whole country is only 22 per cent. Whatever dams have been built earlier, they have not been fully completed. For example, the Damond Valley Corporation; you will have to build two more dams if the construction has to be completed, so that you can take water from one to the other. The present dam is silted. Naturally whatever dam you make is now silted, because they are all 50 to 60 years old. We are seeing that the dams built earlier are to be replaced by new ones. It is becoming necessary because nature is talking revenge, that is why we find that some areas are flood affected and some are drought-prone areas. Naturally, our Government, with the help of other States should take a great deal of measures so that remedial steps can be taken. We have to increase our forests; we have to clean our rivers because all the rivers are silted, they have to be de-silted. In India we revere the rivers with great respect and sincerity. For example take the sacred river the Ganges. But the river Ganges is dying in front of us. In Bihar and Uttar Pradesh through which the river Ganges flows, in the rainy season there is a flood but there is no water in the summer season. All these things have to be looked into-

We are glad that Shri Yogendra Makwana was able to visit our State. We expected the hon. Minister also to come but we learnt from the other Press reports that due to some other engagements, he could not come.

Orissa is also frequently hit by cyclones and floods. Thousands and thousands of people are rendered homeless. In my State also, Midnapore the district from which I come, 24-Paraganas, Hawrah, and Hooghly, all those districts have suffered. Fifty thousand people are rendered homeless, about 4,500 square kilometres of area is completely destroyed and official figures put it as 18 deaths in West Bengal and 33 in Orissa. Many fishermen of Orissa and Bengal are still to be traced.

In Orissa the districts of Balasore

[Shri Narayan Choubey]

Cuttack, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar are flood-affected, while the districts of Kalahandi, Phulbani, Balangir are suffering from drought. The newspapers and TV report about a mother selling a daughter and a brother selling a sister and all these things have come from Orissa which is a drought-prone area. Whenever the Prime Minister visits something is done, But the country cannot be run by one man, the Prime Minister alone. He was no doubt most unhappy with the situation. He saw in those States wherever he visited the situation. Whenever proposals are made, they are again kept in the cold storage after the Prime Minister comes back. This has happened in Orissa.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : How do you know that the proposals are kept in the cold storage?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Because we saw it in the Press, TV report also was there. Your Chief Minister, Shri J.B. Patnaik openly said that nothing of that sort had happened although it came out on the TV. TV is controlled by the Central Government, not by us.

So, that is the situation in many States. I do not say that my State is good. The situation there also is bad. I do not know what they are doing, but I request the Government of India to help the States.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA : Why do you not speak of West Bengal?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : I leave it to you. You are free to speak to help the West Bengal Government.

Interruptoins

There was a proposal from the Government of West Bengal which is lying in the Planning Commission, to make a dam on the river Subernarekha in Midnapore District of West Bengal. River Subernarekha caused great havoc to West Bengal this time. I request the Minister through you to see that this dam is constructed on this river.

Sunderbans has been the worst affected this time. Just on the other side of the Sundarbans is Bangladesh. The then Pakistan Government made a pucca and concrete embankment. Their entire embankment is jeepable. Even their military can march on this embankment. But on this side of the country i.e. in West Bengal, not even a bullock cart or a cycle can go. It is not only a question of West Bengal but it is a question of international border. I seek help of the Prime Minister and the Government of India through you to see that the embankment at least on the Sunderbans be taken up by the Central Government and made a pucca one, because what happens is that when the flood comes water enters into the West Bengal rivers and goes towards Bangladesh side. But there it gets hit against the pucca embankment and rushes back to our side, This is a problem which cannot be solved by the West Bengal Government alone. I request the Minister to see that the embankment on the Sunderbans be made a concrete one with the Central help.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Cuttack) : Orissa suffers from cyclone, floods and other natural calamities year after year. I would like to say that 9 out of 13 districts, 121 blocks and 7509 villages have become the victims of the last cyclonic floods. The population affected is 40 lakhs and the area submerged is five lakh hectares of land. It had a heavy toll of life of about 40 people.

About the present form of granting assistance after the natural calamities, several Members from this side have already spoken on this. For flood grant is given and for drought, assistance given is deducted from the plan allocations. This makes the resource position of a backward State like Orissa tight. With the result, the areas of development also get eroded. I would urge upon the Government that the total assistance should be in the form of grant.

In October, 1985 the State Government demanded an adhoc assistance of Rs. 30 crores on account of floods in Orissa. But the Central Government has

said that the central assistance would follow after the assessment by a Central Team. The announcement was to be made on 15th of November. But so far no announcement has been made. I request the Minister to get it expedited.

I must say that Orissa suffers from all calamities—floods, cyclone, tornado and even drought. As far as cyclone is concerned, there should be updating and strengthening of standard ground observations from ground meteorological and ship observatories. When cyclone comes, telecommunication link gets disrupted between Pardeep and Bhubneswar. This should also be strengthened.

We should have a national cyclone code for the country as the emergency plan for the coastal areas.

I must say that research in cyclone preparedness in an urgent necessity. Government should formulate a programme and carry out researches on how to face the situation caused by natural calamities.

Just now one of our hon. Members from Opposition—I think he is from Kerala—has spoken about the natural calamities. He was very sympathetic about these natural calamities being suffered by the States of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, but he was speaking only in favour of Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Though he was sympathetic about the natural calamities being suffered by Orissa but he said that Orissa Government was callous in dealing with these calamities. I must tell him that in the last 200 years, Orissa has never seen such a severe flood. I am reminded of a flood in 1950s when there was a breach in the Dalaighai, which caused the collapse of the Government at that time. If in 1982 all possible action would not have been taken, the people there would not have tolerated the government in the State. The State Government took the natural calamities very seriously and all possible actions were taken with the help of the Central Government. The State Government is very serious about the situation there.

As far as the drought condition in some parts of the country is concerned, the proper approach will be to inaugurate the dry land water conservation efforts besides bringing the gap between irrigable and irrigated hectareage and getting ready well-laid out contingency plans for raising drought resistant crops. Here I must say that there should be an integral approach for the droughts and floods.

As far as flood control is concerned, our State requires permanent remedial measures. In this connection it may be stated that the floods control components of inter-State projects like Subernarekha should be fully financed by the Government of India.

I would also like to say another thing. Years back the Central Government had financed and constructed Hirakud project as a permanent measure for flood control on river Mahanadi in order to prevent further floods in the delta areas. As the Mahanadi is getting silted and its longevity is also going down, so I would like to say that the Central Government should now consider the construction of Mahanadi stage-II. Similarly, flood control projects on river Baitarni are also essential and should be considered by the Central Government at the earliest.

When all these natural calamities occur, we must concentrate on the poverty alleviation programmes like NREP and RLEGP. These programmes should be taken up in full swing. Of course, special attention needs to be paid to the types of works taken up. Obviously, measures like formation of percolation ponds, desilting of irrigation tanks and canals, soil conservation, afforestation and fodder cultivation on wastelands should get priority.

In the very same House, when I had spoken about cyclone, I had spoken about the coastal plantation. Coastal plantation is the most important thing and I had asked the hon. Minister at that time what steps were being taken by the Central Government to monitor this plantation programme. So, I would like the Central Government that they should take up the coastal plantation programme and

[Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik]

other flood control measures seriously so that Orissa, which is very prone to all these calamities—not a single year is left when the State does not face these calamities—gets rid of these calamities. With these words, I conclude.

DR. PHULARENU GUHA (Contai) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are thirteen panchayats in Contai constituency in Midnapore district of West Bengal, of which seven are affected by the recent cyclone and floods. A large number of people have been affected, many of whom are fishermen. The fishermen had gone to the sea for fishing. They had settled down on the sea shore with food for four to six months and they had also taken with them all their equipments for fishing. But unfortunately, because of the cyclone and floods, they lost everything.

Due to repeated warnings by radio, only two persons lost their lives, but a large number of people lost everything. Their houses were damaged and they lost all their belongings. Large number of their Agricultural fields were damaged and a number of tubewells had gone out of commission with the result in many areas there was no sweet drinking water. About 42 miles of embankments have been damaged. These embankments have not been maintained properly for quite a long time. That is why with the coming of the cyclones the embankments got damaged easily. Over and above that, no relief is provided by the Government of West Bengal. Finding no other alternative we had to go in deputation to the SDO Contai. You will be surprised to know that we were told by the authorities there that they had asked for relief materials, but it was not supplied to them by the Government of West Bengal.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Then who supplied the relief ?

DR. PHULARENU GUHA : You have not visited the area. Therefore you do not know. I have visited every corner of Contai and I know how much relief you have given. Whatever relief has been given, it was given only to the CPM

people. Several people did not get any relief. It has come in papers and it has not been denied that more than Rs. 23 crores of marginal money is with the Government of West Bengal and they have hardly spent any money to give relief to the needy people. You will see from the accounts that we have received from the Agriculture Ministry that the West Bengal Government did not ask for more money for relief. So, the West Bengal Government neither arranged relief themselves nor asked any big voluntary organisation like the Ramakrishna Mission, Bharat Sevak Samaj, Lutheran World Service for relief work in Contai. Usually when they are asked and they do it.

I would also like to take this opportunity to request the Government of India to send a team of different department people to review the condition of embankment, position of drinking water and agricultural facilities there. In this connection I would also like to mention that last year the Government of West Bengal had returned more than Rs. 8 crores given to them for arranging drinking water. People are suffering for want of sweet drinking water in the area and they returned the amount. I have already mentioned that the paddy in large number of areas has been destroyed. Arrangement for relief may be made for these people because they are not having anything to eat.

I would also like to say that a large number of 24-Parganas areas are also affected, but since there is no time, I would not be able to speak about that area. But I would say that the picture there is also same as it is in Contai. I would request the Government of India to ask the West Bengal Government to give relief to the affected people. I would also request the Government of India to make some permanent arrangement for the protection of embankment for proper facilities for agriculture, because there is no facility for irrigation in many parts of Contai area of West Bengal.

Lastly I would like to say that if cyclone were to continue for 15 minutes, may be 20 minutes more, not only the Con-

tal area, but a large part of Midnapore district would have been devastated, as it happened in October 1942.

The younger people here do not know about the condition of the people and what happened at that time. The West Bengal Government have no feeling for the people; so they are not doing anything for the people. I am sorry to say all these things. With these words I conclude.

SHRI K.S. RAO (Machilipatanm) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Floods and droughts and natural calamities have become a regular feature.

Possibly, when the population has been less, the gravity of the situation was not realised fully.

But, Sir, with the increase in population, as well as the growth in the material wealth in the country, the havoc that has been caused by these has gone multiple high.

The loss to cattle and human life cannot be saved unless the necessary measures are taken up in time. If these measures are not taken in time, these will not serve any purpose at all. This is my respectful submission.

There is a feeling among the States that inadequate assistance is being given to many of them. But instead of finding fault in that way, as Members of Parliament have been representing the States, it can certainly be decided to increase the allocation in the Plan to see that adequate provisions are made to all the States and they are given the requisite amounts needed.

Similarly, a provision can be made in the States' Budgets also in the Plan allocations.

It has been observed many a time that losses are magnified and boosted up by several States and other agencies by which the really genuine people who have suffered and also the States which have suffered are not getting adequate funds.

It is observed in many a case that it is the poor and the middle-class people who have been worst-affected by floods. The allocation here can be increased taking this as a priority sector, by reducing the allocation to other sectors like Civil Aviation, Communication and so on. This sector has to be taken care of as per the priority allocations in our policy document. More than short term measures, it is the long-term measures which are necessary and these long-term measures have to be adopted.

In adopting long-term measures, I think, we should have a separate Control Board. We should have Flood Control or Natural Calamities Control Board. It should be formed at the All India level with necessary allocations, which can identify the areas which are being frequently affected by natural calamities. Losses have to be assisted and methods to rectify them or remedy them have got to be found out by that Board, without giving a chance for anybody to raise a finger or to attribute any motive on party lines.

This particularly requires adequate utilisation of the water resources which are in abundance in this country. By doing this we can not only increase the income but we can also reduce the losses caused by way of these floods.

Formation of Water Grids is one suggestion which has already been made. It may not be possible now, at this juncture, to have a National Grid. But certainly Regional Grids or State Grids can be thought of which should not cost more, by virtue of the number of projects that have come up in various parts of our country.

An Insurance Scheme can be thought of for compensating these people who are suffering due to floods and other natural calamities.

A separate fund can be thought of, or can be allocated, from different taxes and excise and customs duties that are being collected.

[Shri K.S. Rao]

Tax exemption particularly must be given to the Corporate individuals who are prepared to contribute in a big way to the flood-affected people.

Encouraging voluntary agencies is one step which should be taken up in a big way.

18.00 hrs.

Andhra Pradesh recently has suffered in a big way because of this. That has got an additional feature of tidal waves and cyclones by virtue of its being a coastal sector. There also it is known that no assistance has been given by the Government of India so far. I request the hon. Minister to consider this immediately because as some of my colleagues said, assistance delayed is certainly no assistance.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Many Members have given their names to speak on the subject. Therefore, I feel we can extend this for some more time today itself.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : We will continue it tomorrow.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Many Members want to speak today.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : We can have it tomorrow, Sir.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Please continue this discussion tomorrow.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI
H.K.L. BHAGAT) : Sir, my feeling is that on the one hand the Members and Leaders are keen that we should discuss larger number of subjects. If we postpone discussions like this, many things cannot be discussed. Therefore, my personal feeling is that the Minister's reply cannot be finished today. But at the most the Members' speeches should be completed today, not tomorrow. So, I propose the time to be extended for this now.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : If the Minister's speech is there today, there cannot be any argument at all on this issue.....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No, no. The Minister's reply will be tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Can we extend the time by one hour first? I am extending the time by one hour, we will see after that.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : First, we will extend by one hour. I request the Members to finish their speeches within one hour because many Members want to be brief and so, they can finish within an hour. There are 12 Members to speak. If members take five minutes each, they can finish it in one hour.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): Will the Minister's reply be tomorrow?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : His reply will be tomorrow. Let the Members finish first.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: O. K., we will extend it by one hour.

SHRI D.P. JADEJA : According to your list there are only 12 Members to speak. But there are many more members who want to speak.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will see.