

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

Mr. Lalit Suri for interrogation purposes on the instructions of their higher ups—I know the name but I will not use it—a very prominent person from the Prime Minister's residence rang up the Revenue Secretary and also the Director, Enforcement from the P.M. residence itself and. . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is not relevant. It is an allegation that you are making.

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, it is quite relevant.

(Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER : It is unparliamentary.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : What is un-Parliamentary? I have not used anybody's name. Let me complete my question. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : No, it is not relevant. It is an allegation that you are making.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : What is the allegation, Sir? The Prime Minister's residence is neither undignified nor un-parliamentary. All right, forget whatever I have said just now. Is it not a fact that from the prominent house of a dignitary this person rang up and told the Revenue Secretary and Director, Enforcement that they should stop interrogation and is it that only because it was stopped after that he prepared the returns and they were filed? I want this particular fact to be noted and I want a clarification.

AN HON. MEMBER : Baseless indeed.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Let him say this, then I will take care of it.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN : First of all, I totally repudiate what the hon. member was [pleased to state that there was a telephone to the Revenue Secretary. It is not a fact. It is false, though I am sorry

to use this word. It is not correct that the Enforcement Director or some of the officers have gone to Shri Lalit Suri to interrogate him and while they were trying to interrogate him, they were stopped either by some very high officials or the hon. Prime Minister. This is also totally incorrect. This is not borne out by the information that I have with me.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We will now adjourn for Lunch till 2.30 PM.

(Interruptions)

13.31 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till thirty minutes past Fourteen of the clock.

The Lok Sabha reassembled after lunch at thirty six minutes past Fourteen of the clock

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

[English]

Floods in various parts of the Country
Contd.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir I would like to offer a suggestion that the discussion being held at this stage seems to be premature. As this is the initial phase of floods, a discussion on it at this stage will be premature. It would be better to discuss this matter through a Calling Attention. I have no objection on a discussion on it but let the matter be slated for discussion through Calling Attention

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House has already decided to convert the Calling Attention on floods into a discussion under rule 193. It has also been accepted by the House. So, there is no point of going back, because one hon. member has already

spoken. I am calling the next member. The Minister will reply to the debate at the end. Since this discussion is under rule 193, he would not make a statement.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV (Nalands) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is true that it is just the beginning of floods this year and more serious floods may recur. As discussion on it has already been started this will enable the Government to take necessary action in the light of views expressed by the Members. According to the figures made available just now, as many as 16 States have been affected by the floods and heavy rainfall. A population of 29.26 lakhs people and crops in an area of 6.68 lakh hectares have been affected by it. Similarly 61 thousand houses have collapsed, 356 people and 8300 cattle have died.

Every year the subject of floods is discussed in this august House and the need to find out a permanent solution to this problem has always been stressed upon. But it is a matter of great regret that no permanent solution has so far been found out. Every year property worth lakhs of rupees is destroyed and the Central Government spends huge amount in this regard. Had the Government taken effective measures from the time it has been in power, it would have required far lesser amount of money to find out a permanent solution than what has been spent so far in this regard.

According to a recent study undertaken about 9 million hectares of land is affected by floods every year. According to a report of the National Commission on Floods, the flood prone areas in the country have risen from 25 Million hectares in 1950 to about 40 thousand million hectares now and the annual average loss due to floods have gone as high as Rs.1000 crores in 1970 to Rs.2992 crores in 1982 In 1987 the total loss caused by floods and cyclones has been estimated to be worth Rs.2568 crores. As against a demand of Rs.3400 or 4000 crores by the State Governments for flood reliefs, an amount of Rs 290.10 crores was provided to the State Governments for the purpose.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the situation is deteriorating day by day. The damage caused by floods is increasing every year and it is apprehended that it will hit more areas in the future. The hon. Minister in his statement has mentioned 16 States, but as I do not have information with regard to all those States, I would like to concentrate myself only on Bihar. Other participant Members may throw light on the situation in their respective areas. In the year 1987, 30 districts comprising 24518 villages and a population of 4 crores in Bihar were affected by floods. It is said that Bihar has not witnessed such a serious flood during the last 100 years and several districts in North Bihar have been affected by the floods this year also whereas flood season has not gone, by posing the danger of yet another floods in the offing.

The financial assistance provided to Bihar was quite insignificant as compared to the loss suffered by it due to floods. I fail to understand this step-motherly treatment of Centre to Bihar. I think that the ruling party Members from Bihar in Lok Sabha either have no say before the High Command or unable to present the case before them properly or the Chief Minister lacks the ability to plea the case of the State properly before them. Bihar is neglected in every matter, be it the case of extending help for flood relief or finding a permanent solution to this problem. As it normally happens in Assam, North Bihar is also hit by floods every year. As long as the recommendations of the Committee or the Board with regard to the river Brahmaputra in Assam are not accepted and implemented by the Centre, floods in Assam cannot be controlled. It is not a question of Centre State relation. The State Government is not in a position to mobilise the resources to find out a permanent solution to this problem. So the Central Government will have to take the responsibility in this regard. Permanent solution will have to be found out at any cost, even by resorting to foreign aid if needed.

Last year, I came to know that the Government formulated various schemes to eradicate poverty. But the number of cattle die in floods is much more than that provided to people for their subsistence every

[Shri Vijay Kumar Yadav]

year. Similarly the number of houses which collapse during floods every year far exceed to the number of houses constructed for the poor people. Thus the natural calamities such as drought and floods by reduce the achievements of good programmes launched by you to cipher. What I want to say is that the Government should adopt positive attitude in such matters. Though various commissions have already been set up and numerous discussions are held in the House also, yet due attention has not been paid to this matter.

The floods in Northern parts of Bihar are caused by the rivers emanating from Nepal. Talks have been going on with Nepal for a long time for construction of high dams and reservoirs. In the beginning it appeared that Nepal has agreed to the proposal, but it has not yet agreed to the proposal. The matter has not been taken with Nepal Government with all seriousness it deserves. Keeping aside minor differences, India has good relations with Nepal and the Indian Government is eager to improve the relations with neighbouring countries rather than to spoil it. Our country and Nepal are bound by a number of relations and there is no reason as to why Nepal would not agree to our proposal to construct dams and reservoirs if this issue is taken with it with all its seriousness it deserves.

There is no reason why the Government will not accept it. If the Government does not accept it, it should be persuaded to do so. Until and unless this work is undertaken Bihar cannot be saved from floods. In South Bihar, district Nalanda is not considered a flood-prone area. Even then floods hit this district. Last year unprecedented floods hit this area and I had voiced concern on behalf of my party then. I had said that several districts including Nalanda have been allowed to sub-merge under water in order to save Patna. This measure has ruined the low-lying areas. There is a need to look into it, if such a thing takes place any-where. The issue cannot be side tracked by merely saying that it is a state subject. Whatever issues are raised in the Parliament, these should be duly considered and steps taken accordingly. If the matter falls within the State jurisdiction, it should

be got done by the State concerned. The loss caused by last year's floods in Bihar have not so far been compensated. I therefore, request the Government to take some concrete steps to check the floods occurring in South Bihar, whether it is because of Tan, Phalgu, Sakari or Punpun rivers or any other river of North Bihar along the Nepal border. Serious thought should be given in this direction. It may be pointed out here that after a long agitation the Central Government took up the work of Kosi river where some work had already been executed. Massive agitation was organised including rail roko agitation. The agitation will be further accelerated in future if the situation does not improve. We cannot imagine in Delhi the deplorable plight of the people of North Bihar. A number of villages have been washed away completely and there has been extensive damage to life and property. If more funds and foreign assistance is required to check this destruction, it must be taken and the Government should pay due attention towards it. I am sure you will look into this problem.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA
RAO (Vijayawada) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, first of all I thank you for giving me this opportunity to discuss this important matter.

The hon. Minister, in his statement, has stated that nearly 105 districts were affected due to floods and heavy rains. The estimated damage to the crop areas is stated as 6.68 lakh hectares. It will be much more because the latest figures relating to Andhra Pradesh and other States, which were very badly affected very recently, might not have figured in the statistical information.

Now, the country by and large is happy that we have received good monsoon this year after three or four years drought. In some parts, the rainfall was very very heavy as a result of which crops have been damaged and several people have died.

Sir, in our State, in the month of July, the rainfall was twice the normal rainfall and in some Mandals, it was much

more than three times. When the average rainfall was 160 mm, in some Mandals the rainfall was 600 mm, as a result of which, more than fifty persons have lost their lives in our State. In my city Vijayawada alone, five people have died due to sliding of boulders from the hill due to the unprecedented rainfall. Two persons lost their lives due to floods in Krishna District.

Krishna, West Godavari, East Godavari, Khammam, Warangal, Adilabad, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Medak, Nalgonda, Mehboobnagar and Guntur Districts were affected. In some districts the damage was severe and it was less in some other districts. The main damage was to the paddy crop. In East Godavari District, 90,000 acres in West Godavari District 1,30,000 acres, in Krishna District, 1,50,000 acres and in Adilabad, Karimnagar and Warangal Districts 1,50,000 acres of paddy fields were inundated. Because of huge volume of rainfall, the drains could not discharge rain waters into the sea. So it took a very long time for the water to go from the fields. As a result of which in my Krishna District alone, nearly 1 lakh acres of paddy crop that was transplanted, is completely lost. Now, we have to retransplant the entire area. The total loss to agricultural crops in Krishna District alone is estimated to be Rs. 36 crores. Our Government has sent a preliminary report regarding the estimated damage.

In Krishna District there is damage to the roads and other public utilities. Damage to 10 works under major Irrigation, 16 under medium irrigation and 94 tanks under minor irrigation system, has occurred. Similarly, loss of buildings, houses, etc. The total loss is estimated to be Rs. 34 crores. My information is that 1188 minor irrigation sources are damaged in the entire State due to floods and heavy rains.

I request the hon. Minister to send a team immediately without any loss of time to our State. Let them visit the affected areas and assess the damage, to what extent it has taken place to crops, public utilities and all these things and then give a correct picture to the Union Government and see that necessary assistance is made available to the State Government to take

up short range as well as long range measures. Already our Government has opened hundreds of relief camps in the affected areas. Particularly in the Godavari River the water level has crossed the danger mark. With the result thousands of people are affected and there was serious danger to these people. Our Government has taken all steps to evacuate the people from vulnerable points, making available seeds and giving Rs. 1000 as subsidy per acre on fertilisers or other inputs so that the paddy seedlings are re-transplanted so that the production should not fall. Our hon. Chief Minister has written a letter to the hon. Prime Minister requesting for sanction of Rs. 50 crores so that necessary repair works as well as improvements can be made to the Krishna-Godavari Delta Drainage System, which is contributing several lakh tonnes of rice to the national pool as well as to State Pool to meet the requirement of the State.

The Government is spending more on flood relief rather than flood prevention. For example, last year the total damage was nearly Rs. 2039 crores. In 1986 total damage including loss of crop was nearly Rs. 3000 crores. Every year, on an average, it is estimated that in the State of Andhra Pradesh, we are losing Rs. 53 crores. Similarly, in Bihar we are losing Rs. 49 crores—of course, these are the figures not computed at the present value of the rupee, these are old figures, but these are the figures given by our library. Similarly, the figure for U.P. is Rs. 137 crores. Of course, these figures relate to several years back, the recent figures show that the losses are to the extent of Rs. 2,000 crores every year. Here the main point is why should the Government allow this thing to happen like this. My friend Vijay Kumar Yadav has narrated the plight of the people in Bihar that while in several districts people suffer from drought, in some other districts people are suffering from floods. Why should the Government allow this type of sorry state of affairs to go on for years and years? Why not the Government, take its responsibility? In fact, in the note given by the hon. Minister, he has said: "Even though the responsibility for carrying out the relief and rehabilitation activities is primarily the task of the State

[Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

Governments. . . .” My submission is, the Union Government also must think and take it as its responsibility also, along with the State Governments. For example, in 1986 *Kharif* season, when Godavari river was in flood and several lakh hectares of paddy fields were damaged—when the crop was ready to be harvested, there was colossal damage—immediately in the *Rabi* season, our State Government had taken all necessary steps so that in more areas paddy could be raised under *Rabi* cultivation. Nearly in eight lakh hectares paddy was raised in the *Rabi* season, which helped a lot, both to our national pool as well as to the State pool also, to meet the people’s requirements. So, my suggestion is, the Union Government should definitely come forward to take up the responsibility along with the State Governments, to implement flood prevention measures as well as to improve the drainage systems.

In this connection, I want to bring to your kind notice that in my constituency, there are Maniyeru and Wyiere rivers which are very frequently receiving floods and causing damage to the villages located by the sides of these rivers. Especially at some points where the banks are at low level the water is overflowing, causing damage to nearly fifteen villages. If the banks at those points where they are low, are raised, this damage can be prevented once for all. It will be beyond the competence of the State Government alone to do such type of things—not only for our Government of Andhra Pradesh but even for the Government of Bihar or other governments. So, my suggestion is that the Union Government should also come to the rescue of the State Government in giving an equal matching grant to undertake flood prevention measures.

We have seen a very disturbing news that the Union Government has, unfortunately, given instructions to the commercial banks not to receive the premium under the Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme. Some time back the hon. Minister was good enough to assure, when we enquired from him whether the Government have the intention to give up the Scheme, that they were thinking of evolving certain measures

to plug the loopholes, when it was brought to the notice of the Government that there were some instances of misutilisation or misappropriation or that some things have gone wrong somewhere in some States, they told us that they were evolving certain formula so that such things do not occur in future but it has no intention to give up the scheme. It is a good thing. But this year the banks have not received the premium. For example, in 1986, when the paddy crop had damaged in East and West Godavari districts and in some parts of Krishna district, at least to some extent, though belatedly, our farmers had received some compensation.

Though it did not meet the entire loss, it has given some relief to the farmers. Now, this year what will be the fate of the farmers when the comprehensive crop insurance scheme is not available there? Even this small relief will not be available to the farmers. Sir, the hon. Minister had previously been the Chief Minister of a very prosperous agriculturally developed State. I would request him not to give up this scheme and kindly arrange to issue immediate instructions to the banks so that they may receive the premium against the crop insurance scheme in respect of paddy crop also.

15.00 hrs.

Sir, in conclusion, I appeal to the Government once again to send a team of officials to Andhra Pradesh to assess the damages that have taken place in different districts, particularly in those districts which I mentioned some time back and make available financial assistance, to take short-term measures, such as, restoration of these irrigation schemes, etc. as well as long-term measures such as improvement in the drainage scheme, and taking up several flood prevention measures, etc. With these words, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important subject.

[*Translation*]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I express my thanks to you, the hon. Speaker and Shri

Bhajan Lal for providing me an opportunity to participate in this discussion.

15.02 hrs.

[SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN
in the Chair]

Sir, until and unless you understand this problem in the right perspective it cannot be solved. The hon. Minister is of the view that he will consider the matter only when floods hit the State. But I feel that it will be too late to take any preventive measure at that time. I do not know about other States but I know about Bihar. During the past 150 years we had never witnessed such unprecedented floods which hit Bihar last year. I am saying 150 years because the recorded history available in this respect is for 150 years. I am not aware what happened prior to it. When I was narrating the havoc caused by floods last year in Bihar most of my hon. Colleagues might not have believed me that North Bihar was in such a pitiable plight. Last year's floods have crippled North Bihar and the economic development of the area has been pushed back by 20 years. It is not a minor thing. I therefore, request the Government to consider it seriously.

Drought is in fact, a dreadful calamity and the entire country had diverted its attention towards it. Luckily, rains occurred this year, hence there appears to be no need to pay any attention toward it. But last year the discussion on floods were lost in the din of discussion on drought. During the drought there is at least one saving grace that people have at least some food to eat, place to live in and clothes to cover their bodies but during the floods everything is washed away. Even rich people and people belonging to middle class have become beggars as a result of the floods. They have left their areas and have come over to Delhi and Calcutta to eke out a living. There is no scope of work left in Calcutta now. Therefore, they are bound to come to Delhi for their livelihood. What I mean to say is that the situation is very not only dangerous but also alarming. We must understand the situation in this perspective. We cannot evade the issue by merely saying that floods are a common feature in Bihar every year, It is not so. The people of Bihar

are not responsible for these floods. Somebody else is responsible for that and a close watch needs to be kept in this regard. Our relations with Nepal are cordial. We have been raising our voice every year in this House urging the Government to sign an agreement with Nepal and check the water by constructing a high-altitude dam and reservoir on their soil. Once the dam is constructed water can be regulated smoothly to Bihar. There after that water could be tamed and harnessed for irrigation and power generation. It will benefit both Nepal and Bihar. But instead of this Bihar is being devastated by floods. I am of the view that the time is very opportune now to sign an agreement with Nepal. I know that this project will involve huge expenditure. For that, India and Nepal can draw loans from any international agency or World Bank and meet this expenditure. This will help not only in generating electricity but also containing the floods. It will also help in the economic development of not only North Bihar but also the entire North India. There is a need to think over it very seriously.

I had an impression that hon. Minister of Water Resources will attend the House and participate in the discussion. He had conveyed to me through a letter that the matter was under discussion with the Nepalese Government. But we are not aware as to what has been the outcome of the discussion.

During the last floods, Bihar got the least amount of relief. We do not beg for relief. We are the citizens of this country. You should at least extend the minimum of facilities which could enable us to sustain. Have we committed a mistake by being born in Bihar? The most important point is that an agreement can be entered into with Nepal so that in the event of heavy rains in the catchment areas, North Bihar can be informed and people can be told to go to safer places. Even today, there are no proper arrangements in this regard, although our hon. Minister has stated that arrangements have been made and the floods have not come so far. You come along with me and I shall show you as to how the people are afflicted by floods. The level of Kamala and Kosi river has

[Shri G.S. Rajhans]

risen. Due to waterlogging, excess waters of last year's floods was not drained out. As a consequence, during the current monsoons, waterlogging has further increased. After all, where should the people go? This matter should be taken seriously. It is not a issue to be evaded by saying that floods are a normal phenomena of brought to Bihar. Floods do not occur in Bihar but are brought to Bihar. Therefore, it is our responsibility to check it.

I thought that the Hon. Prime Minister's tour of Bihar would result in one or two Ministers doing the same subsequently. But no one took the trouble of going there. After all why should they do it. It is Bihar's headache, why should they care? It is a persistent affliction of Bihar. It is their fate. Why should anyone leave the comfort of an airconditioned room and go there? During the floods last year, the people had neither food to eat nor clothes to wear. Hundreds of people died of pneumonia and that too during the summer season. Is it not a matter of shame for us? But today our own people are making fun of the horror of floods. Even whatever little arrangements have been made for control of floods, particularly by the Kosi project, is not yielding results on account of rampant corruption. Is there anyone to check as to what happens to the funds which are allocated for this project? People are pocketing crores of rupees out of these funds. Whatever has happened is in front of everyone. Should I demand in this House that a Parliamentary Committee should be set up to look into the working of the Kosi Project? If corruption is increasing, then we too have a hand in it. The time has come to monitor the spending of each penny in this project. It is high time we carefully consider as to what action to take in case floods hit and what to do about providing relief and how to ensure that it reaches the needy people. Last year, it did not reach the right people, even five per cent of the affected people did not get it. I went from village to village, from door to door and found that relief did not reach them. People died of starvation and the cattle perished due to non-availability of fodder. Who is respon-

sible for all this? People died of Cholera, of snake-bite and I consider myself guilty for it and I implore you not to allow the same situation of develop this year too. Last year I submitted during the debate on Food Corporation also that we had been able to barely meet the situation with the stocks in the godowns of FCI but this year these godowns are empty and consequently there are chances of starvation deaths. There are no medicines for snake bite, no Cholera vaccines. In such a situation, can you wash your hands off merely by holding the State Governments responsible for it? The question is of humanity. We raise our voice in the name of humanity in the world. We fight for human rights but the same right are being thrown to winds in Bihar. No one is paying any heed to the torment of people in that State. Today the time has come when we should treat them like human beings and provide them with every kind of protection. Bihar Government has sought rupees one hundred crores for strengthening and raising the height of the barrage. Resources should be mobilised for increasing the height of the barrage, strengthening it and for making proper arrangement for its dredging. You should not only allocate funds but undertake the work yourself. I would say the Bihar Government is corrupt from top to bottom. The Central Government should itself undertake the work and see whether the work is going on properly or not. Our on point programme is that we should get protection from floods and the Central Government has a moral responsibility in this regard.

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Machilipatnam) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I don't think there was at least one year when we did not discuss about the floods or droughts. I do not put the blame on the State Government or the Central Government but unfortunately, no Government is realising the importance of prevention of floods and droughts. The peculiarity of this investment on projects, particularly river valley project is two-sided. One is, increased production and the other is decreased destruction. With one investment, we get two benefits. When there are floods or droughts, particularly flood, the loss is multi-fold and the sufferers mostly

are poor and marginal farmers, and not the rich certainly. I do not know whether this particular point has come to the notice of the various Governments. Sir, everyone of us belonging to various parties claims that we are for the poor, we are for the farmers and we compete with each other in demanding either writing-off of loans or increasing the subsidies or demanding more subsidies or prepared to distribute anything at the disposal of the Government. But we never think in terms of avoiding all these things. I don't think any person in this country is ever interested to be a beggar or to live on subsidy alone. There would not have been a need for subsidy had the Governments taken care of increasing the production and ensuring proper distribution, particularly among the poorer sections of the society. The need for all these things has come up now only because this has not been realised earlier.

As the hon. Chairman has given me only eight or ten minutes, instead of enlarging myself to the entire nation or to the various States, let me quote only one instance of my district. I would like to point out as to how much loss has been there, in the last 10 days, because of the floods and lack of drainage system. Bhajan Lalji, as you know, Krishna and Godavari deltas are supplying rice not only to that area but it has become a storage, a supplier for the entire nation and for at least most parts of the Southern States where it is lacking. If it were the fate of these Districts suffering from floods every year, would you like to prefer leaving it like that and importing rice from other countries losing very valuable foreign exchange? Or, would you prefer to invest a little more and avoid depending on the outside countries? Sir, the ryots in the Krishna and Godavari deltas are very progressive, learned and prepared to adopt modern techniques of agriculture. They are raising more than 40 bags per acre—*i.e.* three tonnes of paddy—whereas the average is not even one-fourth in this country. I wish to bring it to your knowledge that the average investment per acre for major crops in the country today is varying from Rs. 10000 to Rs. 20000. Whereas in Krishna and Godavari deltas where around 2 billion acres are being cultivated,

the investment that is required for improving the drainage is only Rs. 1000 per acre. By investing Rs. 1000 per acre and improving the drainage system in these two deltas, we can increase the crop at least three times. By investing Rs. 1000 per acre, if you are going to get the benefit or increase the production by three times, will the Government not think that it will be a wise thing to invest on improving this rather than investing on some new major projects anywhere in the country? I do agree with your thinking in terms of balanced regional development. But there is a pathetic situation in my district. Only yesterday morning I came here. Two days back when I was touring the villages, in one of the villages about 200 agricultural workers were standing on the road where they went for transplantation. I understand that the farmer in that land was telling the labourers that he would pay only Rs. 1.50 for each labourer per day for transplantation whereas they were asking for Rs. 2 per day for which the farmer was not prepared. I challenge this, if you do not know. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : I would like to say that it is around Rs. five or six everywhere. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI K. S. RAO : Mr. Sobhanadreeswara Rao, you are speaking sitting here. Please go there, see things and then you comment. Please hear me fully and then you comment. Don't be in a hurry. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. K. S. Rao, you please address the Chair.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI K. S. RAO : Why he is making noise here. Let him go to the villages. Let him hear me fully. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : I repeat that the labourers are paid more than Rs. 1.50 everywhere. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is the point in arguing like this? You will also

get your turn when you can have your say. Please sit down.

SHRI K. S. RAO : I was quoting an instance.

*(Interruptions)***

MR. CHAIRMAN : Whatever he says will not be recorded. Mr. Rao, you continue.

SHRI K.S. RAO : What I say is, more than one and a half lakh acres are still totally filled with water, and the farmers are not prepared to go for transplantation. That is the particular reason why the farmer is not prepared to pay. It is not that in the entire district the rate is Rs. 1.50. In every village it is Rs. 10 or Rs. 15. I am not denying that. I am not saying that this is the position in the entire district. On a particular day, that is two days back, when we went to the village, Putlacheru, where the farmer was not prepared to take the risk of transplantation, this was the position. The farmer is not prepared to pay because he knows that he does not get anything. For one acre of transplantation, the cost is more than Rs. 800 only on the day of transplantation because seedling is not available. That is why the farmer is not prepared to take the risk. It was under that situation the farmer was not prepared to pay. It is not that he does not want to pay. Mr. Sobhanadreeswara Rao, you can have it verified. The Zila Parishad Chairman and myself went to Putlacheru by road and on that particular day the entire area was filled with water. We were an eye-witness to that. I am not saying that in the entire district it is like that. What I want to impress on the hon. Minister is this. The loss that has occurred in Krishna district and even in the Godavari delta, is tremendous, it is pathetic to see. You would appreciate if you were to go and see the various villages where water is still lying. The State Government has come forward saying that they will supply seeds at Rs. 360 per bag or as an alternative they will supply, what is called in Telugu, 'Naru' at Rs. 82 or Rs. 86. The far-

mers are not prepared to come forward to take it, the reason being that they will not get even one rupee return on that. They want to keep the land idle this season. This indicates how much frustrated the farmer is and how pathetic the situation is for the agricultural labour in that area. It will be no surprise if in Krishna district some of the workers are to starve in this season. I request the hon. Minister to take it to his heart and either send a Central Team or go there himself to see how the farmers and the farming labourers are suffering there. I am not against my colleague asking for the Central Team to be sent there immediately. The State Government is taking pride that they are supplying rice at Rs. 2 per kg. We are also in favour of that, not against. But unfortunately the price of rice today is more than Rs. 6 in that area. I do not think the agricultural labour can afford to pay Rs. 6 per kg. So, he does not get that benefit. I wish the hon. Minister Shri Bhajan Lal, who can understand and who can act, to think of preventing these floods rather than thinking of relief every time. Let us not lose crores of rupees every year on relief; invest at least half of it on prevention; we will get the benefit. We need not beg from other countries for rice or anything. Our farmers, our countrymen, are prepared to produce any number of tonnes of rice or wheat. You take your farmers into confidence and pay them the right price and arrange for fertilisers and seedlings of good quality in time. The only thing is that, since about two lakh acres have been lost totally, I want the Government of India to come forward and convert the loans that have been taken for transplantation into long-term loans and release loans once again for the plantation.

Similarly, as my colleague has asked, the Government of India must also come forward to assist the State Governments in arranging for these farmers who are put to total loss, free seeds, free fertilizers at least for this year if not for all the years. I request the Minister to take care of this pathetic condition of the farmers.

**Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Rajhans has described aptly that floods do not strike Bihar, but they are brought to Bihar. I would like to add that floods do not strike Bengal but they are sent from Bihar. As Bengal is near the Bay of Bengal, the entire flood water flows through it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are not able to utilize water resources properly, which should have been an asset to us. We can check floods, we can bring more areas under irrigation and we can also generate more hydro-power through this asset but unfortunately, we are running after Thermal Power and are not paying any attention to hydro-power generation. We have not been able to make optimum utilization of our water resources, even though we are suffering huge losses every year. I have got all the figures, but I would like to restrict myself to the relief amount that has been provided. Rs. 1425 crore were paid as crop damage in 1985; Rs. 1213 crore in 1986; Rs. 1300 crore in 1987 whereas in 1985 Rs. 8300.59 lakh were paid as crop insurance for damage to Kharif crop and Rs. 8500 lakh in 1986. This payment was made at the rate of Rs. 200 per hectare.

SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV : Which means one-fourth of the total cost.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : It is even less than that. Farmers are suffering huge losses this year too. Kindly start thinking about it from now on. Whenever the flood strikes, it causes huge losses and every State Government seek aid from the Central Government. The left party is in power in West Bengal and therefore if we do not get timely help we can create hue and cry here and thereby give vent to our feelings, but I pity the hon. Member from Bihar who cannot even say that much because the Cong (I) is in power both in the State as well as at the Centre.

Drought has caused havoc in Rajasthan whereas floods have caused havoc in the areas in our side. When we paid a visit to Sikar—Speaker Sahib's constituency—we were shocked to see a slogan painted on a water tanker saying :

*"Pani bhi Seemit
Parivar bhi Seemit"*

(Limited water-limited family)

It is most unfortunate that even after 41 years of Independence we have limited water at some places and unlimited at other places.

SHRI RANA VIR SINGH : It means that the water should not be wasted.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : If you interpret it like that then it is all right.

The West Bengal Government had asked for Rs. 264 62 crores from the Centre as flood relief last year but the Eighth Finance Commission recommended only Rs. 12 crore. We got about Rs. 80-82 crore. The course of most of these rivers in the area is from Nepal to Bihar and then to Bengal. West Bengal is on the border of Bangladesh. The State Government cannot enter into an agreement with the Bangladesh Government in respect of river water because it is a central subject. This can be done only by the Central Government. The Centre should be fully responsible for the huge losses being suffered due to floods. Serious thought shall have to be given to checking floods. I am emphasizing it again and again because it is a central subject and therefore the entire responsibility should rest with the Central Government. When the people are rendered homeless because of heavy rains, they ask for Tarpaulin. They do not get it because it is said that its production is not there. First of all the MPs and MLAs of that State have to face the people. Therefore we should think over it before floods strike there. Shri Rajhans said that there are no foodgrains with the Food Corporation of India and this is true. This is not an allegation levelled by the left party but it is what every MP thinks. Besides floods, I would like to draw your attention to my constituency. Murshidabad where erosion is causing serious concern. If the crops are damaged due to floods once, these can be had next time, but the land once eroded cannot be brought back. There has been a large scale erosion in 120 km area of my district. I have been repeatedly warning you against it but you are not paying any heed to it. A big part of Bhagwan-

[Shri Syed Masudal Hossain]

bola and Rani Nagar block by the side of my district has come closer to Bangladesh due to erosion. Farmers have been given lease of land. They cultivate crops and when these are ready for harvesting the people and the police personnel of Bangladesh and our B.S.F. jawans get ready to collect the crops which go to the other side of the border because of soil erosion. This has led to an international dispute and the country's border is in danger. This is not the first time that I am raising this issue but I have raised it four-five times during the last eight years, but in vain. The erosion in 120 km area cannot be checked by the State Government alone. Our State Government had sent a scheme costing Rs. 450 crore in this regard and attention must be paid to it. Even the Pritam Singh Report has also not been taken note of. I am once again telling you that floods have already hit Bihar and now they are on the move to Bengal. Therefore, I urge the Central Government to save us from this menace. The Central study group can be sent later but the people should be provided relief first. The people lose their lives in the floods, they want food and clothing but the Centre seems oblivious of all this and it sends the study team, say after three-four months and the relief is provided only when the study group submits its report. This is not the proper way. Attention should first be given to check floods and till this is done sufficient aid should be provided to the State Governments concerned.

SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL (Kota) :
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from Rajasthan which is famous for its famines and not for floods, yet there are two such districts out of the 27 districts of the State which are hit by floods every year causing damage and, therefore, I want to speak on it. These districts are Kota and Jhalwar. Kota was flooded in 1986 and 55 people died as a result thereof. Whenever floods hit, the State Government sends its report to the Central Government in that regard. The Central team which is sent there to assess the situation, should go early. They do not conduct the survey properly. They reach the spot as though they are visiting it for sight-seeing. They just collect the

principal data and return after meeting the officers. They do not even tell the public representatives about their time of arrival at the Circuit House thereby not enabling them even to report about their problems. Just as advertisements are given in the newspapers for informing the public, similarly advertisements should also be given to enable the people to put forward their problems. Even the concerned officers of the State Governments are not able to make them understand the actual problems because they themselves keep on being posted to different places. Whether it is the irrigation officer or a collector, they all get transferred after 2-3 years. Kota city is struck by flood every alternate year. Nobody has so far gone into its main cause. It is good that even at that time the Central Government had granted Rs. 7 crores for flood relief. You gave Rs. 7 crores to the State Government all right but you have not asked for the information regarding the purpose for which this amount was spent. The factors which caused flood are still existing. The ponds located at lofty places near Kota city stand breached resulting in flood. This amount of Rs. 7 crores has not been spent on carrying out their repairs. My submission is that whenever you send a Central Survey Team, you must get it verified as to how much damage has been caused and where, and whether the State Government is making proper use of the funds allotted to it.

I want to submit that although there is an advisory committee on drought and flood in every district, yet they are all defunct. These advisory committees do not hold any meetings. Even if a meeting does take place, the entire business is disposed of within half an hour. No serious thought is ever given to evolving means to rehabilitate the flood or drought-affected people and to check the losses being caused by these natural calamities. Suggestions to check these floods are never sought. Therefore, you should inspite these advisory committees in every district to function actively and issue instructions accordingly.

I want to make a submission regarding soil erosion because it is a big problem in Kota district. There are a number of rivers in this district and each river is

flooded following heavy rains. Thereafter land erosion takes place at a large scale. First of all, I want to submit that you should completely drop your present 'fire-brigade approach under which the Central Government gives funds to the State Government whenever there is flood. Out of the funds so given, food and clothing problems of the flood-affected people are met temporarily and they are also accommodated for some time in some school building or housing board colony, but the moment flood waters recede, they are sent back to their respective villages. You should change this practice without any delay. Instead, you should get the primary causes of flood probed seriously and take steps to remove those causes. Unless the Government identifies those causes and makes provision to check floods permanently, no matter how much funds you allocate to State Governments, the floods will keep recurring every year and everywhere whether it is Bihar, Bengal, Rajasthan or any other State. Can you name any such flood-prone place in the country where floods have been checked due to your efforts. There is no such place in our country. Flood continues to strike every year. Therefore, you will have to find out the causes responsible for floods and make arrangements to control them.

The Government must formulate a plan regarding land-erosion. I feel that whatever machinery and equipment is available with you for checking it, is insufficient and useless. Due to land erosion, the standing crops in thousands of acres of land are destroyed or the land itself is rendered unfit for cultivation. The Government should pay attention in this direction.

I feel that the matters to which I have drawn the attention of the Government will receive due consideration. The points raised by me were : whether the funds allotted by the Central Government to the State Government are being used for the actual purpose; to what extent are the reports sent by the State Governments to the Centre in this regard correct; and that you should send a team from the Centre for monitoring the head under which you allocate funds to the State Governments, so that they may visit the spot to see whether that money is being utilised properly or not. With these words I thank you,

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN
(Rosera) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, floods have become a permanent problem for our country. Today about 41 per cent land of our country is affected by floods. We have so far been able to control floods in about 13 per cent of the area, the remaining 28 per cent is still prone to floods. From this, you can imagine the extent of loss and devastation we have to suffer due to floods every year. Even after such a long time after independence we have neither been successful in checking floods nor controlling drought with the result that standing crops on thousands of acres of land are destroyed, thousands of houses are washed away, huge cattle-wealth is lost and many people lose their lives every year. Floods cause many problems and diseases besides damaging crops.

Though many schemes have been formulated and many dams have been constructed to control floods by our Government after independence, yet we have failed to save or protect the people from floods. Just compare the extent of damage we used to suffer previously and what we suffer now due to floods. In this connection, I have some figures with regard to Bihar, Sir, I want to place the same before you. Previously when there was no planned development, 500 houses used to be washed away but now when there is planned development, 2000 to 4000 houses are washed away. It means that so many families are rendered homeless. Previously crops on one thousand 500 acre land used to be damaged, now crops on about 18 thousand acre land and all the three crops get damaged. Previously water used to stagnate for 3 days, but now it stagnates for 3 months. Thus the plans formulated are in a sense not to stop floods but to welcome them. These planning officers desire that floods should continue for longer periods so that they can go on reaping the fruit. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I came from a flood affected area and I submit that Darbhanga, Samastipur and Madhubani districts are flood affected areas. Rivers here appear to be small, but cause serious destruction. Rivers like Kosi, Bagmati, Kamla Balan, Gandak, Budi Gandak are usually flooded.

[Shri Rambhagat Paswan]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, embankments have been constructed but we are surprised at the way these embankments have been constructed. Instead of having continuous embankments, gaps have been left in between. These rivers flow from west to east and from north to south. Rivers should meet at a proper place and then fall together into the Ganges. Embankments should be constructed properly after conducting a proper inspection. But this has not been done. It is surprising to see that instead of giving relief to the people these create more problems for the people. Therefore people have started demanding that they do not need such embankments and all embankments should be removed because these create obstruction in the flow of water. When these embankments were not there water used to stagnate there for three days, while now the water remains there for many days. This is troubling the people and they are demanding that all embankments should be removed to facilitate the quick flow of water so that the people may get relief. Therefore, Sir, I submit that your plan has not served the purpose. Though we are lay-men and not experts, yet I would like to insist that wherever embankments are built, the local people must be consulted, opinions of likely sufferers must be taken, but your planning officers seldom visit villages, they even do not bother to inspect the situation created by floods. They formulate plans by sitting here and just imagining as to how the people can be saved from floods. When the flood is on our heads and we make a hue and cry, report in newspapers and broadcast at All India Radio and make all our efforts, only then the Hon. Minister plans to survey the flood-affected areas by an aeroplane. Thereafter, it is decided as to how many boats are required and the carpenters are asked to build boats. When boats are ready, these are no more needed because by then the floods recede.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I visited my flood affected area from 10th to 15th July and I found that about 15-20 panchayats' area is badly affected by floods. When I saw the collector and asked him to see that relief work should be started there in 15-20

panchayats' area which has been badly affected by floods, the collector replied that relief was sent only after water remained there for 7 days. I told him that the flood water was there for more than 7 days. After that, I came here, later on it was learnt that relief has been provided there but only to handicapped people and the badly affected people have been left to the mercy of God. This is the state of your relief work.

The flood control officers may be asked to go there and I will set them right and apprise them of the various problems faced by the public? They must construct embankments but these should be constructed properly. These embankments should be constructed upto the place where rivers of Bihar fall into the Ganges.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, 30 to 40 years elapse after the building of embankments but no repair work is carried out. There is plenty of funds to repair them, but the same are not spent on repairs. On the contrary, embankments are made weak by carrying out so called repairs. These embankments are demolished and earth is mixed therein. Thus embankments become weak and start cracking resulting in a loss of crores of rupees. This is the state of affairs there. You make plans without proper understanding. Some permanent solution should be found to check floods. I submit to you that whatever embankments exist, they should be raised to 5 metres height. Besides, you should dig channels in between and the water left in the river should be allowed to flow into the Ganges. 60 billion rupees have been spent on flood control and relief works. If you had spent this sum on flood control schemes, we could have been protected from floods forever.

It has also been observed that the sum sanctioned for flood relief works is not actually spent on them. Officers pocket all the money. Have you ever paid your attention towards it?

As is known to you, the Kosi river originates from Braha area in Nepal. A dam should be constructed there. There is a river named Kamla Balan. It originates from Shishapani in Nepal. You should construct a dam near Shishapani. The

Bagmati originates from the place named Nutoya. You should construct a dam there. Our hon. Minister can hold talks with Nepal on this subject. I know that the Nepal Government is not giving its approval to all these plans because it is not in its power. I insist upon you that in order to mobilise resources, you should stop giving relief. By constructing a dam there, electricity can be produced and floods can be checked for ever.

Whenever there are floods in our area the poor people migrate to the places where dams have been constructed. Therefore, kindly make some raised grounds in between so that people may seek refuge there and save themselves from floods.

In the end, I would like to insist that you should provide full relief to the people when floods come and ensure that sufficient grains and medicines are made available to them. Our Bhajan Lalji is a very active worker. I know that he will find some permanent solution to save Bihar from floods and hold talks with Nepal in this connection very soon. With these words, I thank you.

[English]

SHRI H. M. PATEL (Sabarkantha) :
Mr. Chairman, Sir, the speakers who have spoken before me have rightly emphasised that the floods are an annual feature. We have floods now. It is not something unusual; every year they take place. Not only it is an annual feature, but it is increasing in intensity every year and the reason for this is not far to seek. This is because the amount of silt and top soil that is carried away by the rivers is enormous. And that raises the bed of the river with the result that the floods grow in intensity, rivers spill out and the damage each year goes on increasing. The question, therefore, before the Government should be not merely giving relief to those who suffer from the floods but to think about the steps that they should take which would have the effect of preventing floods permanently from occurring at all. What are these steps and why have we yet not been devoting as much attention as we should have done ?

15.56 hrs.

[SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI
in the Chair]

For instance, it is known that in the catchment area if there is ample vegetation, water is absorbed and the flow of water is slowed down. Since independence we have destroyed forests without any long term thinking. I have got here figures with me. The river Ganges alone takes away or carries away silt amounting to 80,000 Hectare Metres. Now, if you think of all the other river systems, Brahmaputra and other big rivers, then you can imagine the quantity of silt and top soil that we are losing every year. It takes millions of years for the top soil to be built up and we are very prodigal in wasting it. The annual loss of top soil during the flood is estimated at 12 billion tonnes. How long can this go on ? It means that the productivity of our agriculture is also being reduced and diminished. Without adequate top soil, agricultural productivity will go down. Therefore, it seems to me very important that the Government should give the highest priority to certain measures which would prevent this from taking place.

We talk about afforestation but how much afforestation has been really done during these forty years ? I understand that the annual earning of forest operations is very low. We do not stop forest operations, the Forest Department is responsible for cutting large number of trees. The annual earning of Government from forest operations is Rs 820 and odd crores as against a loss of 12 billion tonnes of top soil. Just look at the equation. I think we can afford to spend a great deal of money to see :

- (a) That the forest operations are cut down completely, foregoing earning and
- (b) that we undertake an Afforestation Programme on a war footing, we should not merely talk about it but implement it. Even if it is done in catchment areas, it will help greatly.

These are some of the steps which must be taken. 95 per cent of the water of our rainfall is retained in a well vegetated

[Shri H. M. Patel]

catchment area. 95 per cent of the rainfall could be retained and as against that today it is the reverse. Only 5 per cent is retained and the rest goes down the drains. Therefore, I think it is time that Government should pay serious attention to this matter and I would urge the Minister for Agriculture who is known for his dynamism and action orientation that he sees to it that afforestation, particularly in catchment area is undertaken forthwith on a planned basis and on a war-footing. Now, we do use these words very often. But I hope that in this case they would not remain as mere words but are given effect to in practice.

16.60 hrs.

Secondly, I would say that an ad hoc programme may be undertaken on desilting river beds. This is also very important because it would ensure that the level of the riverbed would go deeper extent this would also be very helpful because silt is a very valuable fertilizer for cultivation.

It is unfortunately true that floods occur when there is very heavy rainfall. It cannot be known how much rainfall would be absorbed in a given 24 hours. But when the rain does fall very heavily, it also causes a great deal of harm and damage. During last year, when the country was facing a serious drought and when several States in the country had no adequate rainfall for several years, we talked seriously about various measures for conserving rain water. We then said that enormous quantity of water, the bulk of the rainfall was going into the sea and at that time we said that we should execute various plans urgently such as construction of check dams, digging of small ponds and so on to conserve rain water. In fact, it was even suggested that there should be a small pond in every field, which is a very sound and valuable suggestion. But what effective steps have been taken for the execution of these schemes?

I realise that this is not a matter which merely concerns the Central Government alone. It is a matter which seriously concerns the State Governments as well. Therefore, I would suggest to the Minister

for Agriculture to seriously consider this issue and call a meeting of the State Governments and work out a joint programme which would be given effect to on a very expeditious basis. This is very important and I am sure funds can be found for this programme. It does not seem to me that funds should come in the way of executing these plans. After all, sound agriculture is very important and productivity of agriculture must go up and not down. With all these considerations in mind, I think whatever funds are necessary should be made available. Of course, we should see to it that the funds which are made available are used properly and in a planned manner and in a sound way.

I do not wish to take more of your time, but I do hope that these simple suggestions will be given due consideration.

My one final point would be this. There is a natural drainage course and what we should try to do is not to interfere with this natural drainage course so that water can have its own flow. In the course of our development efforts while constructing roads, digging canals and so on, we have unfortunately blocked the passage of water along the normal drainage channels. It is very important that there should be a review of this with a view to seeing that wherever there are such interferences in this natural drainage channel, such interferences are removed or rectified in such a way that natural drainage is allowed free passage.

I do not wish to take more of your time and the bell is also ringing. I do hope that the Minister will pay a deeper and longer attention to my short suggestions.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MANOJ PANDEY (Bettiah) :
Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we have once again assembled to have discussions on the annual feature of flood disaster. We discuss the problem of floods only when they are upon us. At other times we do not take the trouble of going into that problem. So I request the hon. Minister always to concentrate on the problem of floods and formulation of a number of schemes to tackle this problem. These discussions on

floods should have some long-term effect. We always look to short-term effects. When floods have their sway, the Government limits itself to providing relief to the flood-affected people. Money is spent on relief but no permanent solution to this problem is sought. So my first suggestion is that there must be a long-term planning in this regard. Particularly a Board, which may be called National Flood Commission, should be constituted to suggest permanent measures in regard to the flood problem. Short-term measures which are frequently taken up as relief measures are not enough. There should be a long term planning for flood control.

The second problem, on which hon. Members have spoken, relates to the flooding of the country's rivers. I want to draw the hon. Minister's attention towards another point. The catchment-area of some rivers falls in other countries but India has to bear the brunt of the flooded rivers.

I want to make a particular mention of the rivers which flow through the territory of Nepal. Some of these rivers have their catchment area in Nepal. Like all other places here also forests have been deuded. Due to large-scale deforestation in Nepal, a mere two days' of rainfall causes flood in the rivers flowing in India. A lot of silt has accumulated in our rivers which has saturated their water bearing capacity. This is an international phenomenon and it was raised at the SAARC summit by our Hon'ble Prime Minister. I request the hon. Minister to pay special attention to this point and confer with Nepalese authorities to arrive at a solution. Floods in some of our rivers have their origin in Nepal. Every year there are floods in the rivers of North Bihar and rainfall in catchment areas and deforestation in Nepal are the main factors responsible for such floods.

The third point, of which the hon. Members of the B.J.P. may be aware, relates to the Ganga-Cauvery water scheme. This scheme was formulated when Shri K. L. Rao used to be the Irrigation Minister. The scheme envisaged the discharge of excess flood water from the Ganga into to the river Cauvery which is generally short of

water in those days. Utilisation of excess Ganga water in Cauvery would enable widening of the latter's basin and we could go ahead in the direction of a permanent solution to the problem. Time and again it is said that the Central Government does not have enough funds to finance this scheme.

When this scheme was formulated 30 years ago it was estimated to cost Rs. 13,000 crores. Postponement of its execution on the plea of shortage of funds has escalated the cost of this scheme. Now it has reached the mark of Rs. 44,000 crores—*i.e.* it has seen a four fold increase in a period of 30 years. If we have no funds for the same, I think this scheme is probably gathering dust in the Government's cupboard. I feel that this scheme could be of immense value for the control of floods.

Whenever we have discussions on flood control or irrigation schemes, the hon. Minister for Water Resources should also be present here in the House. The Agriculture Minister is present here but the Minister for Water Resources should also be present here because we are having discussions on irrigation schemes or floods and the same cannot be held in the latter's absence. We do not know even the fate of these schemes. I request the hon. Agriculture Minister to convey our feelings to the hon. Minister for Water Resources that at least at the time of discussions on floods he should be present here in the House.

Hon. Shri Patel has raised a very good point. In our area also, there is grave problem of silting. When flood water recedes, silt accumulates on the river-beds because rivers bring it with them from the higher ranges of mountains. The problem of silting exists everywhere, be it in the river Kosi and Bagmati or as Shri Vijoy said in the North and Central Bihar or in Andhra Pradesh or Purvanchal. Because of this silting, the Kosi Barrage project which costs more than Rs. 100 crores is on the verge of collapse. It cannot be guaranteed if this project will survive for five years from now.

Desilting may be done with the help of imported or indigenous technology.

[Shri Manoj Pandey]

Madam, I am extremely grateful to you that on my behalf the hon. Minister for Water Resources too has come in the House. I want to convey it to him that there is grave enormity of the desilting problem in my constituency. The process of desilting may be taken up gradually, so that the expenditure likely to be incurred there on is reduced to the minimum. Imported technology may also be used if need be. If indigenous technology is necessary that too may be used. Hitherto due attention has not been paid in this direction. The Government should pay more attention to the desilting problem.

I also want to draw your kind attention to the biggest problem of my constituency which is related to the river Budhi Gandak which affects 15 districts of North Bihar. There was a proposal for construction of a dam for controlling the water of this river. Some expenditure had also been incurred for the same. This is a State project and construction of this dam could create a 40% shortage of water in the river Budhi Gandak. If we are able to check the flow of the river in the catchment-area itself, the magnitude of floods caused by the river can be reduced. This project costs a mere Rs. 35 crores and does not require construction of a very large structure. There cannot be a better proposition than this where such a small amount of money will benefit 15 districts. But the State Government is incapable of doing it because it does not have adequate resources for this purpose. I, therefore, request the Central Government to set up a National Flood Control Commission without delay and execute all such projects through it.

*SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJU (Tumkur) :
Madam Chairman, it has become a routine programme for us to discuss the problems of floods in each and every session of this August House. This is the state of affairs even after 41 years of independence. We are not in a position to contain the excess flood water. I plead with the Hon'ble Minister to construct dams so that the excess water in the rivers can be stored. The excess water should not be wasted as

it is happening now. We have to feel bad only if there is no rain but I do not really understand why we are perturbed when there is excess rain. Infact, there is a proverb in Kannada which says that nothing will go wrong if there is excess rain. These days the floods have occupied the headlines in our radio broadcasts and telecasts. * This year there are floods in all most all parts of the country. In North India it is devastating and the loss is heavy. Regularly we deliver speeches here about the impact of floods. Money is sanctioned by the Government for the relief programmes. Last year we discussed about drought several times. I too participated in the debate on that unprecedented drought. These discussions and the temporary relief measures will not help the people, especially farmers of this country. We have to think of preventing floods and droughts permanently instead of planning temporary relief programmes. I would like to ask the Hon'ble Minister as to what has happened to Datter Canal Estination? and to K L. Rao's plan. Some parts in Bihar experience devastating floods every year and on the other hand many parts of Rajasthan experience severe drought throughout the year. Our Government is spending hundreds of crores of rupees every year for the flood relief programmes. Even the Capital city of India has been affected by floods. Of course, this is not a new phenomenon. For the last four decades we are facing the problems of floods even in Delhi. I do not know who should be blamed. It appears that neither the Government nor the top officials and Engineers are concerned about the permanent solutions for the problems of floods. It is high time that we took immediate steps to the problems of floods.

Our senior colleague has mentioned about the change in the Ecological system. It is true the destruction of forests has led to ecological imbalance. Our Prime Minister has given the top priority for afforestation programme. Unfortunately this is not being implemented strictly by the various State Governments. Pavagada is a place in my constituency which is in the grip of unprecedented drought for the last several years. Strangely, this year it received 8 inches of rain in one day. This is nothing

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

but the result of ecological imbalance. Similarly conservation of black cotton soil is neglected. About 90% of the Parliament members are farmers as per the Bio-data. If we are really serious about helping the farmers we should not allow the water to go waste into the sea. My humble request to Our Prime Minister is to take urgent steps to construct dams across the rivers other works like road construction, house construction etc. may be stopped temporarily, but construction of dams should not be stopped at any cost because the entire future of country lies on this. Irrigation is the backbone of our nation. We can usher into a new era of progress and prosperity only through irrigation.

We are fortunate to have rivers like Ganga, Brahmaputra, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri etc. The water of all these rivers has to be nationalised and it should be provided to the farmers. My final request to the Prime Minister and other hon'ble Ministers concerned through you Sir, is that in future we should not get an opportunity to discuss either flood or drought in this August House. I trust that our Government will take immediate steps to conserve the flood water and help the farmers of this country.

Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak and with these words I conclude my speech

[English]

SHRI M.R. SAIKIA (Nowgong) : I thank you for giving me this opportunity to say a few words on this subject.

This House has discussed the problem of floods every year. Therefore, the question arises whether any solution has been provided to this problem and whether the intensity of the flood is diminishing or increasing. What we have seen throughout the country is that in most parts of the country flood is becoming a permanent source of menace to the people.

I will confine only to my state Assam. We have discussed about the tragedy created by floods in Assam for the last three years. Last year, there were floods five times in quick succession right from the month of

June upto October. One of my colleagues from the other side has suggested for the constitution of a national board for controlling floods. But what purpose would be served by constituting such a board? In my State, there is such a board constituted many years ago, named, Brahmaputra Flood Control Board to control mighty Brahma. putra The function of controlling mighty Brahmaputra belongs to the Central Government. That Board framed a master plan and submitted two projects—Subensiri Project and Dhing Project—to the Government of India three years back. But what is the result? Simply by discussing the problem it will not serve any purpose. You have to take some concrete steps. Already 40 years have passed since independence. What effective measures have been taken to control floods? Every years lakhs and lakhs of people are being rendered homeless because of floods. Dwelling houses are being washed away. Thousands and thousand of hectares of standing crops are being damaged. Bridges, roads and culverts are being washed away. Means of communications get disrupted. I can cite one example. National Highway No. 37, which is important for strategic purposes, remained closed for more than a month in the month of June. So, these are the conditions in Assam. This is the situation not only in Assam but throughout the country. This Government is very much sensitive to political situations but not to the economic situations.

This year the people of Assam have already witnessed three floods since the month of May up to this month. In Nowgong district, in places like Lanka, Zugizam, Baithalkushi, Madigaon etc., more than eight lakhs of people have been affected. Their dwelling houses have been washed away by floods. All the standing crops were damaged. Bridges, roads and culverts have been washed away. Water supply has been disrupted because of floods. More than thirty lives have been lost. People had to be shifted from flood-affected areas to the high places with the help of country boats and Army, Army had to lift the marooned people to the places of safety. Hundreds of relief camps have been established. The State Govern-

[Shri M. R. Saikia]

ment has made a request to the Central Government to send a team to Assam for assessment of the damages. Even the Agriculture Minister was requested to pay a personal visit to see the things for himself, but there was no response. Simply by discussing this problem, no purpose will be served. Today we find that on all fronts—on labour front, on *kisan* front and on other fronts—there is dissatisfaction. People are not satisfied. Why? Unless we have got sincerity in our hearts and minds to serve the people, nothing will happen in this country.

Shri H.M. Patel has mentioned about deforestation. Deforestation operations are carried on by the State Governments to increase their revenues. In our State, three years back, the then State Government had converted all forest areas into baron lands, in order to increase the revenues of the State. Not only in Assam, almost in all the States, the State Governments carry on deforestation operations to increase their revenues. Unless this is stopped, how can you control the velocity of floods?

For controlling the mighty rivers like Ganga, Brahmapura, the State Government cannot control them because of the paucity of funds. Therefore, the Central Government should come forward to implement such huge projects to control the floods. Unless the Central Government extends financial help to implement these projects, nothing will be achieved.

I would like to point out one thing to the Minister of Water Resources. Water resources are the national asset. The national asset should not go waste. I do not know why the Government of India allow this resource to play havoc and create tragedy to the people. Is it not inconsistent with what you say and what you do? Therefore, my earnest request to the Government of India, to the Central Government, is to come forward with long-term and concrete proposals so that by implementing various schemes flood can be controlled in the country and every year there will be no necessity of having discussion on the problem of floods. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Panaji) :
Madam Chairman, we have been discussing the subject on floods for the last several years in this House and I think that with the measures the Government may perhaps like to take in the years to come, there should be a day which all of us should wish, when there should be no need of holding another discussion either by way of a Calling Attention or under Rule 193 on floods. A day should come that way.

Madam Chairman, basically this aspect of floods will be dealt with by the Ministry of Agriculture. In fact, I am speaking in defence of the Ministry of Agriculture. I do not know when I say that in a given area when flood comes, industries also get drowned, buses and motor vehicles get drowned, perhaps even planes get drowned. That means every Ministry in some way or other gets drowned. Then why alone the Ministry of Agriculture is made responsible for this? That is why I am saying that losses occur to the extent of crores of rupees. When we create a Ministry which involve crores of rupees, why not a Ministry to protect the people and the areas is created separate for this purpose? Therefore, it is very essential that if a separate Ministry is created for this purpose, everything would be all right. A better and concerted effort and proper attention can be paid if a separate Ministry to deal with this aspect of calamity either by way of floods or droughts is created. Today, it appears to be a bit ridiculous that the Ministry of Agriculture only is given this responsibility of tackling this issue. यह बोझा आपके सर पर क्यों है ?

Secondly, I would like to state that whenever floods take place, the non-Congress-I Government in the States take the opportunity—I have to say this with respect to the Telegu Desam Government in Andhra Pradesh and the Government in Assam—to castigate, to politicalise the issue of floods, when in fact they should, in cooperation with the Central Government, find a solution to the aspect of floods. Every year, when the floods take place, kindly see the behaviour of the non-Congress-I Government in Andhra Pradesh or in Assam or elsewhere. This kind of attitude of non-Congress-I Governments should stop. It is detrimental to the interest of the nation.

I am saying this specifically because the other day, the Prime Minister took the initiative to meet the District administrators. Why did the Prime Minister take this initiative? It is because the Prime Minister wanted to know the situation from the lowest strata of administration. He wanted to know how the Collector and the District Magistrate tackle the situation. He wanted to get the direct feed back from the lowest strata in the administration. But what was your attitude at that time? Mr. Rama Rao, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, raised several issues that the Prime Minister should not meet the lowest strata of the administrators. What did Mr. Hegde do? Mr. Hegde created some constitutional problems. I am dealing with this aspect specifically because it is relevant here. In the Centre-State relations the phenomena of floods and droughts play a pivotal role. It is here that the coordination between the Centre and the State is tested because crores of rupees are invested, they are given in the hands of State Governments and if the State Governments do not act properly, if the State Governments do not utilise these funds which are given as flood relief and drought relief, then what remains? They mismanage the funds and ultimately if the flood is over, they blame the Central Government and they merely ask the Central Government crores of rupees. The other day Assam Government also asked several crores of rupees. If there is an estimate made of the proper damage, the money has to be given. The Central Government has always given the money and they have never failed to do so.

We have recently floods in Assam and I have got the figures here. 200 people in over 3,100 villages affected, standing crop of 176,000 hectares damaged more than 100 people died and Shankaranandji has stated earlier in Parliament some time back that about 50 per cent of 3.15 million hectares of geographical area of Assam identified as 'affected' has been protected. The Central Government has played its role as far as protecting the flood area is concerned. Now, the question is: What our State Governments doing? I don't say that they are not concerned, But the question is, see their

attitude. The moment they find a pretext to blame the Central Government, they start blaming them. This attitude has to be stopped.

As far as the flood aspect is concerned, several reports by experts have been prepared. I have also got a report prepared by one of the leading Institutes, and they have given certain measures to be taken. Of course, it is very difficult to say in terms of theory listing preventive measures, but sometimes in practice it is very difficult to implement them. But the thing is that as far as preventive and protective measures are concerned, we have to use the latest technology and in this matter I would say, if we require technology to be imported in the sense specially regarding weather etc., if it is required urgently, import it even by spending foreign exchange because ultimately the loss that is caused by way of floods is tremendous. So we should not hesitate and we should take all sorts of cooperation from various countries. We have been sending INSATs and other vehicles in space. (*Interruptions*). In the morning also the way our Opposition Party Members are ridiculing our attempts of sending vehicles in space and blaming the Government for the past failures, it appears that they have no concern for this problem. Even the most developed countries like the United States and Soviet Russia had their own share of failures in the past. But this sort of vehicles in the space would ultimately help us to detect all these weather aspects. So, why not encourage our scientists? Why discourage them because they have failures? This has been the attitude of our Opposition Members.

Lastly, I would like to mention one aspect. When the funds are given, the manner in which our officers at the spot be have has to be controlled. Have we at any time booked or prosecuted those officers to whom the funds were given for the purpose of disbursements and who have not done the duty in the field properly? Have we at any time done that? Unless this is done, we hold responsible the employees and officers who neglect their duties while implementing the schemes of floods and drought. We will not be able to utilise 100 per cent capacity or 100 per cent

[Shri Santaram Naik]

funds which are allotted to the respective States. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Salempur) : Madam Chairman, As a person celebrates his birthday every year, likewise this august House discusses the problem of floods every year and takes it as a formality. So that the people of our constituencies may know that their representative have spoken in the House.

As regards the Government I understand that hon. Members from both the sides request to expunge some particular portion of the speech from the proceedings or some other portion of the speech is objectionable. Such objections are taken into consideration still there are discussions every day. I come from a district which is never spared by the ravage of floods year after year. Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Western districts of Bihar are the frequent victims of floods. There is hardly a year when Basti, Deoria, Gorakhpur and Gazipur districts of Uttar Pradesh have not experienced floods. Particularly in my district of Deoria, there is the river Burhi Gandak which flows along its northern border, whereas the rivers Ghaghra and Rapti flow along its south border and the river Choti Gandak passes in the middle through the district which is a devastating feature. Besides this, there are several other minor rivers and water channels which need no mention. In Ballia, the Ganga merges into these rivers and the influence of the Gandak, Ganga, Ghaghra, Rapti and Budhi Gandak always causes destruction in the districts of Ballia and Deoria. At other places, floods cause damage to crops alone but in our district, the villages face erosion of land by the flood waters. For instance, Bhatni is a town on the banks of the river Choti Gandak and also there is a sugar factory. One does not know when this town will be swept away by the floods. After putting in a lot of effort two or three lines of embankments have been raised. Similarly village Pyaasi is facing an erosion. Variaj town is going to be bifurcated. Other places which are facing land erosion include Parsia, Parsia Devaar,

Bhagalpur, Old Bellhara Bazaar, Haldi Rampur and Lilkar village. A lot of labour has gone into setting up a few embankments over there and the amount sanctioned therefor has not been granted. The fact is that orders are given only when the areas are actually submerged in flood water. Ministers also visit the flooded areas and order that a part of the amount may not be sanctioned. During our own visit of the flood affected areas, I have seen that only a few bamboo sticks and pieces of wood are cut and used to control flood waters and the actual amount spent thereon is highly exaggerated and lakhs of rupees are shown in the documents as the actual amount spent for the purpose. This is the practice they follow every year. There are some people in my district who pray to God for floods in their area so that their financial condition may improve. After all, what is the underlying reason? You may see that a lot of money has been spent on the embankment of the embankment of the river Budhi Gandak and if you calculate the entire amount spent thereon so far, it could run into billions of rupees and with that amount, the entire population of that area could have been resettled somewhere else. Actually, every year we see that with that amount, 5 to 10 residential units are got constructed. Why does it so happen? During floods, they claim that so many lakh tons of stone was used to control flood water but the same was swept away by the flooded river water. If one truck load is used, seven truck loads are shown on the papers. It is all bogus and it is done with the connivance of all the concerned, be it Engineers, overseers, or contractors of the Irrigation Department. Everybody is involved in it. You keep on talking of corruption but they have become very rich and nobody cares to bother about such things. What infact happens is that even if somebody bothers what will happen. In case somebody takes an action against them, in a democracy like ours, judges acquit them for want of evidence against them. Even if they are suspended, the courts let them off. In several cases I have also seen people drawing their full salaries for their entire period of suspension for years together. The fault lies with the democratic system. A democracy can never be free of corruption, under this

system only the degree of corruption may be abated.

One point I shall bring to the notice of the hon. Minister is that our Chief Minister and Irrigation Minister appear to be very active. . . . toured the flooded areas in the very beginning and saw that all the villages are submerged in water. The biggest problem is posed by river Gandak flowing along the State's border. Most of the floods are caused by this river. The Uttar Pradesh Government constructed a dam on its border. When Bihar's turn came, our hon. colleagues from Bihar are present here, it was just sweet talk and no action. The hon. Minister must have read about the Piprasi Dam in newspapers. Uttar Pradesh has a common border with Bihar. This dam was constructed after the Centre put pressure on Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar States I thank the hon. Union Minister to get the dam constructed by prevailing upon the both the State Governments. But the dam has been shoddily constructed. On a visit to the area we saw the river eroding the banks. If the breaches occur in the dam, the whole of Deoria will be swept away. All Ministers of the Uttar Pradesh State Government visited the site along with officials. . . According to them adequate steps are not being taken to tackle the floods. I want to tell you that the present wave of floods is just the tip of the iceberg. A fresh and colossal wave of floods is round the corner in another 15-20 days. It is just a rehearsal of the full show. Erosion is taking place at Narayani. If breaches occur in the dam, lakhs of farmers would be rendered homeless and their standing crops worth billions of rupees destroyed. This is a problem involving two states, and a solution to it cannot be found without Central intervention. The Piprasi dam has a very important role to play. The Centre should hold talks with both Governments. Orders should be given to strengthen the embankments at Narayani, which have been rendered weak by erosion.

Rivers Ghaghra and Ganga meet near Ballia. Erosion has already started there also. Parsia, Parsia Devar and Barhaj Bazaar are about to be divided into two parts. It is sad that work is not being

done even though an amount of Rs. 18 lakh has been sanctioned after a hectic efforts for 2 to 3 years. This is an everyday occurrence. At least Barhaj Bazaar should be saved. The Bhatni area, which has a sugar factory, is situated on the banks of the Choti Gandak and is prone to severe erosion. Embankments have been made but they are not suffice because erosion is continuing. Erosion is taking place at Old Bellha Bazaar, Haldirampur and Lilkar. If erosion continues, entire villages and their population will be swept away. The Centre should have talks with the State Government and also take measures on its own to save these villages. Crores of rupees have been spent on checking erosion at the confluence of rivers Ganga and Ghagra. But the measures taken are not satisfactory. I request the Centre to prevail upon the State Governments to get the dams constructed before the onset of floods. All money is spent only when the floods actually arrive. In that case amount is pocketed by contractors and engineers. So, in order to obviate the situation, action is required to be taken before hand. I once again request that the hard-earned money of the farmers be put to proper use and give priority to the control of floods.

In the end I once again request that the Piprasi dam be constructed to save Deoria and Narayani from being swept away. I conclude my speech.

SHRI RAM NARAIN SINGH (Bhiwani) : Madam Chairperson, no permanent solution is found to the problem of floods despite numerous discussions in the House. Last year's floods in Assam, Bihar, Bengal and many other States have taken up crores of rupees. This year floods have occurred in Assam and 16 other States. Hon. Members speaking in favour of a permanent solution have said that dams need to be constructed on the country's rivers. Dams help in generating electricity, making canals and bringing prosperity for the people and finding a permanent solution to flood problem. Crores of rupees are spent on controlling floods, I shall not go into the details of what is happening in other States of the country. I shall say something about Haryana. River Yamuna flows

[Shri Ram Narain Singh]

through four districts of Haryana. This river is flowing above the danger mark and nearby villages have been flooded. A project to construct a dam on river Yamuna was formulated several years ago. A dispute between U.P. and Haryana and Legal obstacles have come in the way of this project being implemented. The hon. Minister should resolve the dispute between U.P. and Haryana and hasten the implementation of the project to construct a dam on river Yamuna. Construction of this dam will save districts of Haryana and U.P. situated along the river Yamuna from being flooded. Ghaghar flows through Sirsa and other districts of Haryana, causing floods in its wake. A dam should be constructed on this river also. The project to construct a dam on river Yamuna was formulated during the present hon. Agriculture Minister's tenure as Chief Minister of Haryana. But work could not start because of a dispute between Haryana and U.P. If this dam is constructed, Haryana will get a complete relief from floods. It is very important to construct a dam on river Ghaghar. In Punjab, dams have already been constructed over rivers Sutlej and Beas while construction of the Thein dam on Ravi is in progress. The work is still incomplete. It should be completed soon. After its completion there will not be any foodgrains shortages in the country. Productivity of foodgrains in Punjab and Haryana can go up and floods can also be controlled. Maximum problems are faced by Bihar, Eastern U.P., Assam and Bengal. A permanent solution should be found for these areas. I request the hon. Minister to note that the Government needs to concentrate on construction of dams on rivers so that more electricity can be generated, canals can be dig and the country prospers.

SHRI ABDUL HANNAN ANSARI (Madhubani) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak after a long wait. Regrettably, the hon. Water Resources Minister, whom we welcomed with lot of hope and enthusiasm, left the chamber before I could make my request. I do not know to whom I should relate this tale of woe—to the hon. Agriculture Minister or to the hon. Water Resources

Minister. I do not have any objections if the hon. Agriculture Minister is sitting here to note down the list of all destruction brought about by floods. But as far as I know the Government is incapable of dealing with floods. The Government should understand the objective of holding discussions on floods. If the objective is just to lend an ear to the woeful tale of the flood-affected people, then I do not have any objection. Public representatives voice the problems of their respective constituencies over here hoping for a solution. The Government should refrain from behaving in a manner which lowers the morale of these representatives and gives them a bad name in their constituencies. Madam, many hon. Members have spoken on their respective States. We heard the hon. Member from Bengal complaining that floods in Bihar affected his State also. Madam, this is a problem which our State also fears. This is a very old problem. I have collected statistics with regard to Bihar only. I feel that the Centre has sanctioned nearly Rs. 28,000 crores towards providing relief to the flood-affected people.

Some hon. Members have also described in details as to what happens to the large amount which the Centre sanctions to Bihar. During floods, the affected population pray to God to help them tide over their problem. When I visit my constituency, I am pained to see how the dwellings of people have been devastated by floods.

The hon. Water Resources Minister is not present in the House. Three years ago I had brought this matter to the notice of the hon. Prime Minister. He has forwarded it to the Ministry of Water Resources. The reply I got from the Ministry was that India is going to have talks with Nepal to solve this problem. It is regretted that even after three years the matter remains as it was then. It appears that this matter was not taken with Nepal, constructing that these people are as good as a beggar and their mouth can be shut just by throwing a loaf of bread.

It is a matter of regret that 75% of the farmers in my constituency have migrated to other places. They are working as bonded labour in other States. Today a question

was raised in this House about these people being killed by terrorists. These people are moving hither and thither after having left their native land and have adopted other professions because there is no employment for them in their own land. Do we have no such scheme by means of which we may harness water of the rivers and make its proper usage.

In this regard some things were done during the period 1970 to 75. So far as I remember, a world level organisation had visited in connection with floods. After touring India it mentioned in its report that the floods in India are natural and to some extent man made also. They are man made because the water holding capacity of the rivers have reached its saturation point. Instead of increasing water holding capacity our specialists create a problem about these rivers by adopting the schemes of other countries to control floods.

Shri Paswan said just now that due to these wrong policies the water which used to drain out within three days to three weeks, is now difficult to get drained out even in three months. This is a problem worth due consideration. There are places like Sisapani where a dam has been constructed by giving assistance to the Nepal Government but its condition is such that during raing season all its gates are opened, which causes flood in all parts of India, especially in Madhubani and Sitamarhi districts of North Bihar. Other districts in its vicinity are also affected and there is a havoc all around. We should construct a dam in our own area in order to solve this problem. Beside controlling the floods, it will also increase the generation of electricity and enable provision for irrigation. Water can be made available to people when they crave for it after the floods for Rabi cultivation. Today the condition is such that there is no such crop there which has been left beneficial for the farmers. We should pay attention to this problem. Our Agricultur Minister should at least convey the feelings of the Members to the Ministry of Water Resources, so that they may solve our problems. Whatever scheme is introduced for this purpose should be completed.

It is said that this problem will be solved after completion of Adhwara Scheme

to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 56 crores and this will bring relief to the residents of that area from floods. But during the last year floods, the hon. Chief Minister said that it was not possible for the State Government to complete this scheme with its own resources unless the Central Government share this responsibility. Whom should the public appeal : to the State Government or the Central Government ? The Central Government should take the responsibility because it is not the problem of one State alone but many States are affected by it. The Nepal Government should also be consulted in this regard. The Central Government should solve this problem by forming a Central Flood Control Board.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude because the Minister is going to reply at 5.15 p.m. and there is a big queue of Members waiting to speak.

SHRI RANA VIR SINGH (Kaiserganj) : The Minister should reply tomorrow. Kindly respect our views. I have been waiting since this morning. Please give us a chance to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your name is also there. You will be called to speak. Let him conclude first.

[Translation]

SHRI ABDUL HANNAN ANSARI (Madhubani) : Madam I would like to make a few points in brief. There can be no other example of misuse and mismanagement of the assistance given by the Central Government for last year flood relief. On the one hand the public was suffering from starvation and on the other our officers were enjoying a gala time and the employees were sleeping without any fear. A bogus report with regard to flood relief was prepared and sent to the Government. Such things should not take place. By means of writing letters to the concerned authority and raising it in this House, I have raised the problems of North Bihar repeatedly. After all, north Bihar is also a part of India and has right to get some share in the budget. Taking these things into account, this problem should be solved. With these words I conclude.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RANA VIR SINGH (Kaiserganj) : Madam Chairman, I thank you for having given me time to speak after such a long wait. After many years of struggle with drought, this year started well with good rains. The arrangement made by the Agriculture Minister was so good that even drought had to yield without making much impact. But rains which should be a boon have proved to be a bane for those living in areas along the banks of the rivers. I would like to submit at the beginning that the areas where rain starts, specially if they are away from the river, are not affected by them because there is no scale for the amount of rain. This much and no more. In the areas along the banks of the rivers where less rain should be a boon becomes a curse for the people. With exception of the years when there is drought, every year a few days after non-set of rains, the House echoes about the floods. Many big schemes are considered and after consideration they remain on the paper only. The problem is that when we talk about floods here, our hon. Agriculture Minister marks his presence here only to tell about the loss suffered and the amount of relief to be provided for flood relief. There should be a permanent solution to this. In this connection the Minister of Planning should also give a serious thought to it. If the matter is considered in the House on the line suggested above, then in my view, a fruitful result can come out, but this is not done. The schemes made remain confine to papers only, as if these are the things to be worshipped only. They need not to be implemented. I would like to say that papers containing these schemes are meant for implementation and not to be kept like a thing of worship in the temple. They should be taken out from the shelves for the purpose of implementation so that the public may be benefited. The flood does not cause disaster to the farmers alone. This flood is accompanied by the flood of corruption too no matter whether it is our party or for that matter the opposition party is in power. The flood of corruption is a matter of even more concern. The flood relief provided by you is washed away in the flood of corruption. The corruption is so rampant that even earthbags are brought from

distant places to fill the breaches in the embankments. Barabanki and Bahraich which are represented by me are always submerged in the floods of river Ghagra. Engineers and other officers arrange for bringing earth-bags from distant places for which double-triple expenditure is charged for that and those earth-bags are so laid that they give an appearance that these are genuinely used. But it is true that money is simply being wasted. Neither can the sacks be counted nor do they provide any relief. Thus we suffer a double loss. We not only suffer from the floods but also by the flood of corruption too. The river Ghagra while flowing along Barabanki and Bahraich districts covers a distance of 135 km. Every time it is alleged that silt has got deposited in it. The river bed is full of silt and can not carry the same amount of water as it used to do earlier. It should be desilted so that the water may flow out easily, but no such steps are taken. We simply visit our constituency to repeat our practise of shedding the same crocodile tears and console the people there that this subject will be looked after again. Besides, there was also a scheme of constructing parallel Canals so that this water may be used for better purposes and we may bring water to dry land. There was also a plan to desilt the ponds and repair the canals and ponds which are lying unrepared so far. so that water may get collected there. It was also said that whether it is the area of Shri Manoj Pandey or mine, the water of the rivers should be tamed at their origin so that water could be with hold there itself. It is possible that lame excuses like lack of money or strained relations with the neighbouring countries are put forward for not performing this task. The funds are provided by you in proportion to the loss of life and property. Had a real assessment of the problem was made, we would have done good thing. It is not good to debate always on this issue and find out a temporary solution to it. A permanent solution should be found for this.....I have just started only...

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Even the throat has not got prepared as yet.

SHRI RANA VIR SINGH : The throat of the people from U.P. is always prepared, I do not know about Haryana people.

All essential commodities are otherwise available there, but after the flood, it all gets disappeared. There is a scarcity of food articles, matches box, salt etc. and the prices rise. On the one hand we are struck by the floods and on the other hand the people suffer because of the hike in prices and the traders' community takes the undue advantage of the miseries of the flood affected people. But it is not they who are responsible for this, it is we who are to be blamed. Whenever the flood comes we should make these commodities available in plenty so that the public do not have to suffer. The trader will make profits because it is quite natural that he has to earn profits. When roads become inaccessible due to flood, then they take advantage of the situation. The public has to face the problems. The insurance scheme should be implemented on a large scale and actively in areas which have been recognised as chronic-flood areas. At least in such a situation, you should bear our burden. Your insurance scheme is not so essential anywhere else as it is in these areas. This scheme should be made active and appropriate. If the insurance officials come to their rescue with even a little relief for the person coming from a flood-stricken area, then he feels a great relief. The person who braved the floods with all its might will feel a relief with this scheme. If there is such a danger in some areas, in other areas like Barabanki and Behraich there is a Saryu River Project which have seen going and coming of a number of Chief Ministers in the state as well as their style of functioning also. That project was like the Great Wall of China. Wherever you moved your eyes, mud walls were seen. The wall changed the course of water to the other side and has increased the flood-prone area, and brought more sorrows for our people. It is not possible for the State to compensate their losses because the budget of State is increasing day by day. Unless the Centre gives assistance, that loss will not be fulfilled. Our farmers have started demanding that this canal which was provided to them as a boon and to bring happiness for them, has become a bane because it is submerging their land. We have not constructed the new paths. More population and new villages are getting submerged and all this is happening because the course

of water has changed. Therefore the Central Government must send relief so that Sarayu Project may get completed. In Barabanki and Behraich areas, several villages have submerged in water. The villagers there are demanding the essential commodities from us. They need salt, match-box and boats. I would like that you should send relief teams immediately to those areas which undertake on the spot study of their problem and not from the sky-fly. The facilities required by them should be provided to them at the earliest so that they may feel that they also enjoy the facilities of a common citizen of India. You are talking about treading into the 21st century but the people there are being rendered homeless. They are struggling against heavy rains and floods. Your assistance can save them.

The country at present, is facing a lot of uncertainty so far as floods and drought are concerned. If the Government really wants the country to be self sufficient in foodgrains and in other fields it will have to take effective measures to check floods for ever.

I am quite sure that our active and energetic Minister will generate a new hope among the farmers.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : Madam Chairperson, discussion on floods and drought has taken place several times in this House, but this time we are having a discussion only on flood situation. We have to control the floods. At the time of floods, the hon. Minister visits the affected areas to express his sympathy, but no permanent solution has yet been sorted out. What action is being taken to prevent floods in the flood prone areas? I think we have no such plan. One of our colleagues just referred to the Ganges and the Kauveri. If no decision can be taken in regard to the Ganga-Kauveri link, then the Krishna and the Godawari at least be linked. Except the river Godavari, there is no flood in the Krishna and the Kauveri rivers. A friend of ours just pointed out that we cannot save Bihar from floods because the main cause of floods lies in Nepal and therefore, it becomes an international issue. I am not aware of the measures being taken by the Indian Govern-

[Shri C. Janga Reddy]

ment to take up this matter with the Nepal Government to prevent floods in Bihar. We can persuade at the least the Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra to take precautionary measures if not the Nepal Government. The river Godavari which passes through those states is flooded every year affecting a major part of Andhra Pradesh. There was flood in this river in 1983, then in 1985 and also this year and the situation is feared to continue for some more time. This river starts over flowing due to heavy rainfall in June and July. We celebrate our festival connected with floods sometime in September or October. Sometimes there is a rainfall during the month of November also. I would like to know why the Central Government is reluctant to give its approval to the construction of a dam over it. I would like to urge the Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra to restrict their water within their own boundaries and prevent its flow into Andhra Pradesh. It is said that about one lakh people will become homeless and landless if a dam is constructed. We will have to lose some of our forests and about 3-4 lakhs acres of land where the farmers have sown their crops by dint of hard work. The farmers there spent Rs. 500 to Rs. 800 per acre, but all the crops were washed away with the result that farmers suffered a huge loss and the Government's godowns were also emptied. Now the Government will have to supply the foodgrains to the flood affected areas from the reserved stock. This year we will have to import foodgrains to meet our needs. Besides one million tonnes of rice, we are already importing wheat, pulses, oilseeds and some other commodities. In the light of this, the loss of one acre land for the sake of a dam does not mean much. Then the argument of deforestation is also advanced. Though both the Ministers of Agriculture are present in the House, but whatever we say in this House remains consigned to the records only and neither the Government nor any Ministry takes any note of it. The Minister of Water Resources as well as the Planning Commission will have to sit here to listen to us and think about this matter. Action is taken only after the

floods visit us. It is your first and the foremost duty to control floods first. As one of our colleagues have stated that we would come to know the huge expenditure which has been and is now being incurred on floods and drought if we add the entire amount spent during the last 40 years. It is for this reason that I urge that it should not be made a political issue. The Godavari-Inchampalli project was approved by three Chief Ministers who belonged to the ruling party. They were of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. The Chief Minister of Telugu Desham came into power thereafter. Why did the Government not implement that agreement then? Even today neither the Government nor our people want to implement the agreement. I want to repeat that without Inchampalli, we cannot have Kolavaram. If it is constructed, it will not work. We can solve the Telugu Ganga dispute by supplying the water from the Kolavaram to the Krishna. The Telugu Ganga river is being dug. It hardly matters, if the Planning Commission has no funds. The State Government is incurring the entire expenditure from its own budget. The people of Karnataka have always been attempting to stop the flow of water from the rivers Krishna and Tungbhadra. There is no possibility of flood in the river Krishna. The water of the Godavari can be utilized by diverting it towards Pulcharla. The flow of water from Nagarjunasagar to the Krishna barrage can be stopped and the water available in Nagarjunasagar at Sri Sailam can be diverted towards the Telugu Ganga and Madras. Why don't the Government think in this regard?

I have been a champion of Inchampalli for the last three or four years since I was elected as an M.P. But nobody has paid any heed towards it. I would like to emphasise that unless Inchampalli project is completed, the planning of Polavaram is meaningless. Priority should be given to Inchampalli project where two thousand QMC water is still flowing which we will have to control instead of 2500 QMC water. 2000 plus 500 makes 2500. So long as it is not done that cannot be taken up. The water cannot be supplied even at the cost of a huge expenditure.

In Andhra Pradesh a 50% power cut has been imposed in respect of agriculture and industry. It was due to the fact, that there was no water for Hydro-power in Nagarjunasagar, the Inchampalli and the Krishna rivers. This led to shortage of power and the Government had to impose a power cut from 25 to 50 per cent and to the extent of 75 per cent in the month of June. There was no other alternative. The Inchamapalli Project is of Madhya Pradesh. It is shared by Orissa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh is for generation of Hydro-power. Its water is going waste. It cannot be used as drinking water, for it will cause Cholera. There flood and now more than 50 per cent water has flown into the Inchampalli river. When we ask for the construction of a high level canal, the Government expresses its inability to provide water for the canal. Even the Hon. Prime Minister says that water is not available. Water should be provided at least once in five years for irrigation purposes. If water is provided even once, there will be water in our wells and fields. Just now there was a mention of the Hyderabad canal. There is no adequate water in the ponds of Hyderabad and therefore, there is water cut in the Hyderabad city. There the water is being supplied for one hour instead of two hours per day.

Here we are discussing the flood situation in the House, while the people in Hyderabad city are facing acute shortage of water. There is yet no overflow in the Gandipet. There is a possibility of overflow in the river Manjari. What is its cause? Will the Water be brought from the Godavari or from the Krishna river?

The Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad has not been able to provide water even for half-an-hour per day during the summer season. Why is it so? I would like to know whether we cannot get water for Pochampar and Hyderabad even once in 5-6 years. The only way to check floods is to link the Krishna and the Godavari rivers if not Godavari and the Ganges. In this way flood can be controlled in Andhra Pradesh. Floods in other areas can also be controlled if Shri Shankaranda and the Planning Commission decide to do so. The Government will now provide Rs. 200, some seeds and fertilizers. Just now

somebody said that one man's sorrow is joy for the other. The Government employees claim Rs. 5 as an emergency expenditure against Rs. 1 spent by them. A huge amount of money thus goes waste. We should exercise some control over it by adopting some preventive measures. I am grateful for the time you allowed me to speak.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR (Hamirpur): Madam Chairperson, I am grateful that you gave an opportunity to express my views. So far as this discussion is concerned, I think, the Government should take it more seriously. One of the previous speakers, rightly pointed out that the relevance of the presence of the Minister of agriculture is this much that compensation or relief is to be given. It is not in his hands to take effective measures to stop floods. In the light of this, it is but natural that the hon. Minister of Water Resources and the Minister of Planning should also remain present in the House, so that they can listen and understand the feelings of the Members. This problem should be solved by adopting a national point of view.

Some hon. Members demanding setting up of a National Flood Commission. This Commission was set up and its report is also available in the records of the Library. But the effective measures on the basis of the recommendations made by the Commission were not taken. I would like to urge the concerned Ministry to consider the suggestions of the Members and the recommendations of the Commission a bit seriously and the Central Government should take it in a co-ordinated form, only then something can be done in this regard.

The country has been facing drought for some years and now it is facing floods, which are natural calamities, but the Government has always been taking this matter on *ad hoc* basis. Whenever there is flood, a team is formed and sent there. It takes more time in reaching there and less in doing the work because there is no interest. We are interested only to meet the officers and to prepare the official report.

[Prof. Narain Chand Parashar]

The hon. Minister may kindly listen. Sir, if you draw the attention of hon. Minister then only I may have my say.

It may be asked that whatever recommendations are made and whenever Central teams visit those areas, how many of the teams contact the MPs, MLAs and Chairmen of Panchayat Samitis and District Councils. It will be in the interest of the parliamentary system, if the hon. Minister kindly tells us, did the team which visited Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar contact and take into confidence the Members elected from there to the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha irrespective of their party affiliations? I believe that they were not taken into confidence because when the team visited our State, we were never told that the team is going there. One thing does happen that the Chief Secretary is definitely informed about it because arrangements for their comforts and stay there have to be got made so that the District Magistrate may receive them and they are able to prepare their report while sitting in the rest house. The team is neither interested to visit the place nor interested to watch the situation on the spot. It is known to you that they do not come into contact with the people to know about their problems. All those people who are in contact with the team, remain present there. They do speak and express themselves but neither the Ministry nor the Government Officers pay any heed to their sentiments. What I mean to say is that this work should be done more seriously and whenever any team goes there, they must take into confidence the MPs of that area. Our concern should not be mocked at. It is known to you that there is parliamentary democracy in our country. If nobody consults MPs in a parliamentary democracy then under which system they will be consulted. It is the responsibility of our Ministers to get this implemented. They should ensure that this is implemented by the officers of the Ministries and the Departments. Whenever any team visits any area the Member of Parliament of that area must be informed and they must find out the reasons for not doing so.

Secondly, there should be a permanent machinery for this purpose. If there are floods, prompt action is taken and relief is sent there. If any dam collapses, it is also reconstructed. It is all right. But when plans are formulated, nobody takes them seriously. We have a list of flood prone areas and similarly a list of drought prone areas. What is the use of having these lists, if these are not utilised in their plans of action. I want to tell you an incident. It rained heavily in Punjab and Himachal on 29th June. I was travelling by national highway No. 21 on that day which connects Ambala with Kulu-Manali. There was so much water accumulated near Kiratpur on the Punjab and Himachal Pradesh border, that it was difficult for a bus to pass because there the level of the road is very low. You know that this happens every year and even then the level of the national highway is not raised. Why? I know that this work pertains to the Road Construction Department. But we want that the Government should pay attention towards all these things.

There were heavy rains in Himachal Pradesh. Some people think that Himachal Pradesh is a hilly area. Therefore, the entire rainy water flows down and causes floods in Punjab. It is not so. 50 per cent population of Himachal Pradesh lives in the area which is frequented by floods because its level is very low. According to our information, due to excessive rains in Chamba district some people have died and some others have been washed away. Gurudaspur, a district in Punjab and situated along Himachal Pradesh, has suffered a huge loss. Similarly, Una, Solan and Hamirpur have also suffered a considerable loss. The traffic remained closed. Whenever there are floods, the traffic on the Shimla railway line also remains suspended. The Kalka-Shimla-Ambala Highway also remains closed and soil erosion takes place.

The margin money which is allocated to the State Governments is not enough to enable them to help the people. This should be increased. A permanent machinery should be established in every state. Mr. Minister, why do you not concur with the Chief Secretary and the Revenue Commissioner when you have full faith in them. You

should delegate powers to them on permanent basis and instruct them to submit a report in the event of floods and drought. They belong to your I.A.S cadre. Have full faith in them. The period of three months which is taken to send a team should be curtailed and for this a regular machinery should be fixed. A cell of the Revenue Department and the Agriculture Department should be constituted. When there can be a separate cell for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and for other works, why a cell is not constituted for this purpose? This cell should include Officers and staff of the State Governments along with the officers of the Central Ministry.

One essential thing, I have to say is that Crop Insurance Scheme must be made applicable, especially to drought and floods prone areas or where crops are likely to be damaged due to natural causes. Whether the damage to the crops is due to rains or due to some other causes, it is the Government who has to move in the matter. There are two aspects. The loss is suffered by the farmer whose crops in the field are lost but the benefit goes to the officer who makes the assessment. He who makes the assessment, gets the relief. But those for whom assessment is made have to suffer a loss and receive relief in instalments. If the money is paid thereafter, why should you not implement the Crop Insurance Scheme effectively and select such areas on priority basis which are prone to natural calamities and act accordingly

Now, I will refer to a problem of my areas. Swan Channelisation Project is hanging between the Central and the State Governments. Swan is a big river of Una. It should be channelised and the water flowing from Hamirpur and the upper regions into the small rivers should be stopped. A district which is plain like Punjab, can give a good production and this will help us in checking floods also if a protection flood scheme is initiated under the environment policy and forests are protected. This will serve the purpose.

In the end, I will insist that you should establish a permanent machinery. Do implement the Crop Insurance Scheme and

efforts should be made to see that MPs and MLAs are taken into confidence, whenever such a time comes. It should not happen that they are not taken into confidence and losses are suffered for not doing the work properly.

[English]

SHRI BIPIN PAL DAS (Tezpur) : Madam Chairman, I am sorry I have to say that it is very unfair that the Calling Attention Motion was suddenly converted into a discussion under Rule 193. When I saw the Agenda this morning in the Calling Attention Motion, my name was not there. Therefore, I was not prepared. When I came here, I found that it was converted into a discussion under Rule 193 and I have come without any preparation. So this was very unfair. Discussion cannot be fruitful. It is unfair that you have not given enough opportunity to Members to come prepared.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Das, the reason why we have converted this Calling Attention Motion into discussion under Rule 193 was that the Members demanded for the same.

SHRI BIPIN PAL DAS : Anyway, this is my submission. If they have demanded, then it is unfair and unjust to us because my State is the worst sufferer. I have not come here with facts and figures.

The second point is, no doubt the Agriculture Minister is involved in this matter and I welcome his presence but so far as the flood control is concerned, so far as the meeting or solving this problem is concerned, it is the Minister of Water Resources, who is mainly involved. In the absence of the Minister of Water Resources, what do we discuss? What do we say?

Therefore, I draw the attention of the Government that whenever we discuss floods, the Minister of Water Resources must be present. After all, why was this Ministry created. This is a new Ministry. Why was it created? The Prime Minister had purpose behind it. Therefore, in future, I hope the Minister of Water Resources will be present here along with the Minister of Agriculture,

[Shri Bipin Pal Das]

This is only the beginning. As Mr. Bhajan Lal has said at the beginning, we are at the earlier stage of the floods and more floods are yet to come and more States are going to be affected. So, I thought, this is not the right time to discuss this problem in full scale. Anyway, when you have allowed a discussion, we have to say something.

Every year we discuss floods. But what is the result? What is the solution? What are the steps taken? What are the measures we are taking? At least, to an extent, the damages caused by floods should go on decreasing year by year; then only we can understand that some steps have been taken. But no. We simply discuss. At the most the Government give some relief to the people. That is all. But what about solving the very problem of flood? Unless effective steps are taken to solve the problem of floods or minimise the extent of damage, no purpose would be served by discussing it in this House every year.

In my State, we are just having the third wave of flood I am sure, we are going to have two more waves of flood, if not three, because we have the experience of having floods upto the month of September. Therefore, it is little too early to discuss the problem of floods so far as my State is concerned.

Shri Shyam Lal Yadavji visited my State. Very good. He must have seen the extent of flood there. He must also have supervised the relief given to the people; he has also, most probably, made an estimate of the amount of relief to be given to the State Government. What is the estimate? What is the extent of not only loss of human lives, cattle, crops but also property? How much assistance the Central Government has given to the State? At least I do not know uptill now. Secondly, I would like to know or I would like the Minister to tell us whether he has been satisfied that whatever money has been given has been properly spent for the relief of the people.

17.45 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

To solve the problem of flood, so far as my State is concerned, they have constituted a Brahmaputra Board and we understand that Brahmaputra Board has prepared a Master Plan. But I have not seen the Master Plan uptill now. I do not know how many members have seen it. What is the Master Plan. All right, you need not place it on the Table of the House, but, you must tell us its essential features. What are its proposals? What are the projects? How do you want to control this mighty river? About this mighty river, I may point out that Indiraji once invited the American experts to advise the Government of India as to how to control Brahmaputra River—those experts who controlled the Mississippi River. The American experts came and visited my State. They went from one end of the Brahmaputra River to the other end of the River. Ultimately, they submitted a written report to the Government of India. They said, "We know how to tame and control rivers; we know the technique. But we have not learnt the technique of taming and controlling the sea. This is not a river; this is a sea." With that report, they went back. Indiraji told us that the American experts could not advise us how to control it. Therefore, I am of the opinion that we must not depend on foreign experts. Our own experts. Our can do it and they must do it. I have seen what they have done. If they have the will, if they are sincere, I have seen what they can do. They saved the second Brahmaputra Bridge wonderfully. The second Brahmaputra Bridge was about to be given up because we had some problems. The engineers went there. I saw it with my own eyes. Thousands of villagers came there. Everybody was worried that if the bridge was not completed, then thousands of villages would be washed away by erosion. I told the engineers, 'look here, there is no question of giving up the bridge; this bridge must be completed and these people must be saved. You must understand it. I am not a technical man. You must find out ways and means how to do it, how to control it and you have to do it'. I must congratulate those engineers. The very next year when I went there I saw that they had done the job and now the bridge is there, So, our engineers can do it.

The other day, Shri Dinesh Singh visited our State. I told him the same story. I also told the same story to Shri B. Shankaranand that if you can inspire our own engineers, give them the necessary backing, they can do the job. I have seen it myself. If you come over there you can see it for yourself how they have controlled it, how they have made the bridge possible and how they have saved thousands of villages of Nagaon District.

My submission is that the Brahmaputra Board is quite good. They have prepared a Master Plan. But we should also know what the Master Plan is and what the projects are? So, in substance, to be very brief, this river will have to be controlled not by one technique or one method. Various methods are to be adopted, embankment, revetment, guide bunds, dredging, retention dams, hydel dams—all methods and techniques must be adopted to control this river. Only then something will be done. They say, it will take a long time. Yes, I know it will take a long time because it involves thousands of crores. I know. You are not going to spend thousands of crores in one year. You are not going to spend thousands of crores in five years. You will take a long a time even to spend the money, but start the work, for God's sake. For God's sake, start the work. Let us know that the work has started. Let it go on to 20 or 30 years. But no work has been started up till now. This is my complaint. You have made a plan. They say that they do not have funds. The Brahmaputra Board says that they have no funds. I would appeal to the hon. Minister to put pressure on the Planning Commission to give them the funds. Otherwise, dissolve this Board. Why constitute a Board then? Sometime back the Board was without a Chairman, topless! When there are no funds how is it going to work? This plan is on paper. No implementation. So, the Planning Commission, if they mean business, if the Government of India means business, they must give enough funds to the Brahmaputra Board and see that the Board functions and starts functioning. Let it take 20 years, to control the river. I do not mind. I will not be there. My children will be there. But let the work be started. This is my humble submission.

Only one last point. But here I may add one sentence. There was a proposal during Shrimati Indira Gandhi's time, when I was also in the Government, that there should be a canal connecting the Brahmaputra with the Ganga. That would have saved Assam to a great extent from floods. That would have supplied water to the Calcutta Port. That is why we advanced this proposal. Unfortunately the Bangladesh Government did not agree because it had to go through Bangladesh. I would submit to the Minister to re-examine the proposal, whether this canal, by some scientific method, can be constructed through the Indian territory. Since Bangladesh had not agreed, we had to give up construction. I do not know, I cannot give an opinion, I am not an expert. It has to be examined whether this canal can be constructed through the Indian territory. Science has advanced so much, that I do not think that it will be impossible to do this job. This should be examined.

Then, this is my last point. More than the floods, the bigger problem we face in Assam is erosion. My friend here has also said it. Some other friends have also said it. Floods come and go. they cause damage because human beings, cattle, property are lost and so on. After it recedes the land becomes fertile. At least there is one advantage. Erosion? With erosion there is no advantage. It eats up the lands. Eats up our territory. Both the banks are eaten up, we lose land permanently. Three-fourths of beautiful town of Dibrugarh is in the bosom of Brahmaputra river. Three-fourths. A beautiful town. It was called the tea capital. It is in the midst of Brahmaputra even now. My own village and the surrounding 35 villages are under water. This erosion is a very very serious problem and I must say that Shri Dinesh Singh, when he visited Assam, appreciated that this is the real problem. Flood control will take time. Work on erosion should not take time. Controlling erosion should not take time. This is my experience and knowledge.

Then, Shri Dinesh Singh asked me: "what are the most vulnerable points?" I pointed out six vulnerable points along the whole river. Erosion must be stopped immediately, and that can be done, I know. I have

[Shri Bipin Pal Das]

confidence in our engineers that our engineers can do it. But the whole point is direction from here, order from here, guidance from here is needed. Shri Dinesh Singh took down the points. You may consult the Water Resources Ministry. He took down this point. He consulted them, he consulted the Brahmaputra Board and he asked them to examine this point so that at least erosion can be stopped at these six vulnerable points. If we can stop erosion at these six vulnerable points, then Assam would be very much relieved. Erosion, I repeat, is more serious a problem than floods and it can be controlled in one year. I can say this with confidence that erosion can be stopped at those points in one year. If you could do it, then a lot of problems which we are facing there will be solved. I hope the Minister will not only advise his Ministry, but also get in touch with Water Resources Ministry and Planning Commission, and see that the problem of erosion is tackled immediately on warfooting at these vulnerable points and that this land is saved.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, I want to know the sense of the House. Only four minutes are left.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. NAMGYAL) : There are only a few speakers left. So, I request that the time limit may be extended till we finish the discussion on this important subject. The reply will be made on Monday.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I think the House will accept the proposal. I request the Members to be very brief. Instead of making a lengthy speech, please come to the points and finish within a few minutes. We can try to accommodate most of the Members and finish the debate today itself.

SHRI YOGESHWAR PRASAD YOGESH (Chatra) : Why not we have some discussion on Monday also ?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There are many other items. So, we finish the debate today and the Minister will reply on Monday. The time is extended upto 7 P.M. Mr. Kali Prasad Pandey.

[Translation]

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY : (Gopalganj) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we came here as Members of this House and has been discussing floods for the last three years. The State Governments have spent money on a large scale to protect the people from floods. The Central Government gives some grants as a flood relief to states every year. I am at a loss to understand that when crores of rupees have been given by the Central Government to the States and the States have also been spending crores of rupees, this problem of floods, instead of being contained, has been going on increasing day by day.

Let us look at the period after independence, a canal was drawn from the turn of the river at Balmiki Nagar. This carried water from the Gandak river. What work has been done in respect of that canal ? The basic reason is that the money provided by the Central Government to the State Governments in the name of development works can be termed as a loot. This word can be used for it. When a student appears in an examination after study in a school and result is out, every body feels that his ward has worked very hard and he should get through. Has the Central Government ever thought whether the State Governments have been able to control the floods with the large sums of money granted to them ? This is what I want to know from the hon. Minister.

The hon. Members of this House have asked why the Minister of Resources, who came to the House, left when a subject like floods was being discussed in the House ? By mere speaking and shouting in the House again and again as representatives, the problem is not going to be solved. I beg of you to solve this problem once.

18.00 hrs.

I want to know from you that monsoon started from 14th June and we are now discussing it in July and August. The

entire area has been flooded. What type of help can be extended there by sanctioning one crore of rupees. I come from Gopalganj area. Shri Manoj Pandey also comes from a nearby area. There soil erosion is taking place on a large scale in 4 or 5 zones. In the name of prevention of soil erosion, when one bag is utilised, engineers raise a bill of thousands of bags. Thus, it will not be improper if the word 'Badh' (flood) is termed as 'Bahar' (boon). Similarly what is happening in F.C.I. godowns, you may get them checked. If I am proved wrong, I am prepared to resign from the membership. In the godowns of F.C.I., seals are broken and good grains are replaced by rotten grains brought from outside. Today we find that Cholera epidemic is spreading in Delhi. If the state of affairs regarding grains remains the same, then the entire country will have to face the menace of Cholera. In reply to a question regarding F.C.I. asked by me in this House the Central Government stated that the matter is being investigated by the C.B.I. I fail to understand when C.B.I. will complete its inquiry. I had charged two contractors in clear terms that whatever reaches Gopalganj, it contains sand and stones. Since the time the contractors have taken over this work from F.C.I. the loot has increased much. You will be surprised to know how the Government is being looted? When F.C.I godowns were run by the Government, good quality wheat used to be made available and distributed and the shortage was also limited to two to three per cent. Since the time this work has been entrusted to the contractors, the shortage has increased to 29-30 per cent. How then you will be able to bring about radical changes in the system?

Many scientists have opined that the reason for devastating floods is the heavy silting of the river beds. The villagers believe that when there were big fishes in the rivers, the Department of Fisheries made efforts to protect them. Those big fishes proved helpful in desilting the river-bed. But, gradually they have now become extinct. You might be knowing that in Benaras, there used to be fishes weighing about 10 quintals each but today the situation has changed, when Shri Kedar Pandey

was the Chief Minister of Bihar he inaugurated a new canal. I come from a district on one side of which is West Champaran. The dacoit problem in Uttar Pradesh has been solved as a result of the action taken either by the Government of India, or by the Hon. Prime Minister or by the hon. Home Minister. But, on the other hand in Gopalganj crime rate has increased after that. On one hand flood affected people are taking shelter on the dams and on the other they are facing dacoits terror there. The displaced persons cut off from their native place for many years are taking shelter on the dams. The Government of Bihar have many schemes and they should take steps to rehabilitate these people. The people there are living really like animals. It is true that in ancient times, people used to live on tree fruits, river water and the sea water, but today, the man is thinking to settle on the Moon and the scientists are making efforts to change the dream into a reality. I have said earlier also in my speech that the new education policy will bring certain improvements. The problem of floods was there before the independence and it is still there after the independence. So what type of new technology has been used to solve this problem, whenever I go to my constituency, people ask that what are the conclusions of the discussion held there on floods, what solution has been found out. The Government did not take steps upto the month of May to complete the survey work by a survey team. But when the floods ravage the area, Government's assistance is started to be given on a large scale. Every engineer wants that there should be some change in it. I have seen that this year also, it was the intention of the engineers to pocket lakhs and crores like the last years. I am an independent Member so I am not speaking in terms of feelings of any political party. It appears as if these people are somewhat afraid of now-a-days, because of the presence of vigilance team at every site. Many engineers have thought that they will get the desired posting by offering lakhs of Rupees. This House does not know that when I was the Member of Bihar Legislative Assembly I had said, as Shri Misra and Shri Manoj Pandey have said about the Piprasi dam, that there were floods for eight years but nothing has been done in that regard. The

[Shri Kali Prasad Pandey]

result was that I was sent to jail for three years. When Shri Chandra Shekhar Singh became Chief Minister, seventy persons were arrested and black-listed. Speaking truth is a curse. Raja Harishchandra has to loose his wife and son for speaking truth. Had Christ not spoken the truth he would not have been crucified. So in the matter of floods also, truth was suppressed. It is not so that some of you don't come from the areas affected by floods. Next time when this matter is discussed in the House the representatives of the people of India should know that there is a change. The problems cannot be solved only by speaking in the House. Have you ever directed the State Governments to consider the suggestions given by the elected representatives of the people. I urge that a central study team should be sent to the district of Gopalganj where on one hand a new canal has been constructed and on the other River Gandak has changed its course towards district headquarters due to soil erosion, which is only three and half kilometers away from the river. Bihar is a backward state. May be because of the efforts made by the hon. Chief Minister, some big mafiagang leaders have been arrested and so some change is visible there. I can assure you that if you provide some funds to the State there will be must improvement, otherwise the engineers will again misuse the things. I myself come from very backward area. My house is also submerged in the flood water. What the engineers do is that they dump two three baskets of the soil and say that they have raised the dam. The dam, a safety measure from floods, goes from Sonpur to Siswa near the Border of Uttar Pradesh. If its level could have been raised by filling soil, then there would not have been such a loot.

*SHRI S.B SIDNAL (Belgaum) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I take great pleasure to take part in the discussion on floods which is a very vital subject. It has become a practice to discuss drought during budget session and flood during monsoon session. I take this opportunity to offer some suggestions on this important issue.

First of all I suggest that a master plan should be prepared and it should be implemented completely within a period of 10 to 15 years. Our future depends upon this and in the absence of such a master plan our future generation will be in darkness.

Secondly, the menace of deforestation has to come to an end once for all. The forests are being converted into plain areas. This has to be stopped. Protection of forests is one of the important measures to stop the floods. Mr. Patel was speaking on this subject few minutes ago. He said that it takes 300 years to recreate two inch of soil. The rain if it is torrential can destroy two inch of soil in two seconds. Even the persons working in forest Department are not aware of the bavoos of deforestation. They donot take any action against person who are responsible for felling of trees. Infact some of these employces of forest department are responsible for the steep increase in the process of deforestation. A time was there when it was very difficult to walk from one place to another due to thick forests. Now, all these places have become plain areas. One measure to stop felling of trees would be to rehabilitate the villagers who indulge in this activity. They should be provided with jobs in factories, sugar mills etc.

For the last three decades we are celebraing Vanamahotsava throughout the country. We take keen interest in celebration but not in the implementation of the programme. This is the cruse of the mattey. The Chief guest will be invited to plant a tree during the celebration. The next year another important person would be invited to plant a tree at the same place on one hand. This attitude should go and on the other people should develop love towards trees. These should be district-wise plans for afforestation programmes.

Our Prime Minister has given a clear direction in this regard. It is very essential to adhere to his guidance for the promotion of aforestation. Harijans and Girijans have to be deployed permanently for this purpose and they should be given the responsibility of not only planting trees but also to protect the trees. They should be

paid handsome amount. The horticultural and forest department should train these people in the field by this we will be able to provide jobs to the poor harijans and protect vegetation of the nation.

Separate fund may be earmarked for the purpose of flood control. It can be collected separately and channellised as and when needed. Unless we take this measure, I am afraid that a time may come when the entire amount of our budget will have to be spent for controlling the flood. Hence district-wise, and block-wise planning is very essential.

In our country most of the educational institutions do not have plants or trees by the side of their buildings and to some extent they look like grave yards. In some foreign countries like South Korea, Israel etc. growth of vegetation is encouraged to a large extent. In Israel trees are grown in the grave yards in the name of the dead persons and gradually those grave yards turn into forests. Deserts are being converted into beautiful greenery. What is happening in our country. We had 30% of the land area as forest. Now the percentage of forest area is only nine.

We are aspiring to enter a prosperous 21st Century. For this, it is very essential for us to prevent drought and flood. The natural resources which are abundant in our country should be channelised for a brighter future of our younger generation. Instead of spending money every year on flood and drought, we should have permanent plans. Permanent and not temporary relief is the need of the hour.

I also suggest that we should encourage planting of trees which yield fruits. In some part of our country and especially in the Capital City we see lawns, parks and other vast areas of vegetation. These areas do not have fruit bearing trees. Hence, we have to encourage planting of fruit yielding trees in addition to flower plants.

I hope the honourable Minister would give a serious thought to my suggestions.

Sir I am grateful to you for giving me this chance to speak on this vital issue and with these words I conclude my speech. . . .

SHRI C.P. THAKUR (Patna) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Speaker, and the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs for accepting the request of the Members from the most backward State of India, Bihar, to give more time for the discussion on floods. Some of my colleagues have said that extending the time for discussion was not proper but the importance of the subject can be well understood by the sentiments of a number of members making request for giving more time for discussion on floods. We have seen that there was a qualitative change in the request made today. Earlier the Members used to ask about the relief measures, but today the member from both the sides, from the ruling party as well as from the opposition, have said that it is regrettable that even after such a any time of our independence we are discussing floods in this House. By now, we should have been able to devise ways to control floods. I request the hon. Minister to give a categorical assurance regarding floods control. We can repeat the story of flood like this that when the floods come, people start dying and it appears in the press. After that the State Government takes note of the situation and when they say that it is beyond their control, then aerial survey is undertaken by the centre and relief measures are undertaken. This situation is repeating every year. As the other members have also said, the hon Minister should give an assurance that there will be no recurrence of such a situation again.

Some of the members have just now asked whether we can control these floods or not? Floods are not in India only. Floods are there in other countries of the world also. China and America have controlled floods of the Rivers Fawn and Mississippi respectively. Floods in the River Nile was controlled and there was prosperity everywhere. Can't we control the floods in our country? When we can launch satellites and produce atomic energy, then why can't we do this? We can do this also. Today its technology is so advanced that we can control the floods by using it. There are different things like silting, dykes and dams which cause floods in our country. A commission should be appointed to consider this matter and the modern technology. . . .

[Shri C. P. Thakur]

Just now, some of my colleagues have said that whenever this matter is discussed, only the hon. Minister of agriculture is present here. It is a fact that agriculture incurs heavy loss due to the floods, but we do not take into consideration the wastage of water which is the most useful resource and a basic requirement. The hon. Minister of Water Resources should also be here in the House alongwith the Minister of Agriculture. We lose our basic facilities, the infrastructure facilities and the basic needs due to floods. School buildings are washed away and roads are damaged, industries suffer heavy losses and the means of transport fail. So, the hon. Minister of Planning should also be present here.

Sir, Bihar is suffering from the indirect effects of floods. Floods bring poverty and backwardness to the State. It forms such a trap circle that the people of the state find themselves unable to go out of it. How that loss can be recovered? After the fury of the floods is over, we should try to find out the ways to recover the losses. The State Government as well as the Central Government should take action and provide facilities to recover the losses.

Sir, now to negotiate with Nepal Government is another problem the Government of Bihar is facing. Deforestation is taking place in Nepal. Nepal cannot afford afforestation due to want of resources. The Central Government in consultation with the Government of Bihar should make arrangements for negotiations with the Government of Nepal and other international agencies regarding flood control.

I represent Patna, but that city is also hit by floods which is causing soil erosion in the adjoining areas. These areas get washed away when the surplus water is pumped out of Patna city in order to save it.

I met an expert from Holland sometime back and he said that if the Government wants to check erosion of the adjacent areas of Patna he can help in it by joining these areas to Patna and he could also link the rivers of Ganga and Sone in such a way

which would avert the floods. Ganga is full of silt and therefore, dredging will not only help in checking floods in Patna but also in other parts of Bihar. Besides, different rivers could be interlinked.

I would urge the hon. Minister to conduct a meeting to discuss the various issues related to various departments and to persuade the people that the Government is quite capable. Due to the heavy loss caused by the floods, the people in Bihar have become fatalists and they believe that neither the State Government nor the Central Government can tackle the problem.

The only cause of the mass murders and increasing terrorism in Bihar is poverty and Bihar alone is to be blamed for that. I would urge the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Shri Yadav who belongs to the neighbouring State U.P., to provide special grant for the development of this backward area.

*SHRI A.J.V.B. MAHESWARA RAO (Amalapuram): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I convey my deep disappointment through you over the absence of the Hon. Minister for Water Resources while such an important subject like floods is being discussed in the House.

Now it has almost become a regular feature to debate over the devastating floods during the Monsoon Session. Whenever the debate takes place, the Hon. Minister replies to the debate and announces some relief measures such as releasing some amount for the relief operations. It seems that the Government is satisfied with the distribution of foodgrains and clothes etc. to the flood victims. There ends the matter and Government forgets the entire thing till the next flood ravages the entire land. This is how things are going on at present. No permanent solution has been found so far to prevent the floods. The Government has so far ignored the preventive measures that are necessary to avert the floods. I express my disappointment over the callous attitude with which the Government is viewing the flood problem.

June and July are the worst months in the year as the entire country is affected by the overflowing of all the major rivers.

Lakhs of families lose their hearths and homes. These devastating floods cause immense loss of life and property every year during this period. In order to avert this gigantic loss, it is very much necessary for the Government to formulate a plan so as to put a stop to the recurring floods. A permanent solution is required. A definite plan should be drawn and executed immediately if we are to save the country from floods. There are various projects, dams and barrages etc. over the major rivers pending completion over the years. These major works should be completed as early as possible. This helps to a great extent in solving the flood problem. Sir, every year the country experiences a loss of thousands of crores of rupees due to floods. If we spend even fifty per cent of the loss of one year and invest the same on completion of major projects, we will succeed to a great extent in averting the floods. What we need is a definite plan and a definite will to execute that plan.

Sir, Krishna and Godavari are the major rivers in Andhra Pradesh. Every year these two major rivers overflow and cause immense loss of both life and property in the State. Farmers, especially small and marginal, are the worst victims of flood. The State Government spares no effort in rescuing the victims. But, as every one knows, it is a gigantic task. The State Government is forced to spend a lot of money which is well beyond its means. It is a herculean task. But the State Government is equally sincere and tries its best to tackle the situation. In the process, the meagre sources that the State Government has at its disposal gets exhausted. Hence the Central Government should come to the rescue of the State Government. I take this opportunity to request the Central Government to extend liberal financial assistance to the State Government. This year the state is once again in the grip of floods. At the beginning of the season itself, the fury of floods is such that it has already caused a lot of damage in many parts of the State. The State Government is unable to bear the entire expenditure. The Centre must help the State in rescue and relief operations. The Hon. Chief Minister of the State Shri N.T. Rama Rao, submitted a

memorandum yesterday *i.e.* 2.8.1988 seeking central assistance for tackling the situation arising out of heavy rains and floods in July, 1988. He has requested the Central Government to release immediately Rs. 50 crores from the Relief Fund to meet the grave situation in the State. I request the Central Government to sanction Rs. 50 crores from the Relief Fund immediately. I hope and trust the Central Government comes to the rescue of the State Government in helping the flood victims by releasing the said amount.

Sir, my constituency is the worst victim of floods. Amalapuram and infact the entire Kona Seema area is a very rich and fertile land. Yet, the entire area gets submerged in the flood water resulting in a great loss. This entire area is a low lying area and hence very frequently subjected to floods. Farmers suffer loss every time. Sir Arthur Cotton built Dhavaleshwaram barrage during the days of the British. This barrage is in fact saving the life and property in this area during mansoons. But for this barrage, perhaps my constituency would not have found a place in the map. People in this area live on tiny islands called lanka lands. These lanka lands get submerged in the water during rainy season. Every year, during this season, they are shifted to safer places. A lot of amount is being spent on evacuating the people and providing shelter in safer places. Thousands of acres of lands goes under water. Hence to save the people from these difficulties, it has now become imminent to raise the level of the existing flood banks. They should be strengthened as they have already become old. New safety walls should be constructed along the banks of the canals and rivers in this area. Revetments should also be constructed so as to protect villages and adjoining agricultural lands. Houses to the poor should be built on elevated platforms under various housing schemes like Indira Avas Yojna. The mouth of the river Godavari is heavily silted. It is resulting in heavy floods as there is no free flow of the river into the sea. Hence the desiltation operation should be undertaken immediately. A Master Plan, namely Krishna-Godavari Drainage System, which is estimated to cost Rs. 300 crores has already been submitted to the Central

[Shri A.J.V.B. Maheswara Rao]

Government. This Master Plan should be approved and executed as early as possible. This Plan will help in bringing more area under cultivation.

Sir, recent floods have ruined the economy of this area. Many standing crops like sugarcane, coconut, and banana have already been lost. The farmers once again lost everything. I request the government to direct the Banks to convert short term loans into long term ones and also to grant new loans to them.

I conclude my speech thanking you for the opportunity you have given me.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh. Only five minutes. There are three more Members who want to participate.

[Translation]

SHRI YOGESHWAR PRASAD YOGESH (Chatra) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we will have to speak in telegraphic language in order to obey you. I would try my level best to present the entire matter in brief.

Some of my friends discussed the devastation caused by floods and also the corruption which prevails in dealing with it. I would like to draw your attention to last year's floods once again. I would like to thank and congratulate the Government for its efficiency in tackling the grim situation of drought in Punjab, Haryana, Western parts of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat on the one hand, and floods in Bihar, eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Assam, on the other.

Most of the Members in the House, have pointed out today that the issue of floods should not be confined merely to a particular Ministry, but other Ministers, like the Minister of Water Resources, the Minister of Planning, the Minister of Health and Family-Welfare, and the Minister of Energy should also pay attention in this direction and the senior officials of these

Ministries, should try to tackle the situation. You are very well aware of the fact that they are called after floods hit various parts of the country.

After all what causes floods? The water level of tributaries rises in the rainy season. This causes floods in major rivers.

There are a number of minor projects on small rivers in Bihar. These tributaries become more dangerous than the major rivers in rainy season. But after the rainy season there is hardly any water as it is in case of Auranga Project in Palamau district. It causes heavy destruction in the rainy season.

A scheme named Urma Reservoir Scheme was formulated some 20-25 years ago, but it has not been executed till now. Similarly, work on Tilhaya-Dhadar Scheme on two rivers is also lying unexecuted. Its water flows into the big rivers. The water of Urma reservoir flows into the river Koyal and the water of both these rivers, along with that of river Satawa flows into the river Sone which in turn floods Ganga. This causes unprecedented floods in the area. So if minor projects are executed, throughout the country these will not only solve the irrigation problem but also control the floods.

Almost all the Members have raised the issue of desilting. I would like to offer a useful solution in this regard. It is a productive suggestion. The bed of river Sone has risen because of silt and the river is very shallow now. This results in unprecedented floods in the Ganga also. We know that the Department of Energy is supposed to consult the Minister of Water Resources for desilting process. Besides, millions of tonnes of sand are also required for underground mining. Previously, the rivers of the Ganga and the Damodar were a good source of sand. But there is no more sand in that area. So the Department of Energy should make arrangement for laying railway track to the river Sone for the transportation of sand from the river and supply coal to those parts of the country which can solve the problem of energy. This would solve the problem of silting also.

Secondly, many hon. Members have suggested often that the river Ganga should be linked to the river Kaveri. It is a good proposition, but I would like to suggest something to the hon. Minister Shri Anukul Chandra Thakur was a great saint of Bihar. His followers were spread in Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He wanted that the holy waters of the Ganga must flow to the plateau of Devdhar. Lakhs of devotees visit the area and offer water as a prayer. But actually what he had in mind was that Ganga would provide resources for irrigation in the plateau and floods would also be controlled.

I would like to point out why the Minister of Water Resources should have been present here. When the floods hit the Ganga, it causes destruction everywhere, while the level of water in Ganga reduces to very low level during summer months. A need is then felt to increase the water supply. Recently, the board formed by the Ministry of Water Resources has taken a strange decision to liquify the ice by spraying charcoal over the Himalays. The Ganga water starts getting polluted from Haridwar and Kanpur. But the authorities plan to pollute it at the very source by spraying Charcoal there. It would pollute the entire environment also. It would be a major cause of ecological imbalance and would result in dangerous reactions. Many great scientists have expressed their concern and apprehension in this regard. So it is a matter of even greater concern. The Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Water Resources and the Minister of Planning should sit together and deliberate on the matter, because this experiment could prove quite dangerous. So I would urge to stop this experiment. Besides, the Minister of concerned Departments/Ministries should try to find out a permanent solution to floods. Let them have a fruitful debate and find out the possibilities.

With these words, I conclude

*SHRI ABDUL HAMID (Dhubri) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to take part in this debate. Today we are discussing about flood throughout the whole

country. Many hon. Members have given their valuable suggestions in this regard. It is a matter of great regret that even after 40 years of our independence we are confronted with the problem of flood. Today it is a burning problem. There is a very peculiar situation in Assam. Almost six months of the year we the people of Assam have to face the problem of flood. Our state remain submerged in water for about six months every year. So this is a life and death question for the people of Assam. Thousands of people become homeless. There is damage to life and property.

Although I wanted to narrate many things about Assam and specially about my constituency Dhubri, but I have very little time at my disposal. That is why I will touch upon the points very briefly but vehemently. The Government of India has spent several crores of rupees in the name of controlling the flood of the mighty river Brahmaputra. I am sorry to say that these funds have not been utilised properly. There has been no benefit to the people of Assam. As a result of devastating floods in every year the economic condition of common man is turning from bad to worse. In my state, we are just having the third wave of floods. I am sure, we are going to have two more waves of floods, because we have the experience of having floods after the month of September.

More than the floods, the bigger problem we face in Assam is soil erosion. Some hon. Members have also said it. After the flood recedes the soil erosion starts. It eats up the lands. Both the banks of the river Brahmaputra are eaten away by the river and thus we lose land permanently. Erosion is a serious problem in Assam and this is the real problem for us. If we can stop erosion half of the problem of flood will not be there. We should see that the problem of erosion is tackled immediately on war footing. For the last 20 years about fifteen lakh people have been rendered homeless as a result of erosion. They have been compelled to take shelter on Government land and Railway land. They have got no other way out. There is no scheme to rehabilitate these people. Today they are landless and homeless. They have no

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Assamese.

[Shri Abdul Hamid]

livelihood, under such circumstances these people are migrating towards the towns in search of their livelihood. When they roam about in the towns of Assam, some people think that these wretched people are from Bangladesh. But actually that is not the case. They are our own brethren. From Nowgong to Dhubri the Brahmaputra stretches for 400 KMs. There is erosion on both the banks of the river and as a result about fifteen lakh people have been rendered homeless and these unfortunate people have been termed as Bangladeshi by a section of people. What a shameful thing it is? I want to cite just an example. In the year 1950 the river Brahmaputra at Dhubri was 3 KM wide. But the present Brahmaputra at Dhubri is about 15 KM wide. Such a massive erosion has taken place. Now it looks like a sea.

Therefore, I urge the Central Government to take effective steps so as to arrest the erosion on both the banks of the Brahmaputra whereby we can protect the lives and properties of lakhs of people. By implementing the schemes under NREP or RLEGP you cannot give protection to the erosion affected people. You will have to chalk out some programmes in such a way so that erosion may be stopped. A master plan has been prepared by the Brahmaputra Board. It is a very good thing. We should see that this master plan is implemented into which can protect from flood and erosion. There should be proper plan for the rehabilitation of those families who have lost their land as a result of erosion.

Here I would like to point out that there is rampant corruption in the Department of Food Control, Government of Assam. They are doing dis-service to the people of Assam. There is a nexus between the contractors and officials. Their only job is to submit the bills as work done without doing any work worth the name, sanction the amount and distribute it among themselves. They sit idle throughout the whole year practically doing nothing. Only when the floods occur, they start moving. Is it the way of working? Crores of rupees are spent in the name of embankments. But what is the result? Are the people getting any

relief from flood? The answer is a big zero. These embankments and such other schemes are there for the benefit of some political leaders, big contractors and officers of the Departments of Flood Control and E and D.

While concluding the speech, I would like to submit that some scientific device should be made by the Central Government so that flood and erosion can be controlled effectively, then and then only the people of Assam will get some relief. With these words I thank you once again for giving me time to speak.

[*Translation*]

SHRI R. S. KHIRHAR (Sitamarhi) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for the last two-three years, I am observing in this House that every year floods are discussed and all the hon. Members make mention of the havoc of floods in their respective constituencies and in the country as a whole and try to find ways and means to solve the problem.

Sir, from my experience of last year, I can say that when the three States, viz., Bihar, Assam and Bengal were flooded, our hon. colleagues had discussed it in this House in strong words and had also talked about the damage caused due to floods, the causes thereof and the solution to the problem, I am not raising doubts about the capability and sincerity of the Government. But if we pay attention to the results of such discussions in the House and solutions evolved therefrom, we find that it is nothing more than a formality. The funds provided by the Government are totally inadequate in relation to the number of people affected. I would like to portray the situation in my own State Bihar. I come from the northern border of Bihar, which is adjacent to Nepal. There are about one dozen rivers—small and big—in Sitamarhi, which originate from the Himalayas and flow through Bihar. I would like to specially mention the rivers of Bagmati and Aghwada group. These rivers cause damage to Sitamarhi. Two projects had been taken up for that area of which one is Bagmati Projects and the other is Aghwada Group Project. For the last 19 years, work on Bagmati Project is going on, but what has been the results?

During these 19 years, funds to the tune of Rs. 119 crores, provided by Central and the State Government, have been spent. 120 to 125 acres of land has been blocked for constructing the dam. Another 100 to 125 acres of land was locked up in constructing the small canals for irrigation, but even after spending Rs 125 crores on the project and rendering 225 acres of land inaccessible for crop production, Sitamarhi gives a barren look. Last year, when we demanded Rs. 19 crores on behalf of the Government of Bihar, only Rs. 86 lakhs were allocated from the centre. When I talked to the employees of Bagmati Project, they told that not a single inch of work would be done on the dam or on irrigation schemes, because the entire funds would be spent on the salaries and other expenses and no fund would be left for flood control and irrigation. So I would like to submit that time-bound programmes should be made, fixing a period say 5 years 10 years or 20 years to complete the work and the allocated funds should be released in instalments. Without executing these project, nothing can be done regarding flood control or irrigation. Therefore, the Central Government should undertake monitoring of such projects especially the Bagmati and Aghwada Projects in order to judge whether my statement is correct or not. You make a time-bound programme of 5 or 10 years and then execute it, otherwise abandon it. The farmers have been deprived of 200 acres of cultivable land, which has since become barren. So, I urge the Government to leave them on their fate so that they could cultivate their lands. I would again submit that monitoring should be done of these two projects—Bagmati and Aghwada. If the Central Government has the intention to complete the projects by fixing a time frame, then only steps should be taken to execute the projects, otherwise they should not be taken up.

With these words, I hope that the Government will consider these points. If my suggestions are implemented, even partially, I shall consider my membership of this House to be meaningful.

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

Floods are a curse for our country but there are a few people like money lenders, technicians, officers, and contractors for whom they come as a boon. For how long will the floods continue to prove as curse to some and^a boon to others? It appears to me that it will continue as long as this Government is in power. This matter is now being discussed here, but nothing is done as follow up action on whatever we say. Without taking much time, I shall submit some points about my constituency.

Last year, whole of my constituency was affected by floods. I am mentioning this here because during the course of these floods, the State Government surveyed the affected area by helicopter and also provided them essential commodities. I know pretty well that Rs. 14 lakhs were paid as hiring charges for the helicopter. It shows the extent of devastation caused by the floods there. Houses and belongings of the labourers were destroyed and embankments were damaged. Those embankments have not been repaired so far and that is why the farmers are unable to undertake sowing operations. They are afraid that as the embankments stand breached, their sowings will not bear any fruits and toil and money put in by them will go waste.

The centre says that this work should be done by the State Government. We also ask them and I have talked to the hon. Chief Minister also, but due to the shortage of funds, the State Government is unable to do anything in this regard. They only express their helplessness by saying that they have no funds. You can well imagine the condition of the farmers in the wake of floods.

The arrangements should be made before hand so that life and property of thousands of people could be saved, leave alone the crops which are bound to be damaged. The one kilometre stretch of of embankment near Gidarpur village under Ghosi block along the River Phalgu has been totally washed away. The village will be flooded in the event of recurrence of flood. To save the village, arrangements should be made right now. Arrangements should also be made to evacuate some other villages like Chunukpur, Mandai,

[Shri Ramashray Prasad Singh]

Arahit. Due to the breaching of this embankment in Ghosi block, it is feared that all the villages will be flooded. Similarly, the embankments in Lango and Timarpur villages under Kako block are also cut-off and are going to be submerged under water. We are drawing the attention of the Government so that they could be saved before floods strike. The same is true of Masodhi also. Some arrangements should be made right now pending the repair of embankment of River Punpun. Due to the breaches in the embankment of River Punpun, the farmers of Pogyawan, Balimari, Sarwahadi and Kharant villages are not sowing kharif crop this year.

I am giving here an example of the anti-farmers and anti-labourers attitude of the Government of India. The Central Government cannot mend the things now, as the monsoon season has already set in. But the scheme formulated for the flood control and irrigation are still pending with the Centre. In 1980, the Punpun-Dardha Project was sent to the Centre for clearance, but it is still under processing. I would like to bring this to the hon. Minister's notice that initially this scheme involved an outlay of Rs. 32 crores, but now the project cost has risen to Rs. 95 crores and this will certainly create a problem for the State Government. When the schemes remain pending for so long a period with the centre, then it means that none of the projects are going to be successful. Punpun-Dardha scheme should be sanctioned and included in the Eighth Five Year Plan. This be a great work for this district. With will this request, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA (Jorhat) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me a chance in the last to speak to an almost empty House.

This is an affairs which does not distinguish between religious, sectarian or political considerations. I am thankful to our hon. Minister, Shri Shyam Lal Yadav, for taking the trouble of visting Assam during the worst days of floods recently. I am not going to elaborate anything about

the damages caused by the floods but only on erosion which is another major factor associated with floods. I will repeat what my esteemed friend, Mr. Bipin Pal Das, has said about erosion. Shri Yadav undertook a tour of the flood affected areas in my state recently. Most people do not know that the topographical and geological terrain of the Assam Valley was severelly shaken by the great earthquake in 1950 and as a result of which the bed of the Brahmaputra rose by about 15-20 feet. Thousands of acres of land were eaten up. Big towns like Dibrugarh were eroded. In my own constituency, two big villages including the vast paddy fields were covered with five to six feet deep sand in the course of one of the high waves of floods last year. This process still continues and the worst sufferers are the tribals, the Scheduled Castes, the backward class people who inhabit the riverine areas. 98 per cent of the people who are affected by these floods and erosion are the agriculturists Assam is basically an agricultural state. As a result of these floods, thousands of people have been thrown out of their habitation. This is not a problem of mere floods but this is a human problem. It has to be treated in a human way. I am sorry to say that even in this human problem some political and other considerations have come in the way of really solving the problem in the real perspective. Now, I would like to refer to the river vally projects lying with the Water Resources Ministry for years together. The cavalier way in which they have taken it is resented. The Water Resources Minister has not cared to visit the state for the last three years of heavy floods. In that context, I refer to another scheme for flood control submitted by the State Government to the Central Government in January 1987 which involve a total outlay of Rs. 167 crores under the Tribal Sub-plan. I am sorry to say that nothing has come out yet. The State Government asked for financial grant of about Rs. 500 crores last year and only Rs. 30 crores or so was granted. A poor state like Assam cannot solve this problem unless the Central Government comes out with financial help and resources. Floods come and go but erosion takes everything with it for ever. Assam is one State where this problem is very very severe. In the Tribal Sub-Plan, a scheme was there for

protection of a historical Muslim Saint Dargah known as Azanpir Dargah in my constituency which is facing erosion. But nothing has been done so far to protect it. We gave representations to the Prime Minister, to the Planning Commission and also to the Water Resources Minister. And the Chief Minister of Assam also made several representations to this effect but nothing tangible has come out so far.

19.00 hrs.

I, therefore, request the Prime Minister as also the Minister for Agriculture who have a vast experience and are popular leaders to appreciate the agonies of the people of Assam, They may kindly arrange early meeting of the concerned Ministries like Water Resources, Energy, Planning, Surface Transport etc. for evolving real flood control and protective measures to save the people of Assam from the ravage of flood and erosion.

Assam is a poor State. They cannot do anything tangible without substantial Central assistance. So many study teams have gone and visited Assam, so many experts have visited Assam, but nothing has been done.

With these words, I appeal to the Government of India, particularly the Prime Minister, to do something substantial and tangible, apart from the adhoc measures, to save the people of Assam from the ravages of floods.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The Minister will reply on Monday.

19.01 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till
Eleven of the Clock on Thursday,
August 4, 1988/ Sravana 13,
1910 (Saka).*