

[Shri Z R. Ansari]

ensured that workers do not suffer. All our actions will not must be based on these twin principles.

MR. SPEAKER : Calling attention.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may kindly convert it into 193.

MR. SPEAKER : How to spare the time for it ?

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : We should also be given opportunity to speak on it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You are unnecessarily wasting my time now.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : We want that we should be allowed to take part in the discussion and ask a few questions.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have got no time. I am not God. I cannot create time. You get the session extended by one more week. It is not in my power.

[Translation]

It is beyond my power.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

[English]

Serious situation arising out of unprecedented floods and cyclone in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and other parts of the country

DR. CHINTA MOHAN (Tirupati) : I call the attention of the Minister of Agri-

culture to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

“Serious situation arising out of unprecedented floods and cyclone in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and other parts of the country and the steps taken by the Government in that regard.”

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : The situation arising out of recent floods is a matter of serious concern to all of us. Some states have been affected in varying degrees—resulting in large scale loss of life, property and crops. The states affected are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The worst affected are Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Uttar Pradesh and Kerala.

Relying on reports received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh it is understood that 2685 villages in 13 districts have been affected. It is unfortunate that 126 human lives have been lost. Out of the affected villages 614 villages have been marooned. Cropped Area of 19.27 lakh acres has been affected. Damage to 884 major, medium and minor irrigation works and about 1.40 lakh houses has been reported. Road breaches have taken place at 112 points and 14 bridges are reported to have collapsed. The river Godavari had started receding on 17th August, 1986 and was flowing below danger level all along on 20th August, 1986 though extensive areas are still under water.

Immediately on receipt of the first news of the disaster in Andhra Pradesh a Central Reconnaissance Team consisting of Secretary Planning Commission, Secretary Department of Agriculture, Secretary Ministry of Water Resources, Director General of Health Services, Chairman, Central Water Commission and other senior officers visited the flood affected areas in Andhra Pradesh to have first hand information

about the damage and the relief and rescue operations being carried out by the State Government. Considering the severity of the disaster, Prime Minister himself visited Andhra Pradesh on 18th August, 1986 and made an aerial survey of the affected areas. On the basis of the discussion held with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and State Government officials, Prime Minister announced immediate Central assistance to enable the State Government to meet the situation. The following Central assistance has been sanctioned :

- (i) Orders have been issued for immediate release of Rs. 30.00 crores as Ways and Means Advance.
- (ii) Additional quantity of 50,000 tonnes of rice has been released.
- (iii) Release of additional 10,000 kilolitres of Kerosene oil, out of which 5,000 kilolitres in the current month, and balance in September has been ordered.
- (iv) Release of 5,000 tonnes of edible Palmolein oil has been ordered.
- (v) On receipt of a request from the State Government, adequate quantities of short-duration paddy seeds will be made available to enable the State to retransplant paddy in affected areas.

Accurate and timely flood forecast and warnings by the Central Water Commission helped the Andhra Pradesh authorities to alert the people about the impending disaster. The Government of Andhra Pradesh have mounted a massive relief and rescue operations to alleviate the distress of the affected people. Army, Air force, and Navy are assisting the State Government machinery in rescue and relief operations. An estimated population of 8.20 lakh has been evacuated and 4.34 lakh food packets have been air dropped. 15 Helicopters, 357 boats/launches, 514 medical teams and 307 veterinary teams have been pressed into service.

The reports received from the Government of Kerala, indicate that continuous

rainfall in the catchment areas of the main rivers caused sudden and extensive floods on the banks of Pamba, Manimala and Achankovil rivers. As a result extensive areas in Alleppey, Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam and Kottayam districts are reported to have been affected by floods, causing damage to agricultural crops, houses, sea walls, school and other public buildings. I am sorry to inform the House that 41 persons have lost their lives. The Govt. of Kerala have organised a large number of relief camps, emergency medical centers, free ration shops and taken all necessary measures for meeting the situation.

The Government of U.P. have reported that 3255 villages in 38 districts have been affected by floods. A population of 17,64,000 in an area of 3,22,000 hectares including 1,43,000 hectares of agricultural land have been affected. 109 persons have lost their lives and 1994 houses have been damaged. The State Govt. have set up 529 outposts and 72 relief camps, pressed 1045 boats into service and shifted about 10,000 persons to safer places.

In Punjab heavy rains in the Malwa region from 24th June to 30th June affected Faridkot district and caused some damage in Bhatinda and Ferozepur districts also. A cropped area of 41,000 hectares in 287 villages has been affected, 712 houses totally and 6682 houses partially damaged. 1 human life and 8 cattle have been lost.

Floods and heavy rains have affected other states also in varying degrees. As per reports received so far 2662 villages in 27 districts in 10 other states have been affected. A population of 33.8 lakhs and a cropped area of 2.31 lakh ha. is reported to have been hit by floods. In these states 110 lives have been lost. Details of area and population affected are still coming in.

As the Members are aware, the financing of relief expenditure is based on the recommendations of the 8th Finance Commission and Government decisions thereon. The Margin Money available annually to the States has been increased from Rs. 100.55 crores to Rs. 240.75 crores annually on the recommendations of the 8th Finance Commission from the year 1985-

[Shri Yogendra Makwana]

86. This enables the States to take immediate action for providing relief to the flood affected people.

The State Government of Punjab have submitted a Memorandum seeking Central assistance for flood relief. A Central Team has been designated to visit Punjab to assess the requirement of Central assistance. No other State has submitted a Memorandum seeking Central assistance for flood relief.

I would like to assure the House that the Central Government would take all possible steps to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in mitigating the distress of the affected people.

MR. SPEAKER : Dr. Chinta Mohan.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN *rose*—

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI SOMNATH RATH : What about Orissa ?

MR. SPEAKER : You may take your seats. It is not your business now.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing goes on record.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Sir, I have said in my statement that the information which is received from the State Government so far, I have placed before the House. I am still waiting for the reports from the State Governments. In case any State Government will request the Central Government, we will respond to it....*(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing is going on record.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : You must know the rules, hon. Members. The House

cannot run according to your wishes. The House runs according to the rules and the rules say that only Mr. Chinta Mohan is allowed to put his questions. You are not allowed....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : I cannot allow. I have no time Mr. Acharia. Why don't you understand certain things ? It is a basic thing....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Now take your seats....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Not allowed....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Vishnu Modi, not allowed. Will you sit down....

*(Interruptions)**

[*Translation*]

SHRI GIRDHARILAL VYAS : Please help us....

MR. SPEAKER : Help is a different thing.

[*English*]

But we cannot allow this. It is not free for all. Please sit down.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G.S. DHILLON) : May I take one minute ? Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this statement we gave the number of loss of life in Andhra Pradesh as 126. This morning it came on the radio that it was almost 160. We tried to reconfirm it from the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh. So far we have not received any information. If there is any need to change, I will certainly change this figure during the course of the debate....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Nobody is allowed except Mr. Chinta Mohan....

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Is there any use of telling you ?

*(Interruptions)**

We shall do it, for one and all.

[English]

It does not form part of the record....

*(Interruptions)**

MR. CHINTA MOHAN : Sir, from Ganges to Cauvery, we are seeing floods today. Today there have been floods in U.P., we also witnessed floods in Kerala, but the flood in Andhra Pradesh is something tremendous and the people of Andhra Pradesh are in grief. The children are not able to get milk and the people are half floating in the river waters of Godavari today. Godavari is the river starting from the western ghats and ending in the eastern coast of Andhra Pradesh. It has got 3,450 TMCs, of water, out of which only five per cent is being utilised in the Doulesuaram ani-cut but the rest of the water is going into the sea. Today, because of the cyclone from the Bay of Bengal and due to the heavy rains, we are witnessing lot of floods. When we look at the people of the Andhra Pradesh, we see tears in their eyes. Even people with lot of money do not have water to drink. This is the situation there. Not only the people of Andhra Pradesh but the entire nation has to share this grief of the people of Andhra Pradesh. At this juncture, I would like to express my sorrow and sympathy to the people of Andhra Pradesh who are in grief now. We are getting 3,450 TMCs, of water from Godavari but out of that we are able to utilise only five per cent. We have got Suaram Sagar project. Apart from that there is no other project to utilise this water. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been constantly and persistently

pursuing with the Government of India to give clearance to the Kovalam Project. But because of the callous attitude, because of the useless attitude of the Government of India, today we are witnessing the floods....*(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, the word useless is unparliamentary. It should be withdrawn.

12.00 hrs.

He should withdraw that. Can we say that the Andhra Government is "useless" ? He should withdraw.

MR. SPEAKER : You can say that to him.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : I will request the Government of India to take up the Polavaram project. They have to see because the people of Andhra are grieved and 160 people are dead, so many persons are injured and more than 2690 villages are drowned today. There is no communication between the villages and the rest of the country today.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : The Prime Minister has given Rs. 30 crores at the very moment.

KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE : We are very much concerned about it. The Prime Minister has already visited that place and he has already given Rs 30 crores.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : We have got complete damage to the houses of about 1,11,000.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, he is not their Minister. The Prime Minister is for the entire country. He did not give charity. What he gave is far from adequate. It has no relation to the magnitude of the crisis confronted by the State.

(Interruptions)

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Sir, why is she doing like this ?

MR. SPEAKER : I think, the subject is so serious....

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Why are you allowing ?

MR. SPEAKER : I am not allowing. Mr. Raghuma Reddy. You know that without my permission, nothing is allowed to go on record. I have not allowed anybody except Dr. Chinta Mohan.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Why is she telling like that ?

MR. SPEAKER : Can I put my hand in her mouth ? I can appeal to your good sense and their good sense and ask your good sense to understand some common sense.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : Sir, on the Pollavaram project....

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Chinta Mohan, you should concentrate on the loss and hardship suffered by the people, the problems being faced by the poor people due to floods. These things we can take up later on, Dams and these projects, you can talk later on, because you have only 10 minutes.

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE : In the mean time, control that flood.

MR. SPEAKER : I will control them; I will not allow them.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : On the 15th and 17th, the Chief Minister visited the flood affected areas. On the 19th of this month, it was very kind that the Prime Minister of India had reached the flood affected areas and was also very kind that he released about Rs. 30 crores to the flood victims. However, it is a drop in the ocean now. The loss is about Rs. 900 crores. But the actual figures are touching more than Rs. 2000 crores. Only the actual direct loss of property is about Rs. 900 crores, as of today. The indirect loss of railways, transport communication and other revenues may touch about Rs. 200 crores.

How to control flood is an important issue and I would like to say a few things

about it. There are short-term and long-term measures. We have got the spread of epidemics and cholera in the flood affected area and people are afflicted by these epidemics. There is no safe drinking water. Relief camps have come. Medical team and veterinary team are with the people of Godavari area. Cattle do not have fodder; children do not have milk to drink. At this juncture, I request the Government that they must come out with immediate relief of about Rs. 50 crores to the Government of Andhra Pradesh to meet the needs of the people who are suffering. Fodder should be supplied to the cattle and fertilizers to the farmers immediately. Immediate steps should be taken so that they will fill their belly at least once a day.

Coming to long-term measures, this Polavaram project has to be cleared very soon. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : I appeal to the hon. Members in this august House to observe some sort of decency so that people can listen to what the hon. Member is saying. It is a very tragic circumstance which is prevailing and they should not be talking among themselves and making a lot of noise. This is not proper.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : Sir, the Government of India would give immediately another advance of Rs. 50 crores as relief to the flood affected people. Also, this Godhavari bridge is almost touching that area. At least 5 feet has to be raised immediately and that bridge has to be taken up by the Government. Then only there will not be any floods, there will not be any sort of damages to the country in the coming future. I would like to suggest that there should be a Flood Insurance Scheme. You are giving Crop Insurance to the farmers. In the same way, there should be a Flood Insurance Scheme with the Government of India. Each and every time you are giving money to the people whose huts have been damaged. The ryots are suffering very much. What about their cattle ? What about their lands ? Today the Godavari land, the granary of India, has become a desert. It is flooded with sand and it takes a lot of time for them to reclaim...

The Government should immediately see that long-term loan should be given at low interest rates to the farmers so that they can cultivate their fields so easily.

The East Coast is much prone and vulnerable for natural calamities. West Bengal, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh are being affected every time. In the Month of November, there is every danger of facing cyclone or some type of floods. At this juncture, I would request the Government that they should come out with a plan for providing East-Coast Flood Control Authority so that the people of flood victims can get the relief immediately.

I would also like to say that the people are not well trained to give relief for these people. There should be a Disaster Institute which may be located in the Andhra Pradesh or anywhere in the South so that they can reach immediately to see that the people can get relief immediately. With these words of expressing the need that Polavaram Project should be cleared immediately, I would like to conclude...

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : You are only talking about Polavaram. What about the Inchampali project ? That has also to be taken up.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN : Yes, that has also to be included, very shortly.

AN HON. MEMBER : He has got his name included.

MR SPEAKER : He has succeeded in it.

[Translation]

Allright. Whatever has been stated by Shri Janga Reddy, may become part of the record.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we all have sympathy with the flood-affected people of Andhra Pradesh. I thank the hon. Prime Minister for granting immediate help to the flood-victims of Andhra Pradesh. Fury of flood has caused great devastation in Andhra

Pradesh and in view of it, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Agriculture that more relief should be provided to the flood-victims so that the arrangement of their rehabilitation, food and medicines could be made.

Sir, the speech of hon. Member from Tirupati has pained me very much, because he tried to give a political colour to this human problem. It is true that Andhra Pradesh had been a famine-affected area since 1983, but now other natural calamities are also affecting it. But instead of finding solutions and tackling problems, if any one tries to give political colour to the problem and speaks against the Centre, I think, that would not be helpful.

Sir, so far as the people of Andhra Pradesh are concerned, they are dearer to us and to all Indians than to Telugu Desam. We want that the maximum help should be provided to them.

I would also like to request that immediate relief, as has been provided in Andhra Pradesh, should also be provided to the people of Vidarbha region, Kuttanad district in Kerala and many districts of Uttar Pradesh which have also been very badly affected by the floods.

MR SPEAKER : Kota has also been affected by the floods.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you should request the Prime Minister to grant assistance to these areas also.

The assistance should also be provided to the other flood-affected areas of Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal and Haryana.

The floods have caused us a loss of about Rs. 50,000 crores since our first plan. If we take into account the damage caused to the crops alone, it would exceed Rs. 50,000 crores. According to an estimate, the crops worth Rs. 316 crores are damaged every year. It is also clear from the fact that during Sixth Plan we had spent a sum of Rs. 780 crores on flood control works and a sum of Rs. 1200 crores had been provided by the Centre as assistance. The State Governments had also spent separately. Every year we

[Shri Harish Rawat]

have to spent a huge amount for this purpose. So, it is necessary that in flood-prone areas, some permanent solution should be found out.

As per an estimate, rivers of our country carry about 1440 million acre feet of water every year. Since 1952, we could utilise only 540 million acre feet of water and our storing capacity is just 130 million acre feet. I would like to request the hon. Minister of Water Resources that in consultation with the concerned Ministers of all the State Governments, he should formulate a comprehensive plan on priority basis to make best use of our water resources and the funds, should also be made available for this purpose.

The issue of inter-linking of all rivers with one another and to prepare a national grid has been raised several times. More stress has been laid on the importance of such a scheme, but no practical effort was made to construct such long canals, to inter link even canals if not the rivers, so that the surplus water could be utilised. On the one hand the rivers in Uttar Pradesh cause heavy floods and on the other hand, Haryana has to fight for water. In the famine-prone area of Rajasthan, which Mr. Speaker represent, the water is scarce for the people. I would request the Government, through you, that this plan should be considered. Besides it, we can also increase our storing capacity. The hon. Minister should consider this suggestion also.

Several times it has been suggested that the people residing along the rivers, which experience floods every year, should be rehabilitated at some other places. The State Governments should enact some law in this regard so that provision could be made to rehabilitate the people living on either side of the river within two to three kms. distance and who are generally affected by the frequent floods. Besides this, more provision should be made for relief funds. I think that by doing so, the Government can at least check the loss of life to a great extent, if not the loss of property.

Today, the flood forecasting and warning system is very effective in many States, particularly in the coastal areas, but it is not that effective in other States like Uttar Pradesh etc. This needs to be made more effective.

There is also need to enact laws for proper land utilisation. A survey of the floods-affected areas should be conducted on a large scale. It has been repeatedly pointed out in this House that a survey should be conducted of those areas which are frequently affected by natural calamities, whether it is the famine or the floods, and on the basis of facts that come to light, a permanent solution to this problem should be found out.

I would request the hon. Minister to set up a permanent commission for assessing the situation of floods and natural calamities which could immediately react, otherwise the State Governments like that of Andhra Pradesh will always get an opportunity to complain.

There is a proposal to set up National Calamity Institute and I would like to submit that it should be set up in an area which is well-equipped so that it can serve the purpose when the occasion arises. In this connection, I would like to mention that floods cannot be checked unless the work of soil conservation is given top priority in the hill areas. It is true that the State Governments are making some efforts in this direction, but the amount of work that should have been done in the catchment areas is not satisfactory.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You are not going on record now. Prof. Kurien.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Give me one minute, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : No. Not at all. You are not going on record. When I say 'No', that means 'No'.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : It is a very important subject. You are not allowing even five minutes.

[Translation]

The calling attention has been turned into a farce. You have converted it into a half-an-hour discussion. It would have been better, had we put a question and the hon. Minister replied to it. If you do not allow us to speak on this, how will it serve the purpose?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Rawat, will you take your seat? I told you that day also and today also. I am carrying out what you have decided. You decide it otherwise and I will do otherwise. Don't tell me one thing and try to get another thing done by me. You have done it. It is not I who has done it. I told you on that day also. Whatever is entrusted to me, I try to do it, and when I do it, you try to obstruct me.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Who did it? Did I do it? Then you change it. I will do it. Do not blame me. I am not the culprit. You are the culprit.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to argue. I am just making a request, through you, and drawing the attention of Business Advisory Committee towards this.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : It is not proper. Do not try to bluff me. Prof. Kurien.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Idukki) : Sir, I have carefully gone through the statement given by the hon. Minister. The amount of devastations and damages caused has been described here. It is found that 125 human lives have been lost in Andhra Pradesh, 41 persons died in Kerala and 109 persons in U.P. in addition to damages to property, crops etc.

First of all I would say that the information given by the Minister about the number of persons died in Kerala is not correct. You have mentioned the deaths

in Alleppey, Pathanamthilla, Ernakulam and Kottayam, but you have avoided my own district Idukki, the Constituency from which I have come. According to press reports and other information I have received, 13 persons have died in Idukki also this is not included in the list. I hope the hon. Minister to correct it.

I am very happy that the Prime Minister visited Andhra Pradesh and has given liberal assistance to the State of Andhra Pradesh. Of course, they deserve it because the havoc there was so very serious. But I do not know why assistance has not been given to the other States. My hon. friend from Andhra Pradesh was complaining and saying that this Government was useless—that Government which gave them Rs. 30 crores and all other assistance. In spite of busy schedule, our Prime Minister visited that State and gave them so much of assistance. (Interruptions) How can you call it a useless Govt. What about other States. You have not mentioned about assistance given to Kerala, you have not mentioned of any assistance given to U.P., you have not mentioned of any assistance given to Punjab. The Agriculture Minister is from Punjab. (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Really you deserve to condemn the Government, not he.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, whatever time they take by way of interruptions, to that extent you should give me more time.

In spite of the fact that 109 persons died in U.P., you have not mentioned of any assistance to U.P. 41 plus 13 people died in Kerala but no assistance has been given to Kerala. Therefore, our complaint is that you are giving more assistance to Andhra Pradesh. (Interruptions) In this connection I have to make one point. In your statement you have said that accurate and timely flood forecasts and warnings by the Central Water Commission helped the Andhra Pradesh authorities to alert the people. I would like to know as to how, in spite of these alerts and warnings given by the Central Water Commission to the Andhra Pradesh, 126

[Prof. P.J. Kurien]

persons have died there. Was it that the State Government was sleeping?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY: The Government have done it to the extent it was possible. (Interruptions)

[English]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: I am not deviating from the statement. I am only saying from the statement that timely warning was given to Andhra Pradesh Government. Why that Government was not able to give sufficient warning to the people and evacuate them from vulnerable areas. (Interruptions)

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: The State Government had made all efforts.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: You were given sufficiently early warning; but you have not taken care to evacuate the people from flood prone areas. Therefore, the responsibility of that is with you.

Having said so much, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister about Kerala. The Revenue Minister who is in charge of Flood Relief announced in the Press that he had requested the Central Government for flood relief assistance. But in your statement you have said that no request has been received from the State of Kerala even as on today. I would like to know the correct position as to whether the Government of Kerala has made any request to you for flood relief assistance, since they have already announced it in the Press.

Secondly, I would like to know whether you have got any long term plan for tackling the flood and drought situations. Every year we have got floods and we spend crores of rupees on ad-hoc measures. Ad-hoc release of grants are a waste even if the State Government is fully utilising it. There has got to be some long term plan for tackling it. Mr. Rawat was suggesting

linking of Ganga-Cauvery rivers. It is a very good thing if you can do it.

With regard to Kerala, I have to make a positive suggestion because in Kerala all the rivers are flowing from east to west and they are at closer distance, you can connect all the rivers by a programme stretched over five years. If you connect all the rivers by a canal, 80% of the flood problem will be solved. I assure you that the amount you spend for five years on ad-hoc measures of flood relief will be enough to construct this canal. I would suggest that even if the State Government does not write in this regard, you may please ask them to bring up the proposal. Sir, I am suggesting a new canal connecting all the rivers from north to the south of Kerala.

I would like to know whether you have got a programme for insurance to the flood affected people. What is the assistance you are giving to those who have died? I have got a letter from my constituency yesterday. One girl, Thresiamma from my constituency has written that last year her father, the only earning member of the House, died of floods and there is no other earning member. They are starving now. She has passed S.S.L.C., pre-degree and typewriting test also but there is no employment.

I would ask you—so many people died all these years due to floods and natural calamities. Can you think of providing their dependents some job. Secondly can you consider these calamities as national calamities and meet the entire expenditure by the Central Government?

We have in Kerala sea erosion. That should be treated as national calamity. Our own land is being eroded away by sea. The entire expenditure to prevent sea erosion should be met by the Central Government. Flood relief assistance and drought relief assistance should be given as hundred percent grant to the States because these are national calamities. I would like to know whether you agree with these proposals.

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore): Sir, true to the predictions of the environmental

scientists once again our lands are being devastated by the fury of floods. Vast areas in various parts of the country have been totally submerged leaving the inhabitants destitute and homeless.

Although the recent monsoon onslaught affected several parts of our country I would like to confine myself to the State of Kerala from where I hail. The State of Kerala appears to be cursed by nature this year. The belated monsoon and the severe drought has caused cent-per-cent power cut in the State of Kerala. Due to this power-cut all the industries have been brought to a standstill and the first crop has already been damaged. This is followed by extensive rainfall of severe intensity in all the districts of the State which has submerged the second crop of the year which was almost ready for harvest. Natural calamities like floods, land-slides, sea erosion, etc. are a perennial problem so far as Kerala is concerned. Of late when there is no rain there is drought when it rains there is devastating flood. There is rarely a year when neither happens. The biggest festival of Kerala, Onam, is fast approaching. So far as Kerala is concerned this Onam festival is the harvest festival of our people. Unfortunately this time our farmers do not have an opportunity to celebrate this festival because they have no crop to harvest.

12.28 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Another segment of the society which is badly affected by this monsoon is fishermen. In a densely populated State like Kerala the fishermen are living along the coastal belt of Kerala and they live in small thatched huts and during monsoons powerful winds sweep the shores and demolish most of their huts. Many lives are also lost in the sea. In the face of abject poverty and starvation the fishermen are often driven out to sea despite the warning of the meteorological department. Sea erosion of the worst type along the entire 520 km length of coastline was witnessed during this monsoon. Extensive areas in the districts of Alleppey, Kottayam, Pathanamthilli, Idukky, Cannanore, Kasargod, Calicut, etc. have been inundated.

According to the latest information which I received from Trivandrum yesterday night the death toll is reported to have risen to 65 and relief measures have been extended to 5 lakh people in over 1500 camps. Loss of crop alone is estimated to be to the tune of Rs. 30 crores. The number of houses damaged is 1 lakh. Damage to public property like roads, bridges, etc. is estimated to be Rs. 200 crores. This is only a quick estimate. Information is still coming from different districts. I reliably understand that our Chief Minister has already contacted the Central Government for help. Unfortunately nothing is mentioned in the reply given by the Minister. I also understand our Chief Minister is coming to Delhi next week and he is going to give an elaborate report on the flood situation. The Kerala Government has appealed to the Centre to give an amount of Rs. 10 crores as a preliminary assistance for relief. I urge upon the Government to be kind enough to allow Rs. 100 crores for the State of Kerala for rehabilitation activities. It is beyond doubt that the floods, landslides and sea erosion is the direct consequence of large scale denudation of forests.

Although the Agricultural Ministry has very little to do with the environment and forests, I have a question. Will the Government come forward with more stringent law for conservation of the forests?

Unscientific methods of cultivation without proper land development are also responsible for causing widespread soil erosion. In this connection, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will promote scientific cultivation for promotion of land development with proper irrigation facilities.

Again, I will request the Government not to have a fire-brigade attitude when the situation like flood arises in the country.

Lastly, although Kerala has constructed sea walls along 300 kms of coastal line, another 140 kms are still to be covered. The Central Government must come forward with financial assistance to construct the remaining part of the sea wall.

[Shri Mullappally Ramachandran]

Once again, I urge upon the Government to provide Rs. 200 crores to the State Government of Kerala for the flood relieve activities.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam) : Sir, the gravity of the situation has already been described by the hon. Members. I join them in expressing the deep sympathy of this august House for all those victims of rain and flood in the country.

In this monsoon, Andhra Pradesh, as everybody knows, has been the worst affected area. Loss of crops and property in Andhra Pradesh would amount to crores of rupees.

Without going into the other details, I would request the Central Government to immediately clear the Polavaram project. The fury of the Godavari might have been minimised had the Polavaram project been completed.

Next to Andhra Pradesh, Kerala suffered the most. This is the second consecutive year we have suffered large scale floods. Practically every year in the last one decade, floods have claimed their toll of lives and property even though on a smaller scale.

In this regard, I would like to point out the negligence of the Kerala Government in not evolving long-term measures for flood control in Kerala. They are spending large money on ad hoc operations and less money for long term solutions.

When we discuss about floods in Kerala we cannot shut our eyes to the large scale deforestation that is taking place in Kerala. Environmentalists the world over point out that wherever large scale deforestation takes place, both floods and drought can be expected. Without the moderating influence of forests, floods and droughts follow in rapid succession. That is what is exactly happening in Kerala. This year when the monsoon was delayed by a month, there was the threat of drought. Now with just a week of heavy rainfall, all the rivers are overflowing. There has been a systematic destruction of forests in Kerala with the help of some important

constituents in the ruling front. Everybody knows it.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : It is not correct.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : I am not mentioning about your party.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : It is your own party who are demanding that the encroachers should be protected.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No interruptions please.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : After the present Government has come, not an inch of land has been allowed to be encroached.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH KURUP : In this connection, I request the Central Government to send a high powered Central Team of environmentalists and scientists to Kerala to study the amount of deforestation that is taking place in Kerala and its impact on the ecology of Kerala. Let some Central Team go and assess the situation.

As usual, this year also large scale destruction took place in Kuttanad, which is the rice bowl of Kerala. Maybe, the hon. Minister knows about it. Nearly 2000 acres of standing crop ready to be harvested went underwater. In Kuttanad area alone 12,906 families were evacuated and 256 relief camps were opened. The geographical position of Kuttanad is very peculiar. The farm lands in Kuttanad lie three to eight feet below the sea level. This belt has a total area of 1600 square KM of which 760 Sq. KM are low lying farm lands.

Four major rivers of Central Kerala drain into Kuttanad, since they go through the whole length of Kuttanad and drain into the Arabian Sea. Thus during the monsoon, when these rivers overflow, the low lying Kuttanad is prone to sudden flooding. This is what is happening.

Over the years, various schemes were undertaken under the Kuttanad Development Scheme. All of them failed. The said thing is that all the development projects including the building of roads through the

length and breadth of Kuttanad has destroyed the ecology of that areas very adversely.

Not only floods, but various other problems are destroying the ecology of Kerala. In this connection. I want to reiterate that at any cost we have to save this precious piece of land of Kuttanad, which is the granary of Kerala. Last year also I raised the same point and now also I request the hon. Minister to send a team of central experts, some scientists and so on to Kuttanad area to study the problems to talk to the people and farmers and to make a report on the basis of their study.

Regarding the grant which is going to be released, I suppose that the Central Government will give generous aid. I would like to submit that that should be a permanent grant. This is what I want to mention. Last time, the Central Government was kind enough to grant Rs. 138 crores at a time when our Government was in severe financial crisis. It was given for rehabilitating the flood victims. But that was diverted to some other purpose by the Kerala Government for some day to day activities. I suggest that it should be inquired into. An inquiry should be conducted.

(Interruptions)

SHRI A. CHARLES : Even when people are dying, he wants to raise unnecessary issues which are not true....

(Interruptions)

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : I would like to know from the Minister whether the areas affected by floods will be brought under Crop Insurance....*(Interruptions)**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Not allowed. Nothing will go on record please.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Sir, I share the anxiety and concern of the hon. Members and it is not a calamity in one

State but its effect is widespread and the entire Nation is concerned about it. But I stoutly deny the allegations made by the hon. Member Dr. Chinta Mohan while speaking on this Calling Attention Motion.

In spite of the efforts made by the Government of India to help the State Government; in spite of the hon. Prime Minister's visit to the State; and in spite of the various assistance, he declared there, to the State Government, the hon. Member has said that the Government of India's attitude is callous. I can only say that it is a very irresponsible statement on the part of the hon. Member. He should not have said like that, when the Government of India is all out to help the State Government in this event of crisis.

Sir, we have 145 flood forecasting centres all over the country. And in Godavari basin itself, there are 13 centres. These forecasting centres have nearly 13, times forecasted about floods and that is the reason why, the people were shifted from the flood affected area. The State Government did shift some people, but because, the flood was very heavy, there is a loss of life to the extent of 126 people.

Sir, the hon. Member was very keen to get the clearance of Polavaram project. This was mentioned by the hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh while our team visited it and the Chairman of the Central Water Commission told the hon. Chief Minister that it is under the active consideration of the Government of India. But at the same time, he said that this will help marginally. He said that it may to some extent reduce the floods downstreams but it may also aggravate floods upstreams of the Dam unless protective measures are taken. So this Dam if it is constructed will permanently stop the floods, nobody can say like that. But, it is the primary duty of the State Government to control the floods. The Government of India is only supplementing the efforts. It is the State Government who has to take necessary precautions. They are not doing anything. Whatever schemes are there, they are not

[Shri Yogendra Makwana]

properly implementing it. They are not doing anything. That is why every time, there is a damage due to floods. Sir, there is a national programme....

(Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : A point of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is your point of order ? What is the rule you are quoting and on what basis ?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : The point of order is that the Union Minister is not authorised to cast a reflection on the administration of the State Government.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You tell the rule. No, no. What is that ?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He is casting an aspersion.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This is not an aspersion. Even Dr. Chinta Mohant old that. He criticised the Central Government. What is there ? That is no point of order. No. There is no point of order.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : With a humble submission, the Central Government can come and discuss it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No point of order. Please take your seat.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am sorry that you have not appreciated my point of order. The point is that while the administration of the Central Government can be discussed, commented on, deplored in the House, the administration of the State Government cannot be referred to.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : No. He is not casting any aspersion. He has not cast any aspersion on any particular person.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He has not only cast aspersion but he has made an allegation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is not an aspersion on any particular person. He has not cast any aspersion on any particular person.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you shouting like that ? It is unfair on your part to speak like that.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am conducting the proceedings properly. I am going according to the rules ; I am following the rules.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have ruled out your point of order.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : You have not listened to my point of order. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have heard the whole thing. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The Chair must listen to us. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I heard the whole thing.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : My point of order is this. Just now the Minister was saying that there were lapses on the part of the State Government. Therefore, it is his duty to specify what are the lapses. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He was just explaining.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : Not only that ; there he stated vaguely indulging in that type of speech. Then again he quoted that the construction of Polavaram Project will not in any way have the effect of lessening floods. On whose authority making that statement ? On whose expert

opinions—making that statement? He should mention that. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, you can continue.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have already ruled out your point of order.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : If there are any unparliamentary remarks, I will expunge them. You take it from me.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : They should not go on record. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI : If on the Floor of the Assembly performance of the Government of India can be questioned and criticised, Parliament has also a right to discuss the performance of the State Government. (*Interruptions*) There are instances where, on the Floor of the Assembly, Government of India's performance was criticised and a resolution was adopted. Why should not the Parliament be allowed to discuss the performance, if any, of the State Government? (*Interruptions*) You cannot bar it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATA RATH : Can the hon. member cast an aspersion on the Chair? If any, will you please go through the proceedings and expunge it? (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There is no aspersion.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I rise on a point of order. According not only to rules but also conventions of this House, while we can discuss the performance of the Central Government and even of the individual Ministry, there is a bar on discussing the performance of the State Governments. (*Interruptions*)

AN HON. MEMBER : What bar? (*Interruptions*)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Bar means prohibition. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Why don't you allow us to discuss Orissa Affairs—scandal? (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Not allowed.

(*Interruptions*)**

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI : They got money from the Central Government and they are not spending it they are cheating the people there (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you shouting?

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL (Kota) : Shri Madhu Dandavate interferes in each and every matter as if he is the expert on all the subjects. We also know this much and this is not physics or chemistry.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you shouting?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : This parliamentarian does not know that as far as raising of point of order is concerned, in the Constituent Assembly, Shri H.V. Kamath had raised 250 points of orders and for that Dr. Ambedkar had congratulated him. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL : The Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri Hegde sends reports daily. These are bogus documents.

[*English*]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Some of the members bring in Physics and Chemistry. So, I have to tell them... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You tell me what is your point of order? I am listening to you.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He is on a point of order. Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, he cannot stop me from raising a point of order. It is my fundamental right in Parliament.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Tell me.

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, he is giving a ruling. *(Interruptions)*

Firstly, let me ask you ; Is your power of Deputy-Speaker decentralised in this House ? *(Interruptions)*

I am raising a point of order. *(Interruptions)* I am raising a point of order. My point of order is ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He is telling.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : For raising a point of order, you should say, under what rule ?

(Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER : How many Deputy-Speakers are there in the House ?

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Under what rule are you speaking ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Take your seat. I will ask him "under what rule" also.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Please listen to me. Under Rule 376 I raise a point of order. My point of order is, in this House right from the first Lok Sabha, up to the present Lok Sabha, right from Shri Mavalankar and Mr. Dillion and Deputy-Speaker and also the present Speaker Mr. Jhakar, had number of times ruled that this House can discuss the performance of the Central Government and Central Ministers, but this House cannot discuss the performance of the Ministries in the States. That was the ruling given, and

therefore, I would like you to insist that even the Minister here follows that very ruling.

(Interruptions)

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : May I explain it ?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Yes, please. He is on his legs. He will explain.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, the ruling is not to be given by him.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am giving.

(Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER : He is giving the ruling.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It is too late in the day for me to learn Parliamentary Procedure from you.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : I do not want to comment on the performance of any State Government. But, at the same time, the hon. Member should not have said that "the callous attitude of the Central Government". I simply wanted to point out... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, even by the Minister, this ruling has to be implemented.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Already the Minister has explained that he has not taken the stand like criticising the State Government. He has said that he did not mean that.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Since the Member has criticised the Central Government, therefore, he can criticise the State Government. Wonderful logic.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now please listen to the Minister.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Sir, I say with all ability at my command

that the Government of India is there to help the State Government but, at the same time, it is the duty of the State Government to implement certain schemes and to reduce the magnitude of these natural calamities. There are number of schemes—scheme of social forestry, scheme of soil conservation, scheme of embankment and many other schemes. If all those schemes are properly implemented, I am sure that we can reduce the intensity of the damages which have happened at present. There is a national programme of flood control and up to March 1980, Rs. 976 crores have been spent on it. If I talk of 1985, up to March 1985, Rs. 1,743 crores have been spent by the Government of India and embankments to the tune of 14,162 kilometres have been constructed. 26,119 kilometres of drainage channels are constructed, 375 towns are protected and 4,696 villages are raised. This is a scheme which helps in reducing the effect of the floods. There is 40 million hectares of land which is flood-prone in this country and up to the end of Sixth Plan, we are able to protect 13 million hectares of land out of these 40 million hectares. During the Seventh Plan, the Government of India wants to take another one million hectare of land under this programme.

As I said, there are number of schemes and if they are properly implemented, we can reduce the effect of such calamities.

The hon. Member wanted that Rs. 50 crores should be released immediately to the State Government but as I have said Rs. 30 crores are already released and other kinds of help like foodgrains, kerosene, etc. are given to the State Government. So, Rs 30 crores are released as ways and means advance. Additional allocations of 50,000 tonnes of rice, 5,000 tonnes of edible oil, 10,000 kilolitres of kerosene, 2,000 tonnes of short duration paddy seeds and pesticides also we are going to make to the State Government so that the farmers can retransplant the crop which has been damaged by this flood.

The hon. Member made a suggestion that there should be an East Coast Flood Control Authority. There is a national programme of flood control which I have just mentioned to the hon. Members

through you. So, there is no necessity for an East Coast Flood Control Authority. I would only request the hon. Member to prevail upon the State Government to effectively implement the programmes which are given by the Government of India. Substantial assistance is given to the State Governments under all these programmes.

There is the mechanism of helping the State Governments. It is all within the purview of the Finance Commission. The Eighth Finance Commission has given margin money to the State Governments. So far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, Rs. 24.5 crores are there with them as margin money and these Rs. 30 crores will help the State Government. While we are giving the ways and means advance, we look into the financial position of the State Government. If the State Government has sufficient finance at their disposal, then we consider the case when we finalise the memorandum of the State Government. If they are in difficulty, we

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immediately release them the ways and means advance over and above the margin money so that they can meet the situation. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the margin money is sufficient; we have already released Rs. 30 crores. I don't see there is any difficulty to meet the situation. The State also has its own resources.

Sir, my hon. friend, Shri Harish Rawat has mentioned that the poor people should be shifted to the other places so that they may not suffer during flood. And he wanted that a Bill should be prepared and an Act should be enacted so that this can be done. We have sent a model Bill to the State Governments. The Centre has prepared a model Bill, Flood-prone area Bill and sent to the State Governments for making suitable legislation. So far, except one State Government—Manipur, I think—all the State Governments have not enacted the law. The model Bill was sent to them long back. It is for the State Government to enact it and to see that nobody can construct his house in a flood-prone area.

[Shri Yogendra Makwana]

The other suggestion, which the hon. Member made is about the linking of rivers. He said, all the rivers should be linked so that flood can be minimised. This is a programme which requires huge fund and it is to be dealt with by the Ministry of Water Resources. I cannot comment on it. I do not know anything about it. It is for the Ministry of Water Resources to consider this suggestion. I can only do one thing and that is, I can pass on this suggestion to the Ministry of Water Resources. That I will do. The hon. Member also suggested that we should prepare some schemes. As I have already said, there is a national programme for flood control.

Prof. Kurien gave two or three suggestions. He said, what is the long-term, planning of the Government? For long-term planning, there is not only this programme, but there is also the programme of soil conservation, the programme of constructing dams, embankment, drainage, channels etc. This is done by the Government of India. But the State Governments should also earmark some funds for this programme. The State Governments divert these funds and they utilise these funds for other purposes and pay less attention to this. When the calamity occurs, then they shout in the House. But at the same time, they should advise their State Governments that they should put sufficient resources for all these programmes. About the linking of rivers, I have already replied.

Then, he said, 100% assistance should be given to the State Governments. Now, that is not possible. It is because the pattern of assistance is decided by the Finance Commission and as decided by the 7th Finance Commission, at present, we are giving 75% as grants over and above the margin money to the State Governments for floods, cyclone, hail-storm etc. Hon. friend, Prof. Kurien referred to the point in my statement that the State Government has not requested for any help. When I said like that, I meant that the memorandum from the State Government was not received by us though the Kerala State Government has requested for Rs. 10 crores as an *ad hoc*

assistance. That is under consideration of the Finance Ministry. It is the Finance Ministry which sanctions the ways and means advance. So, the request is under consideration of the Finance Ministry.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : By what time, we can expect the release of that amount also ?

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : I cannot say. It is not in my hand.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : The hon. Finance Minister is also here. He can clear that amount.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : As soon as I received the file, I cleared it.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Now, the hon. Member has got the assurance also. That is the point I made.

Then the hon. Member, Mr. Ramachandran said that Rs. 100 crores should be given to Kerala. How much money is to be given to the State Government depends upon the memorandum they submit, the extent of damage, the recommendation of the team visiting the State and the consideration of the High Level Committee on Relief where all Secretaries—the Secretary for Planning, the Secretary for Finance and the Agriculture Secretary are sitting and they look into the request of the State Government, the extent of damage, etc and then decide and recommend.

SHRI T. BASHEER : You have sent a team to Andhra but you are not sending any team to Kerala.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : I will send the team as and when I receive the memorandum from the State Government. It all depends upon the memorandum the State Government has to submit.(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : The Government of Uttar Pradesh has already submitted the Memorandum. They have

spent money also and done a very good job.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : They have not received. He is telling that.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Unless I receive the memorandum in the Ministry, we cannot send a central team, because on what basis will the Central team go? The Central Team goes and verifies the extent of damage and that depends upon the memorandum submitted to the Central Government. Unless it is received, it is not possible.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT : It seems as if your Ministry is affraid of hue and cry. A team has been sent to Andhra Pradesh but not elsewhere.

[English]

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : I sent a team to Andhra Pradesh only because the situation was grave. It was an unprecedented flood in Andhra Pradesh and we want to help the State Government because it is the people who are to be helped. Irrespective of the party in power it is the people who are our concern and, therefore, immediately we acted. But in the case of other States we have not received the memorandum except from Punjab and the Punjab team is leaving in a day or so.

Another suggestion by Mr. Kurup—that is a very good suggestion about afforestation. Afforestation is a must. The Government of India is very keen to see that our forest coverage should be 33% of the total land mass of the country. But it varies between 18 to 20 per cent. Therefore, the Government has enacted a law in 1982. In 1982 we enacted the Forest Conservation Act.

I am sorry to say that most of the State Governments violate the law and they cut the forests for their projects—for irrigation projects or other projects. They fell the trees and they construct dams and

the forest cover is reduced. But there are other programmes for afforestation like soil conservation and social forestry programme whereby the States can increase their forest coverage. Then he requested for sending a high-power team. It is not necessary to send a high-power team to any State to see whether they have cut the forests or not. I can say from my experience that most of the State Governments are cutting the forests for their projects. Mostly it is for irrigation projects. However, we have requested all the State Governments to see that minimum forest is cut for their projects and that they should take the permission of the Government of India as required under the law and then they can do it. ..(Interruptions) They are making efforts in raising social forestry and forestry.

13 07 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA—
(Contd.)

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha :—

“In accordance with the provisions of rule 111 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to enclose a copy of the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Bill, 1986, which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 22nd August, 1986.”

DOWRY PROHIBITION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1986

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I lay on the Table the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Bill, 1986, as passed by Rajya Sabha.