

were taken to improve this port especially clearing of the silt, etc.

The port is now ready to handle some ships whereas it is learnt that the ships are in queue to find a berth in Cochin, Mangalore and Tuticorin Ports. To provide employment to idle workers, it is requested to divert a few ships to the Calicut/Beyport Port without delay.

[Translation]

(vi) Demand for financial assistance of Rs. 500 crores to Rajasthan Government to enable it to meet the acute drought there.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this year the whole of Rajasthan is facing terrible famine situation due to inadequate and uncertain rains. Such famine did not take place in the last seven decades. This famine is the fourth during the last five years.

In all the districts of Rajasthan, out of 33,000 villages about 28,000 villages, having a population of 2 crores to 3 crores, and also the cattle have been affected by the acute famine.

The state Government had requested for Rs. 580 crores from the Central Government to meet the situation created by famine. The break-up of this sum was—Rs. 350 crores for relief works, Rs. 50 crores for protection of cattle wealth, Rs. 20 crores nutrition programme and Rs. 10 crores for tools, drinking water, rigs and tankers. But only Rs. 71 crores have so far been sanctioned mostly as Plan advance which is quite inadequate.

Since the relief work has been inadequate due to limited resources of the state, there has been a state of starvation at many places. There is acute shortage of drinking water in the desert areas of Rajasthan and this critical period extends from March to the 15th of July. If more people are not given employment, they may fall victim to a number of diseases and die as a result thereof. Thousands of cattle

heads will perish if adequate fodder is not arranged for them.

The Seventh and the Eighth Finance Commission had recommended that the Central Government should provide cent per cent grant to the States in such unusual circumstances. I, therefore, strongly appeal to the Central Government to exercise special powers and provide Rs. 500 crores as special assistance to the state Government to enable them to tackle the famine situation effectively.

(vii) Need to take urgent steps for timely completion of big projects in order to obviate escalation in cost.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to the delay in the completion of 23 major Projects pertaining to power, coal, steel, cement, Railway, atomic energy, the costs thereof have increased two times and one and a half times. A major portion of public money is invested in the power projects and a power project is completed in 10 to 11 years and an irrigation project take as many as 20 years for completion. Some of the important projects whose costs have doubled are two super thermal power stations at Ramagundum, Fervande Project, Bokaro thermal station, salal project, Dulhasti and Vishakhapatnam refinery expansion projects, Mundhi, Bina and Rajmolu coal projects and Namvelli second power project. The main cause of this delay is centralisation of important decisions. The managers are given powers but this situation is not likely to improve without making them answerable. But the bureaucracy does not want to share its powers and the political leadership also sides with them. It is the Government employees who are responsible for escalation in the original costs of 23 public projects. For example, the Nathpa Zhakhari Project is pending for the last 12 years. Its estimated cost has increased manifold. When the project was drawn in 1974, the estimated cost thereof was Rs. 254 crores and in 1986 its cost was estimated at Rs. 1400 crores. But so far the project is only on the drawing board or in the files.

The Government have created a Ministry of Programme Implementation.