

[Sh. Ganga Ram]
for Salempur (Hathras). It is understood that the Government of Uttar Pradesh has sent a scheme of Rs. 100 crores to the Central Government for extending the pipeline from Oraiyya to Firozabad. An extra amount of Rs. 10 crores will be spent to bring this gas pipeline from Firozabad to Agra. On one hand, this ambitious plan will solve the problem of environment pollution in Agra and Firozabad and on the other hand, possibilities of opening large industries in Agra district will increase and the present deteriorating condition of Firozabad will also improve. So arrangements should be made to implement this gas pipeline scheme immediately.

12.38 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

[English]

**Demands of Farmers and Agricultural
Labour-Contd.**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up further discussion on the demands of farmers and agricultural labour raised by Shri C. Janga Reddy on the 3rd November, 1988.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH (Aska): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I anticipated from the hon. Members of the Opposition to speak about the subject because it is very important. But they seemed to be giving much stress to the *Kisan* gathering at Boat Club. The massive rally to commemorate that martyrdom of Shrimati Indira Gandhi to pay homage to one of the greatest leaders of the country, where lakhs of farmers—marginal and small—and workers gathered, exhibited which way the wind blows.

The Opposition has a right to criticise the policy of the Government if it is not one with which they agree. But on many issues, what is spoken outside the House is not at all substantiated in the House. In democracy, the Opposition leadership and Opposition

Members who speak, should be objective. They must speak how best the programme can be improved or implemented keeping in view how to improve the lot of teeming millions.

As for the issue under discussion, let me bring it to the notice of the hon. House that this Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi had laid foundation for the second green revolution. You have to understand that and appreciate and you will be further surprised when you see the results.

The first green revolution was started in 1960 under the leadership of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the country became self-sufficient in foodgrains in spite of growth of population, but the production of rice and wheat remained static. However, steps have been taken to raise the production. This year the production target of 166 million tonnes of foodgrains will exceed and the target fixed for the next year 175 million tonnes is also likely to be achieved.

Government have taken steps to concentrate on the vast rainfed areas. A separate Ministry for food processing to give essential opportunities to the cultivators and to put an end to wastage and to give scope for employment has been constituted.

Steps have been taken to supply adequate credit in time through the banks to the cultivators. In this connection, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the credit must reach the farmers in time and unless the credit reaches them in time, it gets wasted. If, for example, the credit to be given to purchase fertilizers to be utilised at the time of transplantation is given to cultivators at the time of harvesting, it will be counter-productive.

The setting up of NABARD has been helpful in a great deal in granting loans to the farmers, but let me make it clear that the loans should be given to the cultivators in time.

Government have introduced the crop insurance scheme. Now, it is only meant for the loanees, but it should be extended to other farmers also.

Water supply is the most important input for the development of agriculture. The irrigation potential of the country should be developed as soon as possible. The irrigation potential, if not completed in time, there would be price escalation and it will remain incomplete for years. The Government should, therefore, lay more stress on the development of irrigation facilities, more so, to the rainfed land and the wasteland.

Up to the end of Sixth Plan, the irrigation potential for 68 million hectares had been developed and in the Seventh Plan, it has been envisaged to have additional 2.5 million hectares per annum or 13 million hectares for the entire Seventh Plan. But it must be seen that the target is reached, and thrust should be given to ground water.

In order to supply fertilizers at reasonable price to the farmers, the Central Government is heavily subsidizing the sale of fertilizers. During the current financial year, a subsidy to the tune of Rs. 3000 crores on fertilizers is given by the Central Government. But what is needed is to see that this subsidy reaches to the cultivators, the farmers. Let not the substantial portion of the subsidy goes to the person who own the industry. That is what is needed.

For the supply of quality seeds to the farmers, National Seed Corporation and other institutions including universities are engaged in producing quality seeds. In this House it has been stated many a time that spurious seeds are given to the cultivators.

SHRI H.A. DORA (Srikakulam): Not many a time, but almost all the time spurious seeds are supplied.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH: As such, more thrust should be given to this aspect and it must be assured that the quality seeds should be supplied to the cultivators

throughout the country in time. In this connection we must have sufficient godowns facility in different parts of the country so that in time it may be made available to the cultivators. We should not concentrate our godowns at a particular place because it takes a lot of time in the transportation.

The Government has fixed the remunerative or rather initiated minimum support price. A Commission on Cost and Price for Agricultural price has already been functioning. Government has recently appointed three representatives of the farmers on this Commission to ensure that the farmers get minimum support price, and the opinion of all those representatives of the farmers should be given importance. Not that they should be appointed merely for the sake of appointment.

The purchase of the foodgrains or the produce should be done in such a manner that the farmers are not put to distress sale. For example, the Prime Minister visited Punjab, and the foodgrains had been discoloured because of flood. The cultivators represented to him. I think, the Government will take necessary steps, as stated by the Prime Minister, to see that their produces are purchased by the Government and they are not put to losses.

Sir, the economy of the farmers, especially the agricultural labourers can be improved if Government takes specific steps. Our Prime Minister in the international forums has already stated that about 90 per cent of the labour of this country is in the unorganised sector. The agricultural labourers are certainly in the unorganised sector and the minimum wages are not paid to them. Though the minimum wages are to be paid by the States, yet it is for the Centre, the Labour Minister, to persuade other Labour Ministers in the States and see that the labourers working in the agricultural sector should get the minimum wages. In the Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Labour also, two committees have been set up—one for the agricultural labour, and the other for labour other than those in agricul-

[Sh. Somnath Rath]
ture, in the unorganized sector. They have submitted two reports. Of course, the Commission is also there. Will those reports which are very valuable, be taken into consideration, to see that the unorganized agricultural labour gets not only the minimum wages, but whatever minimum is required by them? In the lean season, they should be provided job in areas such as cottage industries, or under the poverty alleviation schemes. These are needed to ameliorate the conditions of labour.

If anybody is more concerned than others, about the problems of our labourers, farmers and agriculturists, it is our Prime Minister. I quote him:

"Farmers are the backbone of our country. India derives its strength from its farmers. India won freedom as a result of our farmers joining the freedom movement and invigorating it. Today, India's economic progress depends on farmers.

Pandit ji had said that change in agriculture is more important than change in industry. This is what we are doing even today. Agriculture needs the highest priority in our plans for economic development."

[*Translation*]

SHRI MANOJ PANDEY (Bettiah): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will try to confine my speech to the problems of farmers and my suggestions to solve them. In India, if our total population is assumed to be 78 crores, then 54 crores among them are farmers and out of those 54 crores, nearly 30 crores are agricultural labourers. The total land in India is 330 million hectares in which 175 million hectares is dry land, which can also be called wasteland.

Sir, the total cultivable land is near about 140 million hectares out of which we have been able to create irrigation facilities for only 64 million hectares of land, as has

been stated by one of our hon. Members. When we talk of utilisation, it is further reduced. The main problem of farmers relates to inputs. Besides inputs, the other problems relate to the foundation seed. Many things have been said here regarding the seeds. The issue of foundation seed was raised in the question-hour also today. When we provide foundation seeds to the universities, we know what happens to them later on. I would like to say something here about the agricultural universities in Bihar as to what happened there during the last couple of years. The system of multiplying the foundation seed there looks quite attractive but in the fields, those certified seeds of the universities do not germinate according to their standardization. In universities, there is 99 per cent germination of certified seeds, but in the fields, germination is not more than 60-65 per cent. So this gap of 35-40 per cent directly affects the farmers. Price of certified seed is 5 times more than the minimum support price. So, I do not agree with the statement given by the hon. Minister in the question-hour that seeds are provided to the farmers on the basis of no profit and no loss. When we talk of no profit no loss, then the price of seed cannot be 4 times more than the minimum support price in any case. Injustice is being done to the farmer in this way. In my opinion, price of seed should not be more than 50 per cent of the minimum support price. In minimum support price is Re. 1/-, then the price of seed should not be more than Rs. 1.50. The availability of seed should be on time and it is also necessary that the price of seed should not be more than 50 per cent on the minimum support price.

It is need of the hour that we should import seed. I do not differ with it, but it is important that we should supply the seed produced by our own farmers to the farmers of same area, where it has been produced, because soil is most important factor in the germination of seed. It has its own effects. In this way, soil management is done in our regions.

I would like to congratulate the farmers

of Haryana and Punjab, but it would not be proper to judge the condition of other farmers of our country on the basis of Haryana and Punjab, because the farmers of Haryana and Punjab are not the only farmers of the whole country and we will not be able to do justice with the farmers of other States. My submission is that the conditions of farmers in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are worse than those of the farmers in Punjab and Haryana. The problems of every State are different. We have seen that nothing substantial has been done in any State in the field of soil management.

The supply of high yield seed is also not going to be of any use unless we pay full attention to the soil management. It needs more attention as to what nutrients are lacking in the soil and at what points.

I am not even quite satisfied with the functioning of our Universities. If their functioning had been satisfying, and if they had been able to make proper research work on the soil management then we would not have been unable to grow 200 to 225 millions tonnes of foodgrains, despite the availability of high yielding variety of seeds. My submission is that in the present situation it is very important that the State Governments should pay complete attention to the work of soil management and the Central Government should monitor as to what has been done by the State Governments in regard to the soil management.

Another important thing is that the prices of pesticides and insecticides have been reduced in our country. I want to say it with guarantee that a commodity which is priced low in the Central Budget, does not remain available for the farmers. It includes even insecticides and pesticides. Though, the prices of these items have been reduced but even today, especially in Bihar, there has been no reduction in their prices. This is so because there are so many agencies involved which take their commission and resultantly the prices at which they are available for the farmers remains almost the

same and we have no effect of the Central Budget on the prices in our State. This needs attention.

Regarding the provision of Rs. 3 crores of subsidy on fertilizers, my submission is that the Indian farmer is not a beggar. If a farmers' rally demands that the loans given to the farmers should be written off, I do not consider them to be farmers because the Indian farmer has not developed the habit of begging.

13.00 hrs.

Sir, I have just started and will take five minutes more. The most important thing is this that I do not consider a person asking for writing off his loan to be a farmer because this is a sort of begging. And such a farmer is not found in India. Therefore, you should not write off their loans but I would like to submit something regarding the remunerative prices here. The total remunerative price should be at least the sum total of the total cost of inputs, labour and 20 to 25 percent of the evaluated cost of the arable land. If we can give this remunerative price to the farmers, then the subsidy of Rs. 3 thousand crores may be withdrawn. You may give this amount to the farmers in the form of remunerative prices. I feel that in that case, the farmers will not require any subsidy because they will get a remunerative price for their produce and crops. I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister to provide for the remunerative prices to the farmers in lieu of the present subsidy. Then the Government can get rid of this burden of Rs. 3 thousand crores and the farmers also will be benefitted by it. This will be substantially beneficial for them.

The point of labour has also been mentioned here. Most of the agricultural labour is linked with our farmers. I have noticed that labour and farmers are discussed as two separate things. This is a big force, When you keep the labour and farmers apart, it will be a big division of the country. Farmers and labour are linked with each other and are the complement of each

[Sh. Manoj Pandey]
other. It you talk about these two things separately in any form, then ultimately it will prove to be highly prejudicial to them. I feel that both these things should be taken together. These should not be death with as separate or piece meal entities.

Fourth and the most important thing is regarding the cash and credit support which, as you say, is provided to the farmers. My suggestion is that the land of a farmer is the only source of income for him and if you issue a pass book to them from the bank for raising an advance to the extent of 8 per cent of the evaluated cost of his land at any point of time, then it will be a big helping gesture to the farmers. I felt that even at present, the Government gives loans on mortgaging the land by the farmers and once it is mortgaged, the farmer is entirely bound by the terms of the Government. Therefore, you should not mortgage his land but give them loan to the 80 per cent of the evaluated cost of the farmers' land through banks as and when they need it. This will be of great help to the farmers.

Regarding the agricultural marketing, my submission is that we repeatedly announce in the House of having provided minimum support price, but how is it effective in those areas where there is no provision of marketing? I feel that the State Governments which have not yet developed agricultural marketing, should first development it and see whether the State Governments are really able to provide the minimum support price to the farmers. Otherwise there is no sense in announcing the minimum support price where there is no base of marketing because the farmers do not get such a price.

I will conclude after making one point. Our agriculture sector is an unorganised one. If 10 thousand out of 54 crore farmers stage a *dharna* in Delhi and after that our Opposition Party members claim that there were 2 to 10 lakh farmers but that does not make a difference. The problem of farmers should be discussed in their totality. It would

be wrong on the part of 10 thousand farmers coming from a particular region to claim that they represent the farmers of the whole of India. Therefore, problems of farmers should be discussed in totality and a particular region should not be given significance.

These were some of my suggestions. There are many points to be made but since you have rung the bell, I conclude here and thank you.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SEPAKER: We adjourn for lunch and shall reassemble at 2.05 p.m.

The Lok Sabh a adjourned for lunch till five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

14.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at ten minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

[English]

Demands of Farmers and Agricultural Labour—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Zainal Abedin may speak.

I request the Members to be very brief because I am ahving a very lengthy list here. This is a very important subject. Therefore, if a Member is speaking, let him come to the point, let him take 5 to 10 minutes. I will allow a maximum of 5 to 10 minutes to each Member, not more than that.

[Translation]

*SHRI ZAINAL ABEDIN (Jangipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for the last several

years the farming and agricultural community of our country is carrying on a struggle and agitations based on certain well defined demands. During this period there have been huge protest rallies, lakhs and lakhs of farmers have defied the law and courted arrest and recently thousands of farmers staged a week-long 'Dharna' at the 'Boat Club' here. Why are the farmers taking to this agitational path, what are their demands? They are demanding remunerative price for their agricultural produce, they are demanding the writing off of their outstanding loans, they are demanding reduction in the electricity charges, they are demanding distribution and ownership of land to the landless farmers after effecting land reforms and they are demanding a Central Legislation regarding minimum wages for agricultural labourers. Sir, the price fixed for agricultural produce by the ACPC is a fraud on the farmers. The farmers are demanding a remunerative price but they are fixing a support price. But this support price is so low and unrealistic that it is not at all in conformity with the farmers cost of production. Specially those farmers who grow cash-crops are today on the brink of disaster and ruin as an inevitable consequence of the government's pricing policy for agricultural products. In the 1930's when sugar mills were first established in U.P., the then British Government adopted the policy of protection for the sugar industry. They imposed heavy duty on the sugar imported from Java at that time. As a result of that policy, the sugarcane growers used to get a fair price for their produce. According to one estimate we find that in 1947, 60 p.c. of the total price of sugar used to go to the sugarcane growers. In 1954 that share came down to 54 p.c. and at present that has further gone down to about 30 p.c.

Sir, we find the same situation in the case of jute growers also. Today the jute cultivators are face to face with disaster. The Jute Corporation of India is actually protecting the interest of mill owners, they are not protecting the interest of jute growers. The jute industry has been pushed towards further destruction by providing facilities for the use of bags of artificial materials. This year

the statutory support price of jute has also not been announced yet, as was announced in other years.

The cotton growers also are in the same plight. Sir, today the price of one Kg. of ordinary cloth is almost 20 times the price of one Kg. of superior quality of cotton. That means that the mill owners who produce cloth are allowed to make huge profits, but those who produce the raw material viz. the cotton growers are getting only a pittance. This is the situation! The production of synthetic yarn is today about 32 p.c. of the total production of yarn. There is a plan to increase the production of synthetic yarn to 50 p.c. If that is done then the cotton grower will face further ruin. Today cotton is grown on about 71 lakh acres of land. What will happen to this huge area of land and what will happen to the lakhs of families who depend on cotton cultivation for their livelihood? These things are not being thought of. Therefore we find that many growers of sugarcane, cotton and jute are forced to commit suicide as they are not getting remunerative price for their produce. On the other hand the Central Govt. is increasing the prices of things of daily necessities, they are increasing the prices of agricultural inputs and as a result of that the cost of production of the farmers is also going up by leaps and bounds. This is creating a big disparity between the urban sector and the rural sector. Only 17 p.c. of the foreign aid that we get is spent in the rural sector where more than 70 p.c. of our population live. On the other hand 83 p.c. of that aid is being spent on the urban sector where only 30 p.c. of our population live.

Sir, every year our country faces calamities like flood and drought. The farmers are the most affected by floods and drought. It is they whose hearth and homes are destroyed, whose crops are destroyed, whose cattle perish and who are utterly ruined. If we take an account of the total loss caused by just one year's drought and floods and the amount that has to be spent as drought and flood relief, we will find that it is more than the total amount spent on flood control meas-

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ures since 1952 i.e. the beginning of the first five year Plan. What I am trying to stress is that, not enough importance has been given to flood control measures as should have been done.

Sir, on the one hand the devastation by flood is increasing and on the other hand the importance of flood control is decreasing. During the Sixth Five Year Plan the target for flood control was 4 million hectares, but the actual achievement was 2 million hectares. Now in the Seventh five year plan the target itself came down to 1 million hectares in place of 4 million in the earlier plan. The amount allocated for flood control in the budget is never more than 1 p.c. or .5 p.c. of the total allocations. Therefore I regret to say that enough amount is not being allocated for combating this vicious problem which is bringing ruin to millions of farmers and is breaking their economic backbone year after year.

Sir, if we look at the terms of trade between the agricultural Sector and the industrial sector we find that it is always going against the farmer. According to one estimate it is seen that between 1970-71 and 1980-81 the agricultural sector has suffered a loss of Rs. 12,480 crores of rupees based on 1970-71 price index. According to today's price level this loss will be around Rs. 45000 crores. I have another demand about land reforms since 1952 or even earlier, it is being said that land reforms will be carried out and the ceiling surplus land shall be distributed among the landless. But I am sorry to say that all these promises have remained on paper only and has not been given practical shape. Now again the talk of giving land to the landless is being renewed. Till today 29.64 lakh hectares of land has been declared as surplus. Out of this various State Governments have taken possession of 24.37 lakh hectares. But the land actually distributed among the landless is 11.05 lakh hectares. This is the achievement after 40 years of promises. Sir today the most exploited, the most deprived section of our people is the agricultural labourers. Accord-

ing to the 1981 census their number is 45.5 million. Nothing practically has been done for this vast deprived section. Sir, our Prime Minister has said that in our country if Rs. 6 is spent for development, Rs. 5 out of that goes towards administrative expenses and Re. 1 only is spent for actual developmental work. Here I have one question—i.e. out of this Re. 1.00 how much is spent for the rural sector where 70 to 75 p.c. of our people live? I think it will be less than 5 paise. Today millions of agricultural labourers are in a state of starvation, they do not have enough clothes to hide their nakedness. The minimum wages Acts have been enacted in various States, no doubt. But no-where are they being implemented properly and strictly. When the poor agricultural labourers demand just wages after a day's hard work, they are assaulted and become victims of various atrocities, their women folk become victims of atrocities.

Sir, I demand a Central Law fixing minimum wages for the agricultural labourers. The Central Govt. must take the responsibility for its proper implementation all over the country. With that Sir, I conclude. Thank you.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I appreciate the Central Government and the Union Agriculture Minister and the Finance Minister who have implemented the hon. Prime Minister's 'grow more food' programme very effectively with its results before us. The foodgrain production in India during the kharif crop has been a record in itself. Our hon. Agriculture Minister has submitted regarding the forthcoming Rabi crop that our target is to cross the present record production of 15.5 crore tonne to achieve a record of 17.60 crore tonne. I hope that he will succeed in achieving this target. The hard work of Indian farmer, his devotion and the facilities provided by the Indian Government to him like agriculture loan, fertilisers, irrigation facilities, provision of wells and tubewells, besides improved seeds, subsidy for agricultural implements etc. are the effective steps taken by the Central Government to increase production successfully under the

leadership of hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and the farmers have been benefited by them. Today we can say that whereas in 1950 we used to grow 7 tonnes of wheat on one hectare of land, today we have the yield of 17 tonnes of wheat per hectare. Besides, the production of paddy has become more than double. For all this, where on the one hand, the credit goes to the hard work of the farmers, on the other hand, the facilities given by the Central Government in a planned way to the farmers have also contributed to it. These have been very helpful in increasing the production. Because of these facilities India is today in a situation that she has become self-dependent. This is a great achievement in itself. My submission is that today there are 900 lakh agriculture holdings in India of which nearly three fourth holdings are less than 2 hectares. It implies that majority of farmers in the country are marginal farmers even today. Their average income is far below what we expect of a family consisting of 5 members. Therefore, Government has to reconsider this matter seriously as to how to increase the income of the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and small and marginal farmers and as to what ancillary occupations, besides agriculture, can be provided to them so that more income can be generated. The rate of interest at which agricultural loans are being advanced to the farmers in our country is the lowest in the world. Only 10 percent interest is charged on loans upto Rs. 7500. After that the rate of interest increases to 12 1/2 percent upto Rs. 15000 and it further increases to 14 percent upto Rs. 25,000. These are the minimum rates of interest. The rate in the public sector banks is 19 percent. If Rs. 25000 is due from the farmers, the same amount is recovered from them, not more than that. This is a major benefit to the farmers. These people who organise farmers rallies and incite them are not their well-wishers. They mislead them. The farmer should make sure that they avail of the facilities which the Government has provided to them. In order to make these facilities available to the farmers, there is a need for a massive public awakening and these benefits should reach every farmer in

every village of the country. Our agricultural scientists have developed improved varieties of seeds and have done plenty of research in providing maximum water for irrigation at minimum loss. It has to be seen under the 'Lab to the field' programme as to how the achievements of the laboratory can be transferred to the fields. This has to be accomplished by the 'Kisan' leaders. The kisan leaders want to perpetuate their hegemony and make political capital and in this process they do not think of the interests of the farmers. No one is interested in the improvement of the economic condition of the farmers. No body comes forward with suggestions as to what cottage industry should be provided to boost agricultural production. Neither the Bharatiya Kisan Union nor any other kisan leader comes forward with such programmes. They only come forward to incite them for organising rallies and attacking trains. In reality, such people are only taking the farmers away from creative work. The Indian farmer is a true patriot. During the freedom struggle, the farmers played the leading role. In all the attacks our country has faced since 1948, it was the farmers who produced most valiant soldiers. Whenever, there has been a need for more foodgrains, the farmers have accepted the challenge and no other section of society has done the same. The farmers treated this appeal, this dire need and helplessness of the country as their own objective and increased foodgrains production. It also enhanced the image of the nation. Today, we do not import foodgrains under PL-480 or other programmes. On the contrary, we export it. All this credit goes to our farmers. The culture of the farmers is that they have been engaged in creative work from the very beginning. The people, who want to dissuade the farmers from their own culture and creativity are not their well-wishers. In fact, they are working against their interests and misleading them. While preparing the draft of the Seventh Five Year Plan, our Hon. Prime Minister had kept agricultural production as the chief objective. The target of foodgrains production for the last year of the Seventh Five Year Plan has been set at 177 million tonnes, to which the

[Sh. Ram Singh Yadav]
farmers have moved quite close. It is necessary to make more efforts in this regard. Besides, our Hon. Prime Minister has stated that maximum employment opportunities should be provided during the Seventh Plan. Chief source of employment is agriculture and other related programmes. In addition, the plan documents carries some suggestions as to how to meet irrigation and power requirements of the farmers. Maximum attention has been paid to these programmes under the Seventh Five Year Plan. In reply to the questions of some people as to what steps has the present Government taken for the benefit of the farmers, I want to submit—and it has also been stated in the current Budget statement—that under the 'Jaldhara' scheme, special facilities are being given to 50,000 farmers for digging wells so as to enable them to irrigate their fields. Choudhari Sahib and Shri Shyam Lal Yadav are both farmers and, therefore, I want to submit that agriculture should also be treated as an industry. Until you term agriculture as an industry, the untold miseries, which the farmers face due to natural and other calamities leading to destruction of their crops and as a result of which they live and die in object poverty, can never be alleviated. If this has to be ended, then effective steps have to be taken to include agriculture in the industrial sector. If any factory catches fire or losses occur, Government bears the losses so that the workers are not rendered jobless. The farmers, who face similar crisis should be provided assistance and remunerative prices should be paid to them. Since 1980, till to date, there has been only 33 percent increase in the support price whereas the general prices have increased by 60 percent. If the general price index and the remunerative price is taken into account, there is no logic behind the prices fixed by the Agricultural Cost and Prices Commission. You should direct the Agricultural Cost and Prices commission to fix prices according to the general Price index. Until this is done, the farmers will not benefit. The price of jowar and bajra was fixed at Rs. 145 per quintal in Rajasthan and purchasing centres were opened. But they

remain closed for weeks together, as a result of which the farmers are forced to sell their produce at Rs. 125 per quintal in the market. It is the moral responsibility of the Government to buy it at Rs. 145 per quintal.

Besides, I want to submit one last point. In Rajasthan, there is an act called the Rajasthan Agricultural Loan Recovery Act. 450 cases involving recovery of Rs. 750 crores have been filed by the Punjab National Bank. You are aware that Rajasthan has been reeling under drought for the last 5 years. The marginal farmers, small farmers and those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who have been facing natural calamities for the last 3 years should be exempted from repaying the loans. Alternatively, steps should be taken to bring their shattered economy on the track. When we asked an official as to what was the basis of enacting Rajasthan Agricultural Loan Recovery Act, he stated that it was done as per the provisions of the Talwar Committee Report. The major shortcoming in this Act is that if a Harijan digs well in his field and if he does not strike water or power connection is not made available for two years, his land is auctioned as per the provision of this Act. Hence, in fact, the objective with which this act was framed is being defeated. I want that provision should be made to ensure that the land belonging to the small, marginal and other farmers belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is not allowed to be auctioned. At the same time, the loans of those farmers who have been suffering due to natural calamities for the past three years should be waived. I am sure that the hon. Minister will consider my suggestions seriously and take appropriate decisions. With these words, I thank the Hon. Deputy Speaker as well.

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the peasants and the agricultural workers are in deep unrest. I would particularly like to draw your attention to the movement launched by Left peasant and agricultural workers in the

last September where 20 lakh peasants and agricultural labourers participated in civil disobedience. Their principal demands were: Remunerative prices for peasants; assured irrigation, cheap inputs, moratorium on loans, fair minimum wages to agricultural workers, employment round the year; right for democratic movements against atrocities on agricultural workers by both landlord goondas and police and attack by police on such movements. During that movement there were firing in two places in Bihar and lathi-charges in several places. That is how they were treated.

Recent Tikait rally was also an expression of acute dis-content of peasants. This situation is not fortuitous. The peasants, the principal producers of national wealth have been at the receiving end of all the evils of Government policies. Despite all the proposed lollipops of the AICC (I) Session to lure the rural population the hard realities cannot be forgotten. The peasants are being cheated due to capitalist manipulation of market and extremely unequal exchange in prices of produce of peasants and the prices of commodities that they have to buy either as production inputs or as essential consumer items. This is the sum total effect of the policies followed by the ruling party at the Centre over the years.

Now let us examine this question a little closely. It is well-known that the terms of trade between industry and agriculture have more or less consistently moved against agriculture over decades. Famous economist, late Dr. D.K. Rangnekar after a study of inter-sectoral terms of trade between 1975-76 and 1980-81 came to this conclusion:

"The total inter-sectoral transfer from agriculture was as much as Rs. 1369 crores from 1975-76 to 1980-81."

I just would not repeat the figure quoted earlier by Mr. Zainal Abedin that another study which covers the years 1970-71 to 1980-81 shows that Rs. 45,000 crores were against the peasants in the transfer of trade. It goes without saying that in the current

decade the situation has deteriorated far more. There are some who say that the cost of production for the peasant producers has risen due to the rising cost of labour. I am sorry Mr. Tikait also sometimes says that. I shall come to the exact situation with regard to agricultural labour a little later but before that let us see what are the main components of rising cost of agricultural production. It is not labour in any case.

Recently, Shri V. Nadkarni of the Institute of Social and Economic Changes of Bangalore conducted a study which has appeared in the *Economic and Political Weekly*. What does that reveal? While he says that the relative price of agricultural products has declined by 1.3 per cent per year against the prices of agricultural inputs between 1970 and 1985, he also shows that the relative prices of three major inputs of high-tech agriculture, that is, chemical fertilisers, pesticides and diesel, have increased the most. The decline in the relative prices of agriculture against these three items alone is 3.4 per cent per year. From this study, it is clear that it is the capitalist market, manipulated greatly by multinational and monopolists and the Government policy of appeasing them which is principally responsible for the present plight of the peasants.

But this situation has brought two questions to the fore: One, so long as this situation prevails, the demand of the peasantry for remunerative prices cannot be ignored and peasants must be saved from this terribly unjust burden. The Government must do that.

The other question which comes is the necessity of change of strategy. In a poor country like ours where agricultural labourers, and small and marginal farmers predominate, the question is whether the costly chemical inputs and costly energy intensive agriculture with such seeds, which are high yielding only with these inputs, should be the principal thrust?

The answer obviously should be 'no' because without a structural change—

[Smt. Geeta Mukherjee]
change in land-ownership, etc. this strategy gives benefit to a small layer of rich peasants mainly, and maybe upper section of middle peasants to some extent.

Strategy has to be based mainly on the small, marginal and middle peasants by increasing the source of flow irrigation in a big way and it may be solar, wind and other less costly energy, greater dependence on culture of organic manure, intensive research and development for such varieties of seeds which are suitable in this kind of dispensation and situation, etc. So, this change in strategy is very necessary in my opinion.

As far as loan is concerned, really it is a big burden on the peasants. Therefore, not only the Government loan should go under moratorium but the question of even the cooperative loan for small and marginal farmers and the accumulated interest has to be gone into. That also needs remission. That can be done only if the Central Government asks the Reserve Bank to allow this. Otherwise, it is impossible. Therefore while dealing with the question of loan, this particular aspect also should be seen, that is, not only of Government loans but also of cooperative loans.

Now I come to agricultural labourers. It is well known that the proportion of agricultural workers is constantly rising. And it must be emphasised that they are the most exploited lot from the point of view of wages, lack of employment, oppression of usury, total lack of social security and increasing atrocities.

Apart from our daily harrowing experience of life, there are authoritative recent studies revealing the present situation by the Sub-Committee of Labour Consultative Committee of this Parliament under the convenorship of Shri Gurudas Das Gupta, MP belonging to the Communist Party of India. This report was placed before us in this House. I am supposed to be a Member of the National Commission on Rural Labour

which, I must say, is very tardy in its activities. In any case, we have seen that report because it was circulated to us. That is the report not only of the Sub Committee, but that is the unanimous report of the Labour Consultative Committee. The situation regarding minimum wages was described by this Committee as horrible. It says that even Rs. 3, Rs. 4 and Rs. 5 per day as agricultural wage was found by them. In many States, the minimum wages fixed by the Government are also deplorable. For example, even in a State like Maharashtra, it was Rs. 6 per day. There are other States, where the fixation is somewhat better, but the implementation is really not at all satisfactory. In Kerala, it is good, in my State, we have not yet succeeded fully to reach the height of declared wages, but wages have gone up doubtlessly, but these are not what should be.

Then, unequal wages for women labour. That is well known and I would not speak much on that. Keeping those particular sections of labour reserved for women where there are low wages is not at all good. All these things have been clearly laid down in the report and that report has made many important recommendations. Let the National Committee on Rural Labour have its own labour also, but why all the recommendations made by this Committee should not be put in practice. For example they have said that minimum wages should be revised every two years on a rise of 50 points of the consumer price index. They also suggested that the fixation of the minimum wages should take into account factors like poverty line, requirements of nutrition, shelter, clothing, fuel, light, medical and educational expenses etc. They have also emphasised the necessity of strengthening the enforcement machinery and of course, they have spoken for equal wages for women.

Then, the most important recommendation which was unanimously agreed upon by the Labour Consultative Committee was the passing of a Central legislation, comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers to provide a basic framework for their working

conditions, wage and social security, pension etc.

The funniest part of this is that recently where was a Conference of Labour Ministers of the State called by the Central Labour Minister. Though it was a unanimous resolution of the Labour Consultative Committee, there the question of comprehensive legislation was thrown out by the Minister for Labour and unfortunately, excepting West Bengal, Kerala and Andhra, all other Ministers spoke against this. Even States were asked not to pass legislation in the meantime. That is not the way to deal with agricultural labour, those who are at the base of our society; they definitely need a much better deal and this Sub Committee's recommendations should be put into practice pending the tardy movement of the National Commission on Rural Labour.

[*Translation*]

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, so far as the Demands of the farmers are concerned, I think that the Congress Party and the Congress Government has done a lot for the people living in the villages as they form the majority of the population and are solely dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. In the post Independent India, large dams and canals were constructed to provide irrigation facilities and all this work was done for the betterment of the farmers. Even now we can see that whenever some demands are raised by the farmer's Government and the Congress party have always taken the initiative to meet them and work for their betterment. Late Shrimati Indira Gandhi took the step for the nationalisation of banks so that the economic situation of the poor people and the farmers could be bettered and they could get benefits out of it. The privy purses were abolished so that that money could be utilised for the betterment of the farmers and the poor people of this country. Thus, whenever there has been a need to provide assistance to them in the form of fertiliser, seeds or easy loans, the Government and the Congress party have always come forward to provide assistance. This has been the policy of the

Congress party.

I want to submit to the hon. Minister that several steps have been taken for their welfare like land reforms, providing seeds and fertilisers or providing loans, but there is still much to be done. The crop insurance scheme was another measure. There can be no two opinions about the fact that this scheme is for their betterment and it has yielded a number of benefits. However, there are some shortcomings in this scheme. No farmer can avail of the benefit of this scheme on individual basis; only the block or 'Patwar' is accepted as a unit for the purpose of benefits of this scheme and not the individual farmer. What should be done here is that an order should be issued according to which 5 farmers who have suffered damages in a particular block should be considered as a unit and necessary compensation given.

Secondly, I want to submit that the banks charge very high rates of interest on the agricultural loans. If a farmer takes a loan for buying a tractor, the interest rate is so high that instead of yielding benefit. The loan becomes a permanent burden for the farmer, from which he is not able to retrieve himself. It is my personal experience that the farmer who draws loan for a tractor can neither repay the loan nor make use of the tractor because the rates of interest and penal interest are very high. The Government should look into it. The farmers should be charged lower rate of interest and the clause relating to the penal interest should be deleted so far as it applies to farmers.

Land reforms have been implemented by the Central Government as well as by our States Government. In this connection, I would like to state that the State of Jammu and Kashmir have provided land to farmers without making payment of any compensation and according to these measures a land lord was entitled to possess 182 kanals of land. This was done during the time of Sheik Saheb the credit for which goes to him. Thereafter, these people came to power, the ceiling of 182 kanals was reduced to 100

[Sh. Janak Rajgupta]

kanals. Accordingly no one was entitled to possess more than 100 kanals of land. It pains me when I see people possessing thousands of acres of land in the country, no matter if they possess the land in the name of a trust or otherwise. In order to check this phenomenon, the Government should implement the land reform measures strictly so that the poor farmers and the agricultural labourers, for whom the Government wants to do something, could really avail of the benefits of these measures. It is, therefore, very necessary that the Government should implement the land reform measures strictly.

There is dry land in the country which is not being put to any use. This land should be reclaimed and water made available for its irrigation by digging canals. A number of problems can be solved and employment provided to the poor and the agricultural labourers who are without work.

So far as the Prime Minister is concerned, I would like to express my gratitude to him. He went everywhere, whether it was Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, U.P., Andhra Pradesh or Tamil-Nadu, when he came to know that farmers in these States are in distress. May I ask my hon. colleagues, if any of them has ever been to those places to enquire about the welfare of the farmers especially when they suffered losses due to floods. The prime Minister went there himself. He went to inaccessible areas in Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, he visited Bihar and U.P. and took stock of the situation personally and provided succor to the victims. He sent maximum relief to them. Shrimati Indira Gandhi used to do like-wise. I am grateful to the Hon. Prime Minister who went to Jammu and Kashmir, listened to the woes of farmers and provided relief to them. He also provided similar relief to people in the other parts of the country. I am sure that the hon. Minister of Agriculture will pay attention towards these aspects, take steps to remove the shortcomings in this regard and pay attention to better the position of the farmers.

[English]

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda): Sir, The farmers' problems are very serious. Recently, we have seen so many agitations by the farmers. There was one very recently under the leadership of Mr Tikait. Not only Tikait, but we have Narayanaswami and Sharad Joshi also; but all the problems put forth by them were the same. They want remunerative prices, waiving of loans, uniform tariff for electricity and other things, a uniform credit policy, as also free movement of farm produce. But for every agricultural activity, water is the prime need. Unless and until we provide water to the entire land, farmers will not be able to produce more. We have been neglecting drylands, and we are not doing anything for dryland agriculture. Only 36% of our land is under irrigation; and in respect of the remaining 64%, they are not in a position even to feed themselves, leave alone the agricultural labourers. There is no power. Since the beginning, we have neglected dryland agriculture.

There was a demand to connect Ganga and Kaveri. That has not been taken into consideration. You have not surveyed the entire dryland areas either, to get the underground water. Once you survey the underground water, you will know where water is available, and how best we can utilize the available water. That has not been taken into consideration.

15.00 hrs.

Even when the farmers are going to dig their own agricultural wells, there is no subsidy. Recently, there is a subsidy under RLEGP where some wells have been dug. But what about other farmers, middle class farmers, who cannot get loan from the banks; the banks are not giving loan to the farmers to the extent they require.

We are getting 41 per cent of the GNP from the agricultural sector. The banks are giving only 17 per cent whereas the industries are getting 20 per cent of the GNP. You

are giving 36 per cent of the bank loan to them. I would like to draw the attention of the House to this aspect. Out of 17 per cent, 6-7 per cent is going indirectly to the industrialists. In order to get rid of income tax, these industrialists are going in for agriculture, although they are not agriculturists. They can grow crops or the orchards for horticulture. So, they are getting another 6 to 7 per cent loan; only 10 per cent of the bank loan is going to the rural area. How can it be sufficient for their development and to meet the requirements of the people? How can they dig up their own wells? How can they purchase electric motors? Where is the need?

We have made a survey of this. I request them through you to change the complete planning; our planning itself is wrong. This planning system is there to benefit the industrialists, urbanised and elite people, not the rural people. In my constituency, there are a few banks and they are not going to every nook and corner of a village where they have to implement DRDA programme, MADA programme and other programmes. We are raising subsidy amount and the margin money. Therefore, the loan portion is to be met by the banks, but the banks are not going to give loan to the poor people; they say they do not have the resources.

Then we have requested for opening up of more bank branches in the rural areas, but the Reserve Bank is coming in the way. What is this? Who is going to look into the problems of the rural people?

Let us come to the remunerative prices and how they are fixed. The process of cost of cultivation is totally wrong. They will take into consideration the inputs required and the labour rates. But what about the risk? Every day farmer cannot pay. Every day we cannot engage farm labour. There are cyclones and droughts. Who is taking into consideration all these factors while fixing the rates? They are not adding any profit while fixing the rate. But when you go to an industrialist, you will find that he will calculate

all the benefits before he fixes the prices; he will take all the benefits and add profit and then he fixes up his rates. Here we pay. No farmer is actually involved in the fixation of the prices. Recently, one or two farmers' representatives might have been included in it, but that is not sufficient. The farmers should get information relating to fixation of prices from the State Headquarters.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): There is one member from Andhra Pradesh. Why do you forget that?

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: But this is meant for the whole country. I am not interested only in Andhra Pradesh. It is not sufficient. Every State should have one representative from the farmers; then only it can be done. There are farmers in Bihar and U.P. also. I want for both.

For uniform tariff, by spending Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000/-, you are giving water to irrigate one acre of land. But what about the poor farmers? He has to dig his own well; he has to lift water by means of electricity or diesel. Why can't you liberalise the rates for agricultural inputs? Why can't you introduce a slab system as it has been done in Andhra Pradesh? It is Rs. 50 per year. Why don't you make a uniform law for every State? Why don't you tell the Central Government to do it? Why should the State Government bear this burden with their meagre resources? How can they meet this problem?

Regarding waiving of loan in Andhra Pradesh, we could waive interest on loan given to agriculturists.

Recently the Maharashtra Chief Minister has waived the loans and interests to the tune of Rs. 220 crores. Shri Devi Lal also has done it. Shri Sharad Pawar was in opposition and has gone to Congress for the sake of power. Though he had gone to Congress, he was having the views of the opposition. That is why, he did it. Even Shri Devi Lal and Shri

[Sh. M. Raghuma Reddy]

N.T. Rama Rao have done it earlier. Why can't you do it in other States also? When you are giving concessions to the industrialists like Bad debts, why can't you waive loans and interests of the agriculturists. In Andhra, if the farmers found some rocks while digging their wells, we give subsidy to the tune of Rs. 10,000/-. Why can't you do it in other States? I request the hon. Minister through you Sir to totally waive the loans of the farmers if they found rocks at the time of digging their wells.

Sir, the Crop Insurance Scheme is a useless scheme. Nobody is benefited out of this scheme. Only if you make village as a unit, something can be achieved. At present this scheme is meant for the persons who take loans from the banks and other sources. It should be extended to all the farmers irrespective of whether they take loans from the banks or not. This scheme has to be implemented taking village as a unit.

Sir, there is another programme 'Lab to land programme'. This is not doing well. We have to strengthen the system. Whatever you are producing in the lab should go to the field. The extension system should be strengthened with the help of the State Governments. Today morning we have discussed about the seeds. Good seeds are not made available to the farmers. We are not in a position to use the foundation seeds. In the name of certified seeds, somebody is purchasing it and giving it to the farmers after labelling it as certified seed. At least fifty per cent of the area should be covered with the foundation seed.

Why don't you open more number of research stations? There should be one lab in every block so that the foundation seeds could be made available to all the farmers.

Sir, we have land, we have technology; but we are importing foodgrains. If you could announce attractive price before one year, our farmers will produce all that we require. We want another green revolution in the

country.

Mixed farming such as dairying, poultry and in the rural areas fishing areas has to be encouraged and all possible help should be extended.

Sir, in Andhra we have taken some measures for the development of the agriculturists. You must encourage it. You should establish more number of agro based industries and food processing industries.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI USHA CHOUDHARI (Amravati): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I am grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to speak on this subject. The Government is doing a lot for the farmers. The country experienced the worst drought of the century last year. This year floods caused widespread damage. In Maharashtra, floods caused extensive damage in a number of districts. Though we do a lot, drought and floods, when occurring, disturb the economic balance of the country and the Government has to spend a huge sum of money in the planning process to set the balance set right. We would, therefore, like to opine unanimously that time-bound relief should be provided to the farmers. For this purpose we should prepare a standing programme and frame a policy for the farmers about which a discussion is taking place here today. In this connection, I would like to urge the Government to take some measures. I would also like to make some demands. A number of institutions have been set up to provide relief to the farmers since the day the country achieved independence. There is the Agricultural Prices Commission and the Cotton Development Council is also there. Indiraji opened the doors of banks for the farmers. But the situation has taken a different turn now. The position to-day is that some State Governments or co-operative Institutions want to come to the rescue of the farmers. For example, the Maharashtra

State Co-operative Bank of which I am the Chairperson, is the largest co-operative bank in Asia and advances crores of rupees to farmers and prepares good schemes for them. Last year when the State experienced drought we proposed to help the farmers by providing loans at the rate of six per cent or giving subsidy or waiving the loans of farmers. But the laws of the NABARD and the Reserve Bank of India posed an obstruction in the way of implementing the above measures. Therefore, I would like to say that politics should not come in the way when we want to lift the farmers above their present position. I do not want to refer to the various political matters which have been raised here. Now-a-days various political parties are coming into being on the basis of regional issues like, cotton and language. But the Congress Party does not function on any single issue basis. This party thinks about farmers, labourers, women, harijans, Adivasis and all. I do not want to talk about anything which is political. Though I am an M.P. of the ruling party, yet I would like to venture to make a demand that changes should be brought about in the Agricultural Prices Commission and the Cotton Development Council if at all the Government wants to provide some relief to the farmers. If we go through the figures supplied by the Ministry we find that the production of cotton is shown less. As a result cotton is being imported. Last year, on the one hand 2 lakh bales of cotton of the Maharashtra Federation rotted and on the other cotton was imported. It is therefore, necessary that the import-export policy should also be revised. If there is a demand for long staple cotton, the farmer should be given suitable guidance and assistance to enable him to produce long staple cotton. The farmer should be helped in all possible ways and the policy should be framed accordingly. At the same time a New Textile Policy, which will serve the interest of the farmers, should be framed. Last year the Government of Maharashtra and several other institutions came forward and expressed their will to help the farmers, so that the farmers could raise the cotton production. At that time the Government had assured that it would re-consider the Textile

policy and also the Agricultural price policy. To-day I would like to remind that it is very essential that while framing the New Textile Policy, all the aspects relating to the cotton crop and cloth manufacturing should be reconsidered. If any party claims that the farmers can be uplifted merely by giving them remunerative prices for cotton, onion etc., it will not ameliorate their condition. Along with it, small scale industries should also be set up. It is mostly the sons of the farmers who are unemployed. A large number of them are dropouts. Therefore, until we are able to provide them with employment opportunities or financial assistance through the banks for setting up ancillary cottage industries, their condition will not improve. The resolutions passed by the A.I.C.C. for the amelioration of the condition of the farmers was welcomed all over the country. But the only problem here is regarding their implementation. A scheme relating to the development of women has also been formulated. This scheme has been prepared for the upliftment of the women belonging to the backward classes, the Adivasis and other deprived women living in the rural and the hill areas and who do not have any union of their own. Therefore, I want to submit in this House to day that practical education be imparted to the rural and agricultural women folk and some cottage industries relating to the produce in their fields be set up. Only then real upliftment of the families or farmers and agricultural labourers can take place and the situation in the country will improve. I want to make a submission regarding my constituency Amravati. In our Vidarbha region, we had 150 per cent excess rainfall. As a result thereof there were devastating floods and hundreds of people were killed. Loss amounting to Rs. 380.64 crores was suffered due to excess precipitation. Demands have been made to the Central Government for the rehabilitation of the affected people. It is only in Maharashtra that Schemes like Cotton Monopoly Scheme exist for the welfare of farmers. Our Government waived loans worth Rs. 220 crores in the last month. We want that the required financial assistance of Rs. 185.50 crores should be extended by the Central Govern-

[Smt. Usha Choudhari] ment. Finally, I would like to congratulate Hon. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, our Government and the Congress party for having taken steps for the welfare of the farmers. With these words, I conclude.

15.18 hrs.

[SHRI N. VENKATA RATNAM *in the
Chair*]

[*English*]

DR. A. KALANIDHI (Madras Central): Sir, at the outset, I express my thanks to you for having invited me to participate in the discussion on the demands of the farmers and agricultural labour. Many Members from the Treasury Benches have said that lot of subsidy has been given to the fertiliser. The point is that the subsidy that has been given to the fertiliser has the industrialists who are owning the fertiliser industry. So, care should be taken that when a subsidy is given to the fertiliser, the benefit actually reaches the farmers and not the industrialists who are owning the fertiliser industry.

It is a common cry in many States that the farmers do not get the quality seeds. It is because of the lack of research and development. It is because of the lethargic attitude of the Government that they do not allot enough money for research and development. Not only in the agricultural field, even in the medical field we have the same problem. Unless and until we improve the research and development, we cannot produce the quality seeds. If we do not produce the quality seeds, we cannot increase our production. Non-availability of the seeds is also causing concern. So, we should produce enough seeds. Not only that. Quality seeds should be made available to the farmers so that the agricultural production increases and thereby we achieve our targets, thereby we can feel satisfied with our Green Revolution.

Another point I would like to submit is that there are not enough warehouses in the

country. For the foodgrains produced by the farmers, there is no proper storage facility and they are not able to keep the seeds that are supplied to them. As a result of bad weather faced in different parts of the country, whatever we produce in the country is getting wasted. So, the Government of India should take keen interest in constructing the warehouses so that the produce of the farmers is kept in proper storage and the seeds are also preserved properly. This will help achieve production targets in the years to come.

Sir, as far as the procurement price is concerned, I would like to point out that you have different attitude for wheat and rice. You have only sympathetic attitude towards wheat growers and not towards the paddy growers. Whenever the wheat growers ask for more subsidy, you come to their rescue and solve their problem. But whenever we ask for the Southern States where the farmers produce more rice, you don't consider their request. The procurement price is much lower as far as policy is concerned. Unless you increase the procurement price for paddy, it is very difficult to cope up with the problem faced by the farmers. As far as the demands of the farmers and the farm labours are concerned, many Members said that they are the backbone of the economy of this country. There is no doubt about it and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru also said and the great Poet Thiruvalluvar said 'the same thing, that is, 'The world is behind the farmers'. No doubt about it. But what is it that you are doing? You are only shedding crocodile tears. You are only having lip sympathy. You don't even have the heart to call the leaders of the farmers for discussion when they had 'dharna' and agitation in front of the Boat Club under the leadership of Shri Tikait. You never bother about their problems. You never had the time to look into there grivences. But you are able to find time to go to Tamil Nadu and address public meetings there to catch more votes for your own party in the coming elections. You are propagating at the cost of the Government funds for the Congress Party, the ruling party at the Centre. So, this is the type of attitude that you

are having. But on the contrary you are telling that you have sympathy for these people. You say that you have very kind heart and everything for the farmers. It is only crocodile tears that you are shedding.

My next point is about the bank loans. As far as the bank loans are concerned, I am sorry to point out that the banks are not giving loans properly. There are middlemen who execute the loans. The nationalised banks, cooperative banks and the commercial banks do not give adequate loans to the farmers and whatever little they give, is that given time. Sometimes they give the loan after the harvest is over. There is no point of giving loan at much later time. Whenever there is drought condition, whenever there is flood, the farmers are faced with unusual situation and at that time they face a lot of difficulties, particularly they are not able to pay the electricity dues. They are not in a position to repay the electricity dues at all, in a situation like foods drought. Instead of postponing the payment of electricity dues, Government must waive the electricity dues to be recovered from the farmers.

Sir, the Government have shown great interest in clearing the Narmada Valley project. But at the same time when the Telugu-Ganga project came up for approval, you cast political aspersions. You have your own reservations in quoting environmental problem. The farmers of Rayalaseema suffer from want of water for irrigation purposes and the people of Madras city are in dire need of drinking water. So, we want you to be impartial and not be politically biased. So, when we want you to give helping hand to the Andhra Pradesh Government, there you play the politics and quote environmental reasons. You just went out of the way to clear the Narmada valley project. Whenever the hon. Prime Minister visits or tours Tamil Nadu, he says that he cannot clear the Telugu-Ganga project at the cost of other States, whereas in the case of Narmada Valley Project, the same yardstick is not adopted. The hon. Prime Minister spends the Government money for propagating his party policies to catch votes in Tamil Nadu in

the ensuing elections.

Finally, Sir, I want to point out that the Agricultural Cost Price Commission should be revamped. The time has come now to restructure and revamp Agricultural Cost and Price Commission. This organisation should have members not primarily from the group of financial experts but from the real farmers. The farm experts should be given more importance and they should primarily be included as members in the Agricultural Cost & Prices Commission. On the contrary, you are giving more importance to the financial experts and financial consultants.

Finally, only the financial consultants and financial experts should be included in the Agricultural Cost and Prices Commission. On the other hand, you always give more importance to the financial experts and farm experts and push the real farmers to the back. So, you should take all these points into consideration and try to implement them.

[*Translation*]

DR. G.S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, whatever happened on the Boat Club during the past few days, the people can never appreciate it but they have understood the game and have expressed their confidence in the Hon. Prime Minister. The farmers have stated that the Hon. Prime Minister is the true leader of the farmers and whatever action he takes will certainly be in the interest of the farmers. So far as the interest of the farmers is concerned, there can be no two opinions on the point that we should deliberate upon this issue irrespective of party affiliations. We should ask ourselves whether justice is being done with the farmers in his country. I want to make one submission to the Government that a Commission should be set up to inquire into the fact as to how many farmers have become labourers during the past 10 to 15 years and the reason behind such degradation. What was the situation which compelled the small and marginal farmers to leave their traditional occupation and be-

[Dr. G.S. Rajhans]

come labourers? This must be investigated because it is a very serious matter. I am speaking from practical experience and I have seen in my own constituency and nearby areas that people in large numbers have migrated to Delhi, Ghaziabad, Faridabad and other adjoining areas and their number would not be less than 2 1/2 to 3 lakhs. Even those farmers who had more than 30 acres of land are some how compelled to run about in the streets of Delhi in search of work. It is very painful to see their condition. The Delhites ridicule them and the language which they speak. They think that they have come to spread filth in their city. I want to ask that if they do not construct their huts for settling there, where will they go? What wrong had they committed for which they were uprooted from their own place where they had sufficient to eat but today they have become helpless and are forced to seek work of labourers. And he is not getting that even. This is a serious matter and it should be taken as such and considered sympathetically. When a small industrialist can get loans from banks or financial institutions for setting up his business in this country at differential rates of interest what wrong has the farmer done that he cannot get the same. That industrialist may even declare his unit sick and run away with the entire loan-amount. And as regards the farmers who may suffer heavy loss on account of floods or for lack of irrigational facilities or his land may become waste land on account of earthquakes but will not get any assistance whatsoever. Someone has to think about their case as well. Although we deliver long speeches about the welfare of the farmers yet we should think on the practical lines. Not only you, but I have myself seen thousands of acres of standing crops of sugarcane being burnt. I have also burnt my crop. I am also son of a farmer. The reason behind it was that there was no buyer of the sugarcane. What else could the farmer do except burning the crop, ofcourse he did not grow the crop next time. What can a man do under such circumstances? Why is it so that when a farmer wants to sell his crop, he is not able to get a reasonable price for it. You go to buy

cloth in the market, the shopkeeper will immediately ask for its price.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS: I have just started. This is a very important subject and I am speaking from my practical experience.

[Translation]

You go to buy cloth from a shop or some small book, the shopkeeper will immediately ask for its price. But when surgarcane is taken to some mill, the mill-owner would tell us that we would be paid two or three years later. May I ask as to what are the reasons behind this state of affairs and why are the people tolerating it? The private industrialists are ofcourse doing it but the Government units are also not lagging behind. There must be some justice in this regard.

The procurement price of jute is also not proportionate to its cost of production. Hence, we had to burn that crop as well and next time, the Government had to resort to import of Jute. What is your policy? You should give thought to it. We do not demand support price, we do not want relief, we do not believe in begging but we want remunerative prices. If Government does not give it, then where the farmers should go? How many more people should become labourers? If they have to work as labourers, the number of slums would increase and as a result of which filth will spread in the cities. How many people can you kill? You should give some thought to this aspect at least.

You are very happy this time because of the good crop. You go to North Bihar where crops have been damaged. Irrigation facilities are not available. Land has become fallow on account of the earthquake? Where can the people go? The Hon. Prime Minister had visited every village when the earthquake occurred. Shri V.P. Singh and Shri Devi Lal also went there and gave long speeches regarding the large scale relief

which they will provide for them but not a single paise has been reached there in the shape of relief so far. I mean that they only make tall claims. Therefore, I want to submit that people should rise above party interests and think about the interests of the farmers sincerely and stop inciting them.

I will conclude after making one or two points more. You should make the Crop Insurance Scheme Compulsory. Why should our crops be destroyed on account of some mistake committed by Nepal and our farmers should be reduced to utter poverty and beg on the streets.

This issue should be taken up at the U.N.O. our crops are destroyed every year due to mistakes committed by another country. Otherwise our crops should be insured. Compensation should be paid whenever crops are destroyed. We are not begging, we are demanding what is rightfully ours.

I want to say that the problems of farmers should be seriously considered. Is it proper to sacrifice the interests of crores of farmers to please a handful of urban people? People are very tolerant. Does the farmer benefit from the N.R.E.P., R.L.E.G.P. and the I.R.D.P.? If he is not getting any benefit action should be taken against those who are grabbing the benefits due to the farmer.

Agriculture being a very large sector, the Government cannot afford to be complacent about it. Those who have studied global agricultural economics know that people have met their doom in the throes of complacency and illusion. It is not logical to presume that crops in subsequent years would be good if they have been good this year. Countries which have traditionally been big exporters have, at times, had to resort to foodgrain imports.

If the country's farmers are not given remunerative prices, if they are not allowed to lead a respectable life, we cannot think of India becoming self-sufficient in future.

I have always thought that this country

is divided into two parts. One is the urban unit called 'India' while the other is called 'Bharat' which belongs to the poor farmers. 'India' looks down upon 'Bharat' and exploits it. This exploitation should be stopped. We should pledge to serve the farmers in the coming years, give them remunerative price for their produce and give them a change to live a life of respectability so that he can stand on his own feet.

PROF. NIRMALA KUMARI SHAKTAWAT (Chittorgarh): Hon. Mr. Chairman, India is an agriculture oriented country where the majority of the population consists of farmers. Our Government's policy has favoured the farmers. We will be able to know the schemes related to the development of farmers if we go through any of the Five Year Plans.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we have become self-reliant in the agricultural sector. For this the farmer and the scientist both deserve to be praised. The farmer is our true benefactor because, regardless of summer, winter or rainfall he works hard to feed the nation. It is natural that he should have certain reasonable demands and the Government should definitely consider them. But we cannot say that the Government's policy does not favour the farmers. Sir, it would be no exaggeration to say that all development has been oriented towards the farming community. I would like to give some examples in this regard. 0.63 paise is given as subsidy to farmers for the electricity supplied to the agricultural sector. This is a praiseworthy step for any Government which aims at welfare. Sir, electricity has reached 4.5 lakh of the 5.5 lakh villages in India. Concessions on fertilizers in this year's budget have also immensely benefited farmers. Provision of loans at low rates of interest have also been made for farmers. Organisations like the Food Corporation of India, Jute Corporation of India, NAFED, Tobacco Board and spices Board have added a new dimension to the working of the farming community. Last year's drought in our country caused acute hardship to the farmers. But the timely assistance rendered

[Prof. Nirmala Kumari Shaktawat]
by the Government gave them a lot of relief.

Sir, I come from a state which is worst affected by drought. Famine strikes Rajasthan every other year. Governmental assistance provided a lot of relief to the people. Farmers have benefited from programmes like N.R.E.P., R.L.E.G.P. and I.R.D.P. But some big farmers, who can also be called rural landlords, made statements which mislead the farmers. I am amused at the impractical demands presented from their side. Some such impractical demands were presented over here on 31st October or thereabout. It was demanded that loans should be waived and electricity charges should not be collected. Sir, as you are well aware, our farmers are self-respecting people. They would never like to become lickitrencher. If we fail to collect electricity dues how can we continue to produce electricity? I was surprised to hear the impractical and misleading remarks of the farmers' leaders. They called the 'Krishi Bhavan' as the 'Kisan Qatl Bhavan'. Was it proper for them to say this? Similarly our lady Minister Shrimati Sheila Dixit was called 'Chhori Neta' and they said that they did not want to Discuss anything with the 'Chhori Neta'. It is not proper to produce people who make such impractical statements as leaders of farmers.

Today a major portion of the country remains unirrigated. We should evolve new irrigation schemes and take them to the farmers. Most of the area in Rajasthan is dry-land. The Rajasthan Canal has not been completed due to slow progress of work for the last so many years. It should be approved as a National Scheme.

Farmers are not able to get good quality seeds. They cannot even get certified seeds what to talk of foundation seeds. We can imagine the psychological effect on the farmer when he cultivates the land and sows the seed only to find all his hard labour wasted as the seed fails to germinate. Good quality seeds should be made available to farmers. I speak of my constituency where

the certified seeds failed to germinate.

The farmer should get the reasonable price for his produce. The farmer stands in cold water to produce sugarcane. Even then his sugarcane is treated as wood. If sugarcane is being sold cheaper than wood, there is certainly a need to fix an appropriate price for it. My constituency produces garlic. The son of a farmer purchased seeds at Rs. 40 a kilo and today his garlic is being sold at Re. 1/- to Rs. 1.50 a kilo. In other words that garlic is being sold at a throw away price. All this is sad state of affairs.

The Government has constituted a Spices Board but are the activities of the Board limited to the Southern States only? Is a backward state like Rajasthan outside the vision of the Board? Why can't the produce of farmers who grow spices be exported? I request the Government to direct its attention towards this matter. Export of spices should be increased. Garlic powder and such other things should also be produced if possible.

The Government has announced a New Housing Policy. 70% of the farmers live in villages. According to the official policy if house-building loans are given to the farmers, the tendency to migrate to cities will stop. Hence housing facilities should be provided.

There had been good rainfall throughout the country this year, there had been good crops but unfortunately some parts of Rajasthan remained dry this year too. This includes my constituency Chittorgarh where the wells and the ponds have dried up. Therefore, it is my submission that to meet the severe drinking water problem that would arise in due course in Chittorgarh the Government should take timely attention in this regard. What to talk of irrigation, people will not even be able to get drinking water, in the coming days.

Besides, I would also like to point out that ours is a welfare Government which has always done commendable work for the

farmers. Even the Prime Minister has said that the farmers get only Rs. 1 out of Rs. 6 which is sent from here for their welfare. Therefore, I humbly submit that such things should be checked so that the aspirations of the Government are translated into reality.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

SHRI V. TULSIRAM (Nagarkurnool): Hon. Speaker, Sir, many friends have raised various issues in this House and the hon. Minister has listened to them attentively. He is a new and enthusiastic Minister, and therefore, I feel that he will do something for the farmers. I have high expectations from the hon. Minister.

The Government is no doubt doing something for the farmers but all that matters is approach. When somebody is bent upon doing a thing no law can stand in the way, but one should have the will to do it. Every body talks about farmers in India. Whenever a leader speaks at a function he always speaks about Harijans, Girijans and the farmers in the course of his speech. But when the time comes for the practical work, they are nil. No doubt something is being done—I am not saying that nothing is being done—but we are not doing the desired work for the farmers. During the question hour in the morning, you were present here. It was revealed that an expert group for seed production has been constituted but no farmer has been appointed as a member in it. Couldn't a single farmer with the requisite experience and expertise be found throughout the length and breadth of the country. There is no question of literacy here. There may be high officials with high degrees, and they may be intelligent too—and I do not say that do not work—but what is needed today is experience. Work done on the basis of experience is always good and superior. Good work cannot be done on the basis of degree only. Both degree and experience are essential. Therefore, experienced farmers along with capable officers should work

together and the suggestions extended by them will be beneficial to the farmers. I hope that the Minister will definitely include such farmers in the Expert Group.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): I have stated in the morning that we would appoint them to this Expert Group.

SHRI V. TULSIRAM: So far as seed is concerned, the farmers must get good seed. Farmers must also get fertiliser in time. Besides, whatever their production, they should get remunerative price for their produce. This can be fixed by only those, who shiver in the cold months of December and January when they water their wheat fields in U.P., Haryana and Punjab. Only they know what price would be remunerative. Those who sit in air-conditioned rooms will never be able to know this price. Therefore, I want that you should include such farmers, in this Expert Group as it is very essential.

Insurance has also been talked about. Crop Insurance should be provided at the village level. In Order to provide more and more facilities to the farmers, the exemption from levy being given to the farmers in Andhra Pradesh should be extended to all the farmers in the Country. The Andhra Pradesh Government has declared that they will not charge it from them. Similarly, interest against the loans advanced to the farmers by cooperative banks has been waived and on other loans, a concession of 5 per cent is being granted to them. The Central Government should provide help to the farmers through farmer's councils. The farmers should sell their produce themselves and the brokers should get no money. The Government is making efforts in this direction. I would like the hon. Minister to provide similar facilities to the farmers through Central Government programmes and I conclude with the hope that the hon. Minister and the Government will make best possible efforts in this direction.

SHRI RAM NARAIN SINGH (Bhiwani):
Hon. Speaker, Sir, for last two days I have been listening to the discussion under Rule 193 regarding the demands of the farmers. I do not want to speak in detail but I have only two points. The hon. Minister is listening to the suggestions that have been made, by the Congress party also. Just now, Dr. Rajhans from Bihar was speaking and I agree cent per cent with whatever he has said. Our Congress Colleagues have made a number of suggestions. Some have made three suggestions while others have made five suggestions. I want to consolidate them at one place because they are for the welfare of the farmers.

The prime need of a farmer is water and power. Randhawa Sahib was an acknowledged agricultural scientist of our Country. Dr. M.S. Randhawa was an I.C.S. officer and he was also D.C. of Delhi during 1947. Shri M.S. Randhawa used to say that three things are needed for the benefit and improvement of the plight of farmers. These are water, power and remunerative price. If these three things are given to the farmers, they will be benefitted to a great extent. There can be thousands of other things which can be done for them. For this, dams should be constructed on all the rivers in the country so that canals could be provided for irrigation. Today the prices of all goods have gone up by 3—4 times but the prices of agricultural produce has not even doubled during last 20 years. On the other hand I would like to inform you that a tractor which could be purchased against 200 quintals of wheat during 1967, cannot be purchased even against 550 quintals at present. It's price has gone up four times whereas the price of agricultural produce has not even doubled. Consequently, the farmers are badly affected. Insurance which is being done at the village level should be comprehensive so that the losses suffered by the farmers are fully compensated.

The Government acquires the land in big cities and pays the price to the farmers at the rate of Rs. 15 per sq. yard. What to talk

of Rs. 40, One cannot get land even at Rs. 100 per sq. yard in Delhi. The land value is not less than Rs. 5000 to Rs. 6000 per sq. yard and the farmers are paid only Rs. 15 for it. This is what is happening in Delhi. A great injustice is being done in the capital. The problem of unemployment in the village is very grim. A resolution was passed at the AICC that at least one number of each family should get employment. It is very essential. In reply to this, the Government will say that the situation in Punjab and Haryana in this regard is very good.

I want to tell you that agriculture pays little to the people there. The people of those areas have either joined the police force, Navy or migrated to other places. People in Haryana and Punjab, who are not in service, are in bad plight and the condition of the people who are owning land upto 18 acres is worse than a fourth class employee. Therefore, avenues of service in the villages should be in production to the population. Jobs should be reserved for villagers upto 80 per cent, no matter to which caste or religion they belong.

Government has sanctioned subsidy to the farmers upto three thousand rupees. I want to tell you that there is no need of giving subsidy to the farmers. It would be better if you give them remunerative prices or provide them some other benefits. Rate of interests should be restricted to 3-4 per cent, but there is no use of giving subsidy of Rs. three thousand. So far as loan is concerned, loans upto Rs. 5-7 thousand granted to small labourers who are not in a position to repay it should be waived. Loans amounting to Rs. 4720 crores have been waived since 1947 in the case of big industrialists. When Shri Devi Lal waived the loans amounting to Rs. 240 crores due from the farmers, it created a flutter in the whole country. Now the Chief Minister of Maharashtra has accomplished a great task by waiving Rs. 220 crores and the people from all over the country are congratulating him. You waive loans to billionaires, but cannot waive loans even upto Rs. 5-6 thousand to the farmers. It is my submission to you that their loans should be waived.

Another point which I want to submit is that the way maximum credit limit is fixed for industries, similar benefit should be given to the farmers for agriculture also. Limits should be fixed for the farmers according to their needs and they should be issued pass-books from the bank and, thus, may get money from there. There should be a ceiling on urban property. In villages, you have fixed a limit of 18 acres of land per family but there is no limit in urban area even if a person owns 50 houses and 100 shops. There is a great resentment among the people on this account. If someone possesses 19 acres of land, one acre of land is taken away from him. In my view, this should not happen. I also want to say that agricultural implements used for ploughing of land should not be auctioned in the event of default in the repayment of loan. Earlier, these items were not being put on auction in Haryana and Punjab, but auction is resorted to now. It is my submission that this should not be done.

I also want to tell you that agriculture should be declared an industry. I have reiterated this demand a number of times. The Members from that side have also supported the demand that agriculture should be declared an industry so that all benefits could reach the farmers.

You have created different zones. Zones should not be there. The whole of the country should be one zone. There should be no restriction on selling foodgrains for the farmers in any part of the country.

I join my colleagues who have said that there should be parity between industrial prices and agricultural prices. You might have observed that there is a steep rise in costs of industrial goods but the Government has fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 183 per quintal, that too for the next season. Wheat is currently selling at Rs. 300 per quintal in Haryana and Punjab, while you are giving Rs. 173 per quintal to the farmers. Thus, a great injustice is being done to the farmers. For how long will the farmer tolerate it? You purchase wheat from the farmer at Rs. 173 per quintal while the trader sells it at

Rs. 300 per quintal. It is indeed great injustice to the farmer. The moment farmer sells his wheat out, its price shoots to Rs. 250 or Rs. 300. The Government must rectify these shortcomings.

I do not mind if my suggestions are not accepted. Let the suggestions put forward by a number of my friends from the Congress Party be accepted. That will do a lot of good to the farmers.

[English]

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL (Erandol): Mr. Chairman, Sir, sometimes Prof. Dandavate takes wise decisions. This is one of his wise decisions to raise the matter of real public importance. The problems of farmers are genuine and very serious. But the unfortunate part of it is that many people try to take political advantage out of it. Even when Mr. Tikait and other farmers were staging *dharna* in a peaceful manner, they did not want to align with any party. Some of the Opposition party Members tried to instigate them. Of course, they could not succeed in that.

A friend from the Opposition side, who is from Andhra Pradesh, was telling that Mr. Devi Lal has given concession in the loans. Loans have been written off. Shri Sharad Pawar has also written off some loans of the farmers. But the bona fides behind the actions of these Chief Ministers are different. Shri Devi Lal was doing it as an election gimmick. While there were no elections in front of the Shri Sharad Pawar in the near future, he has written off the loans with bonafide intentions. The intentions should be bonafide.

We are all here to help the farmers. But the ways are different. Sometimes we commit blunders. I can cite an example of the Janata rule at the Centre. At that time, they lifted the levy on sugar. Only free sale was allowed. And what was the result? The result was, as my friend Dr. Rajhans has mentioned, that thousands and thousands of acres of sugarcane had to be burnt in the

[Sh. Vijay N. Patil]

fields themselves because it was not economical to crush sugar out of that. It is one of the blunders which our friends from the Opposition commit. But we are in the ruling party. We are ruling at the Centre and in the States since a long time. People expect more from us.

Prof. Shaktawat has mentioned about the subsidy in the energy sector. It is 63 paise in some States while in some others, it is different. But it is not sufficient to give subsidy in the supply of energy.

For irrigation also, the policy of the Central Government to give subsidy for lift irrigation and sprinkler irrigation should continue and subsidy component should be increased.....

16.00 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH RATH *in the Chair*]

This is because our major and medium irrigation projects are taking a long time for completion. The via media to increase the irrigation potential and to give small farmers the benefit of irrigation is to give subsidy on the lift and sprinkler irrigation sets.

The problems of dry land farming are special and they are also big in nature and not sufficient work has been done in respect of them. Research on the drought resistant crop varieties is not that encouraging. I would like the Minister to pay more emphasis on this.

This year because of good rainfall, the targets for production of foodgrains that have been projected are very encouraging. But at the same time, we do not have the storage capacity. Therefore, the construction of godowns needs to be expedited, and specially in the rural areas construction of godowns with a capacity of 200-500 tonnes must be encouraged. Societies are being given subsidies for this, but the subsidy component for this is not much.

A mention was made about the Agriculture Prices Commission. There should be more farmers in it. At each State level one representative should be there. But even after fixing the prices, that is not helping much. The prices of their produce in the market are not helping the farmers. Take for example the case of onions. Shri Sharad Joshi led an agitation for this in Nasik. Now, in Delhi we are purchasing onions at Rs. 6 per kg., but what happened to Maharashtra farmers? They are not getting sufficient return from their produce. This year because of disease eighty per cent of the seedlings after plantation died and only twenty per cent remained and the per acre yield was very very low, just 20 to 30 per cent. Even if you give them Rs. 400 per quintal, it is on no use, because the yield is very very low. Even if the prices go up in the market and the yield is low the farmers do not get sufficient income. Under these circumstances, what is left with the Government and the farmers is crop insurance. In spite of increased losses to the Central Government for the last three years, it should be implemented in all seriousness and all the farmers and all types of crops should be covered.

As far as the oilseeds are concerned, we are spending thousands of crores of rupees on the import of edible oil. But if there is a good crop and at that point of time there is import, the prices of oilseeds go down. Therefore, the import should be canalised and balanced with a view that the local prices which the farmers get immediately after the harvest do not go down.

In fact, all crops like food crops and agricultural produce need proper attention. I would like to congratulate our Prime Minister for setting up the Food Processing Ministry which will give added price to the farmers' produce after its processing.

Along with the farming, we have got fishing and animal husbandry. In the case of fishing, I would like to make one suggestion. Now-a-days in Hyderabad, some farmers have taken up joint farms for poultry and fishing. On the tanks where the fish is raised,

poultry is also reared. It is a very profitable proposition and if we take up this on a large scale, fish and poultry farms together, the production will increase. We see that in recent years the cost of meat per Kg. has increased considerably.

I would like to conclude with these last two points. We supply electricity to the farmers but in many States, especially in U.P. and Bihar we see that the supply is not regular. Water is there in the wells but the farmer is not able to pump it out at an appropriate time and irrigate his crop: So, in such cases the Government should think of installing a large number of wind mills because if it is done at least the farmers will get some relief. Whenever electricity is not there, he can use them, because if electricity is not there and the crop does not get water for 15 or 20 days, then the entire crop will be lost. So, that should not happen.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my friend, Mr. Dandavate in his opening speech mentioned that our holding has decreased and that the holding per farmer has come down to 1.5 hectare and, therefore, it becomes very difficult for a farmer to keep one bullock or one bullock cart and all the other necessary infrastructure for the irrigation purposes. It is not economical. So, I would like to suggest that an experiment on cooperative farming should be tried. Long long ago, i.e. in the early 60 some effort was made in this direction. I would like to conclude by saying that the Agriculture Ministry should think of some form of cooperative farming so that all the farmers get the benefit and their plight is improved, and they are put on good economical terms. I thank you for giving me time to speak.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsganj): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I want to make it clear that we were not talking something different while occupying back benches; we were only talking to Shri Shastri, who happens to be the Minister of State in the Department of Agriculture, about the

work being done for the country in his department.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You tell to the House and not to me. You can meet me in my Chamber.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: I want to highlight the work done in the field of agricultural since 1980. Today, we can proudly say that we are going to produce 175 million tonnes of foodgrains. Besides, we have achieved progressive success in the production of oilseeds and pulses. Earlier, we used to import sugar, but the House will be happy to know that we are going to produce one crore tonnes of sugar this year. Our domestic consumption is about 85-86 lakh tonne and, hence, we are thinking in terms of exporting the rest. Today we are in a position to say that not only in the field of foodgrains, we have made great strides in other sensitive fields like sugarcane etc. When the Janata Party was in power for 2 1/2 years, agriculture production had gone down by 17 per cent. The hon. Members will be happy to know that we tackled the drought situation in such a manner that it did not have much of impact. However, it is correct to say that all these things notwithstanding, our progress in the agricultural field is quite below the mark. Even today, only 26 to 30 per cent of land has irrigation facilities in the country and the rest is dry. Even in other areas of agricultural production, we are lagging far behind. Even today, we have not been able to provide resources like fertilisers, seeds and pesticides to the farmers, living in drought-prone, desert, hilly and chronically deficit areas. It is the need of the hour that the Government should survey these areas and provide fertilizers, seeds and water according to their needs. You should construct small dams, sink tube wells and provide lift irrigation facilities in these areas. The scheme regarding construction of safe dams under minor irrigation should be implemented. Considerable progress has been

[Sh. Ram Pyare Panika] achieved in the country as a result of the work done by the agricultural scientists. Owing to their efforts, we can claim that production of wheat has gone up by six times and that of paddy many times. But we are lagging far behind in the production of coarse grains like maize, jawar and bajra. We should carry out research on coarse grains which are grown in tribal areas and develop hybrid varieties. When the election time approaches, people start talking about the farmers and many leaders of the farmers appear on the surface. As Shri Tulsiramji has just now said that millions of insects appear during the rainy season, in the same way, many people who shed crocodile tears for the farmers appear on the surface when elections approach. Even Raja and Maharaja of the past, who did not touch the plough even by mistake, have started, talking about the farmers. I do not deny that friends from that side have not put forward good suggestions, they did make some good suggestions, they have also urged that all facilities should be made available to the farmers. The farmers have started agitation for remunerative prices. The prices of industrial goods never go down but the farmers does not get inputs like diesel, oil, fertilizer and spare parts which he uses for cultivation, at cheap rates. Not only that, his produce fetches such a low price that he cannot raise his standard of living throughout his life. We also talk of agricultural labourers. Various State Governments fix their minimum wages without giving due thought whether the farmers are in a position to pay it or not. This results in conflict between the farmers and the labourers. Therefore, I want to stress that it is all right to fix minimum wages but the condition of the farmers should also be kept in view. If their condition is not good, it should be improved by granting subsidy so that they are in a position to save as also to pay the minimum wages. The old relationship between the farmers and the labourers should not be disturbed. I myself belong to the labour area. I want that the labourers should get full wages, but the farmers will pay if they are in a position to pay. Therefore, farmer should be paid rea-

sonably good price for his produce so that he is able to bring up his children well. Agitations are launched on the pretext of providing benefits to the farmers. The so called leaders of the farmers are infact cheats, because they appear on the scene only when elections are round the corner so that they could make political capital.

I would like to make it clear to you that agriculture Budget and the Budget on power, irrigation and fertilizer are not related to only one Department. Our Kisan leaders know that the Government provides fertiliser to farmers on subsidised rates which cost crores of rupees to the exchequer every year. When these leaders enter the Parliament, they level several charges against the Government saying that it has put everything in disarray and that no welfare of farmers is being done. But their stance changes totally when they reach the villages. They instigate the farmers there by making wrong statements. It is, therefore, necessary that we should be vigilant against such leaders and parties. An appeal which I would like to make to our farmer community, through you, is that keeping in view the economic and financial position of the country they should put forward only those demands which could be possibly met by the Government. I do agree that the farmers should be supplied power at a cheaper rate. But it is all the more necessary that they should get power in time. I understand that power lines and transformers are being installed for the benefit of the farmers. But I want that more stress should be laid on removing the practical difficulties being faced by the farmers. I also demand that the farmers should be supplied seeds and fertiliser in time. I understand and it is also a fact that the number of commodities, for which support price is being given by the Government has been rising progressively. Initially, the Government started giving support price in respect of some selective commodities. But now support price is being given to more crops than earlier. Now it is necessary to see that the very basis of deciding the items on which support price is paid is changed. The support price should be tagged with consumers

price. The support prices of various commodities like wheat etc. should be fixed on the basis of the rates at which these items are being made available to the consumers. In this regard, I would like to make a submission that more and more farmers should be associated with the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices. I agree with the views expressed by Shri Tulsiram just now in this regard. It is not at all necessary that people sitting here in air-conditioned rooms should fix the support price payable to the farmers. However, these people deserve our thanks for carrying out new research in the field of agriculture and helping us in raising the agricultural production. But it is very necessary that farmers who have practical knowledge of farming should be associated with that Commission. As a matter of fact, large number of people have become educated in the villages. The farmers have taken recourse to agitation not because their production has been low or they are getting less assistance from the Government or the Government is not paying full attention to them. In fact the Government is extending all possible help to them. But the farmers are most distressed due to the fact that they are not getting remunerative prices for their produce. I am of the view that the Government must reconsider their case and take a decision so that the farmers could get remunerative prices for their produce. For this, the Government should fix the minimum wages. Although the Government has already fixed the minimum wages, yet they are on papers only. Today the farm labourers in our country are in the non-organised sector. They are being exploited by the officers. They are being harassed for no fault of theirs. They are being put behind the bar and there is nobody to stand bail for them. So far as the recovery of loan given to farmers is concerned, the Government should reconsider the cases of the small and marginal farmers. Now the time has come when you should waive the loan of the farmers. You should also take into account the recovery of loans taken by big farmers. You should create such an atmosphere in which the farmers may think that the Government is working for their interests. If it is done, some of our

colleagues who incite the farmers will not get an opportunity to do so. It is most essential today.

There are no two opinions that the Government did a Commendable work in the field of land reforms. But is it not a fact that there are still some people who are in possession of thousands of acres of land by showing the land in the name of their dogs, cats and parrots? I can say frankly that there several hon. Members in this august House who are in possession of thousands of bighas of land. I suggest that we should observe this year as the Nehru Centenary Year and resolve that we will give the poor their due rights and ensure that they take actual possession of the land. At the same time, we must ensure proper implementation of the Land Ceiling Act which has been formulated for the benefit of the farmers so that the farmers could become the real owners of the land which they are cultivating. Every possible assistance should be extended to those areas which experience drought, floods and earthquakes by effecting suitable cuts from other heads in the Budget so that some solace could be provided to poor labourers in these areas. Today, there are several places in Bihar, Assam and other States where the crops have dried up despite good rainfall this year. I can cite the example of Mirzapur which falls in my constituency. The crops have dried up there due to non-availability of water in the canal and deficient timely rains. The farmers in these areas are clamouring for water. I request the hon. Minister to visit the area himself and also send a team which would draw a true picture of the affected areas.

The Government should make a fresh scrutiny of the problem with a view to safeguarding the interests of the farmers so as to avoid an internal clash in the country. This will help raising the agricultural production in the spirit of a challenge.

[English]

SHRI CHARANJIT SINGH WALIA
(Patiala): Mr. Chairman Sir, we are discuss-

[Sh. Charanjit Singh Walia]
ing in this House the demands of farmers and agricultural labours. About eighty per cent of the population in this country are living in rural areas. I should say, they are directly or indirectly associated with agriculture and basically the economy of our country is agriculture.

It is a pity that even after forty years of independence, the economic condition of the rural people, whether they are farmers or connected with agriculture in the form of labour, has not improved much. The reason for this is that the farmers, who are the backbone of our society and our agricultural economy, are not being given remunerative prices for their produce. We say with loud voice, we are proud that we have ushered in green revolution and the farmers feed the Indian society and the Indian people. But we are not generous or liberal enough to give them good price for their produce. The representatives of the farmers are not adequately represented in the Agricultural Cost and Price Commission.

We are not against agricultural scientists;

We are not against anybody who is connected with technology. Majority of the members of the Agricultural Cost and Price Commission should be the farmers who are engaged directly in the cultivation of land

Secondly, the prices of inputs and power should be lowered. Energy should be cheaper because for cultivation, a farmer depends mostly on seeds, inputs, fertilisers and energy. So unless and until we supply them these things at cheaper rates, they cannot be satisfied. That is why, they are always agitating. When they make a hue and cry for their genuine demands and start some agitation, then our Government says that the opposition leaders and other people unduly provoke them and plead their cause. I would again request that fertilisers, inputs, pesticides and energy should be made available at cheaper rates so that the cost of their production is lowered. The prices of the

agricultural produce should be linked with the industrial prices.

We have earlier seen drought in so many parts of the country and this time we have seen floods in most parts of the country. I would propose to the Government that it should create some permanent natural calamity and disaster fund with substantial amount so that whenever some such drought or any other natural calamity is there in any part of the country, the farmers, the ruralities, the agricultural people are given relief in sufficient quantity.

There should be compulsory and comprehensive insurance and all the farmers and agricultural labour should be covered under that insurance scheme.

One of the causes of restlessness in our youth is that those who are engaged in agriculture do not get full time employment. So the Government should encourage the rural people to start small scale rural industries so that people remain engaged in the industry and they get some benefit out of it. Government should start some agro-based industries in rural areas.

Government should ensure good quality seeds to the farmers. Strict action should be taken against those who are engaged in spurious and adulterated fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides. We have brought to the notice of the Government several times that there are still some unscrupulous persons who sell adulterated fertilisers. They sell spurious drugs. They should not be shown any sympathy or mercy. They are criminals engaged in such trade and should be dealt with in a very harsh and hard manner so that they stop doing all these things. With these words I thank you Mr. Chairman.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in this important debate. We are discussing the demands of the farmers and also of the agricultural labourers. Nothing could be more important than this subject for this

House because as you know, Sir, ours is dominantly an agricultural country and the entire progress and prosperity of the country lies in the advancement, in the progress of agriculture. You can talk of industry also but that is related to agricultural development. Thanks to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for the initiative he had taken in launching the Green Revolution in our country after Independence, which was also properly nurtured by Lal Bahadur Shastri Ji and Indira Ji when they were Prime Ministers. The country which was producing merely 551 million tonnes of foodgrains at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, is now producing about 170 million tonnes. This is an abnormal growth, a fantastic growth, more than three hundred per cent. This is not a small achievement. In fact, the whole world has acknowledged this spectacular progress of India in the field of agriculture. It is a matter of great satisfaction that we have not only been able to handle ourselves an unprecedented drought that we experienced last year — the outgoing year — but we have also been able to help countries like South Africa, etc. to fight out their drought conditions. We have given them enormous help in the form of foodgrains, etc. But still the reality is — and it has to be admitted — that there has not been satisfactory improvement in the condition of the lives of the farming community, I mean the poor farmers. That is quite disturbing and that has engaged our attention on priority basis. So many steps have already been taken. There have been land reforms. Of course, a lot more has to be done in that direction. As regards irrigation, lot of areas have been brought under irrigation. But still we have to give priority to irrigation. Same is the case with pesticides, fertilisers and so many other things. It is our common knowledge that in our country, concentration of land is still there. The percentage of small farmers holding below two and a half hectares of land is about 85. That means about 85 per cent cultivators are those who are holding below two and a half hectares of land. Such holdings upto one hectare account for 45% of the total holdings of land. So, Sir, you just imagine that only a small number of cultivators and the farmers

possess less than 2/3rd of the total agricultural land, cultivable land in the country. This is the position at present. There are small farmers and many of these small farmers are themselves agricultural labourers also. They produce small quantity of foodgrains and they are compelled to sell their produce even from their thrashing floor itself. They dispose of all their produce even without taking them for their own consumption. In many cases they have to sell their grains at throw-away price. They are exploited. But in the days of scarcity, they have to depend on the supply system, on the public distribution system. Some times, they have to purchase foodgrains from the open markets. They have to purchase foodgrains for their own consumption at a much higher price than the price at which they had disposed of their produce. I would not like to go into the details of the statistics etc. But I want to place one simple question for the consideration of the Government. I strongly feel and also share the feelings of the Members who have spoken earlier that service sector in our country is unfortunately getting more attention than the agricultural sector. To be specific, I would like to say that now the situation is such that even the Class-IV employee of the Central Government or the State Government is getting not less than Rs. 1000 per month as his salary. His yearly income works out to more than Rs. 12000. But how many cultivators in this country are getting an annual income of Rs. 12,000/-? What is our stand with regard to that? At what level we would like to keep these poor farmers — that is, I gave some examples about the size of holdings, the percentage of cultivators having small holding of land which is about 80% or so — who are earning much less than what the Class-IV employee of the Government is earning annually? There is thus imbalance, undesirable imbalance. It has got to be done away with. If we look at this problem from this angle and try to solve their problem, I think lot of other problems will disappear.

Now, coming to remunerative prices, I would like to point out that where there are irrigation potentialities, there is ample scope

[Sh. Sriballav Panigrahi]
for raising more than one or two crops and that automatically will raise the standard of cultivators in the command areas. So, irrigation and soil management for the cropping pattern are the factors which will have to be taken care of. What we are observing is that there is always an attempt on the part of bureaucracy to treat the farmers of all the States at par with the farmers of Punjab and Haryana in the matter of their income. That is not proper. In Orissa and in West Bengal as also part of U.P. and in Bihar, the situation is much worse. Therefore, they cannot be treated at par. So, again, Sir, I would place these points that regardless of cast and creed, some facilities, some help like providing jobs, providing education, etc. should be given to these people on economic consideration. S.C.S.T. first, then on the basis of economic considerations, those who are poor should be given such facilities in respect of providing jobs, educational facilities and medical facilities.

There is terrific discontentment among the farming community because only in agriculture there is ceiling on property and no ceiling on urban property or industrial sector. This is highly discriminatory. So, there should not be any discrimination in the matter of implementation of ceiling on property and the Government should cover all areas. This way we have to approach this important subject so as to eradicate the increasing discontentment among the farming community. They have got genuine grievances which should be properly studied and attended to on a priority basis. Thank you.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla): Mr. Chairman, first of all I want to say that today I want to speak in Hindustani and I had given notice to the Parliament Secretariat earlier. The version that comes to me must be in Urdu because Urdu is my first language.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please speak.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: I am speak-

ing the same. You enjoy it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are to speak in the allotted time on the subject.

(Interruptions)

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: Yes, but my first language is Urdu. So, it should be a permanent feature.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRIM. L. FOTEDAR): Soz Saheb, you speak in Urdu. Shri Bhajan Lal knows Urdu better than you and me.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: I am speaking in Urdu itself. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am speaking in Urdu as I come to know about it only today. How much difference can be there in the thinking of two persons became visible when two hon. Members of the ruling party spoke. Shri Rajhans said one thing while Shrimati Shaktawat said totally a different thing. It is on the records what Shri Rajhans said and I feel that I have a difference of opinion with him. He said that he is himself a farmer. He must be having a say in the kisan lobby. He said that nothing has been done for the farmers in this country. It is a very strange thing. At that time Shri Yadav was sitting here but Shri Bhajan Lal was not there. He says that I.R.D.P. and N.R.E.P. are useless and the farmers did not achieve anything from these programmes. He does not accept that anything has been done for the farmers. In reply to that Shrimati Shaktawat said that a lot has been done for the farmers and a lot is yet to be done. In the meantime I felt an urge to speak about the farmers. Shri Yadav and Shri Bhajan Lal, both are sitting here. All the hon. Members have spoke in favour of the farmers. The kisan lobby is very strong in this country and we must help the farmers. But I am sorry to point out that nobody has spoken on the subject under discussion. This issue relates not only to farmers but also to farm labourers. But none of the speaker uttered the name of farm labourers. It may perhaps be

recalled that the next to industrial sector the kisan lobby has become very strong. It is a matter of pleasure. First of all I shall speak for a few minutes for the farmers and raise those missing points which should have been raised in the interest of the farmers.

The views of Shri Rajhans appealed to my colleague from Lok Dal, Shri Ram Narayan Singh. Shri Rajhans and Shri Singh, both are not present in the House. However, it will be totally wrong to say that no attention has been paid to agriculture sector in this country. It may be recalled in this connection that it was Jawaharlal Nehru who had first of all said in this House that farmer was the backbone of India. Mahatma Gandhi had said exactly the same when he was abroad. That is why the First Plan was named agriculture plan. But later some shift was noticed in the planning process. The second plan too should have been agriculture-oriented. But what did we do? We become ambitious and our planning became defective.

[English]

Perhaps, we wanted to do everything possible under the sum.

[Translation]

That is why attention was paid to agriculture in the First Plan. The Second Plan was called industrial plan. In the third plan, we realised the mistake and gave thrust to agriculture again. What I want to say is that though there have been some shortcomings in our planning, yet India did a tremendous progress in the field of agriculture as compared to other countries of the world. It pains me when in spite of all this, it is being said that the farmers did not get anything.

I have listened to all speeches. I would like to say a few words about the farm labourers. The farmers want that they should get better prices. Agriculture should be made the priority sector. They need power, tractor and quality seeds. These things should have already been there in our

country. But due to some distortions in the planning process, a huge amount of money was wasted in the name of social services. Now there is no time to speak on this issue. I shall speak later on when a discussion takes place on planning. Shri Tikait fought a great battle for the farmers. The Congress Party itself demanded that something should be done for the farmers. It has been stated in the Seventh Plan.

[English]

The Seventh Plan had mentioned about agriculture labour also. I want to remind Bhajan Lalji about this.

[Translation]

I would like to remind Shri Shyam Lal Ji Yadav that he must be having the records of speeches delivered there. But he should not forget that there is a large oppressed sector in the country called 'farm labourers'. It has no union. Had Shri Rajhans been here, I would have told him that this section did not get the benefit of the I.R.D.P. or the N.R.E.P. It did not get the benefit of subsidies being provided by the Government. This section is being subjected to gross injustice. The Minister of Agriculture should take notice of how much of exploitation of these people is taking place. Now, if a child is found working in the industries, it is said that he is a child labour. But four to six year old children are working in the fields and they are not being paid for it. Sometimes they get a little quantity of rice or other foodgrains in return. You are not aware as to how much exploitation they have to face. My first point is this that Government of India should recognise this problem. The hon. Minister should also state about the status of the agricultural labour in his reply.

Secondly, I want to submit that no survey has been conducted about the conditions of the agricultural labour so far and about which I want to submit that the hon. Minister should announce that a permanent all India survey will be got conducted and its report will be implemented.

[Prof. Saifuddin Soz]
[English]

"We want to know the status of agricultural labour in India."

[Translation]

Thirdly, I want to submit that you should kindly state as to what should be the minimum wages? You should fix the minimum wages for the whole country and ensure that it is implemented. Until minimum wage policy is implemented, fixation of minimum wages have no meaning. Jammu and Kashmir is a small state but this issue is a major one for the entire country.

I am aware that Land Reforms have not benefitted the agricultural labourers at all and I want to submit that the greatest wish of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, who would be remembered for ever, was regarding the land reforms. Panditji, has given us everything from Five Year Plans to the very way to conduct ourselves inside the Parliament. But his most cherished dream was regarding land reforms which you have not yet implemented. In our State, under the Chief Ministership of Sheikh Abdullah, the land belonging to the Zamindars was acquired and distributed among the farmers. The agricultural labourers who were landless also got some of the land. But as regards other parts of the country, I can see that even today the Jagirdari system is continuing. I will give the details of what is happening in State like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar etc. but this is not the occasion for going into the details of it. We should have a uniform land reform policy for the entire country. Moreover, it should be free of shortcomings and complications. Only with the successful implementation of land reforms, we will be able to uplift the farmers and the agricultural labourers. Till land reforms are not implemented, vision of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru will not be realised and you will not be able to achieve your aim but you want to take undue credit by saying that you have done this and that. Therefore, what I want is that this must be done for the progress of the farmers and the agriculture

sector.

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Machilipatnam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is known to every one of us and we have been repeatedly telling both in the House and outside that more than 80 per cent of the people are living in the rural areas particularly depending on the farms either as a farmer or a farm labourer and 70 per cent of the Gross National Product also comes from the agricultural sector. It obviously tells us that unless the lot of the farmer and farm labourer is improved, we cannot make real achievement or improvement in the economy of our country. I don't wish to say that nothing has been done in this regard but we gauge anything only in relative terms. So, when you think anything in relative terms and see the lot of the poor farmer and farm labourer in the villages, though not the condition is pathetic but it is certainly nearer to it.

Sir, the questions that have been put to us whenever we go to the villages and speak to the farmers or farm labourers, they ask us: "What crime we have done? Is it a crime to maintain the tradition, peace, affection, hardwork and increase the production? What is the remuneration we are getting?" Sir, it is not only a question of remuneration but even the status and prestige. You can check it up. You may talk to a villager. You may talk to the daughter of a villager, a farmer or farm labourer and if you ask the option of the girl about the bridegroom, she will immediately say that she would like to marry an employee and not a farmer, no matter whether he is Class-IV employee or a Clerk or even unemployed person likely to get employment at the mercy of somebody. This clearly indicates not only the economic aspect but even the social aspect of the farmer and farm labourer. Therefore, unless we take immediate measure, I am sure those people will come to the streets. This we have been repeatedly telling in this House.

The other doubt that they are expressing every time is: Is it a crime to be unorganised? This is so particularly in the case of

farmer and farm labourers. If persons working in the Indian Airlines, drawing about Rs. 10000/- per month go on a strike, any Government is conceding to their demand and immediately agreeing to their demand. Yesterday I read in the newspaper that a few hundred — about 500 — employees of the banks were agitating for an increase in their emoluments by 25 per cent. Here, I am not accusing anyone. But I am only comparing the life of the employees and the life of the farmer and farm labourer. When a farmer or a farm labourer who is almost living below the poverty-line asks something, we do not concede even to increase the remunerative prices which automatically go to the labourer. Then, where is the point in conceding to the demands of the people who are highly paid? This only indicates that those people who are organised, they can get their things done and not the unorganised sections. So, I wish that any Government—let it be Central or State Government—should not give an impression to the people that unless they resort to violence or unionism or they go to the streets, their genuine demands will not be considered and their grievances redressed. This thinking itself must be avoided by taking immediate action in this regard. Kindly see the life of a farmer. A farmer owning 15 acres of land or 18 acres of wet land which is permitted under the land ceiling law, cannot get more than Rs. 20000/- income in a year. Whereas an ordinary employee gets Rs. 15,000, Rs. 18,000 or Rs. 20,000 minimum. Government has put a ceiling on the rural property — the land. But they have never thought of putting a ceiling on urban property or property in industries and trade. That has to be thought over by the Government and the Ministry.

Coming to my State or even the country also, the vagaries of nature are too uncertain. These days no farmer can be certain about the schedule of rain or the release of water from the canals. Keeping these things also, even if he puts hard work, if he risks his hard earned investment, he is not certain that he will get the crop in time because of the vagaries of nature. And the Government will go to the rescue of industrialists whose prop-

erties are running in crores of rupees by paying compensation through insurance. But when it is of crop, we are not thinking in terms of any compensation. I am very happy, the other day, our Hon. Minister Mr. Bhajan Lal did express sympathy and support and also mentioned that they are thinking in terms of bringing back the crop insurance totally, not only on the Mandal basis, but also on the village basis. This increases confidence among the farmers to invest.

Coming to the farming labourers, their life is much more pathetic. In regard to the farming labourers, they do not have work for the whole of the year. In any village, you check up, their work will be only for three or four months. Obviously, they will have to sit idle for six or eight months. Unless these farming labourers are given extra income by other means of employment in the balance time, their life will be more miserable. Many a time, in the Parliament, I suggested that the rural poor particularly the farming labourers and the youth in particular must be trained by starting rural centres in a good number in rural villages taking into account the professions that are required, such as fishing, poultry, dairy, sericulture etc. Boys unemployed can be trained in these professions; they can earn and add to their income which they earn in the balance three months.

In regard to infrastructural facilities, everyone of us has discussed that there is too much urban migration. We think of cutting it. But if we are to increase their income by these methods, and make their lives in the rural areas more effective, nobody will come to urban areas. Only if the farmers are paid remunerative prices and the farm labourer is given enough training in the rural areas and the infrastructural facilities, like education, communication, transport etc., are given, no person would like to come to urban area. Particularly in regard to farming labourers, I request the Hon. Minister to think and discuss with his colleagues in other Ministries and ensure free education, free medical facilities, subsidised housing to every farming labourers. If that can be done... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please proceed.

SHRI K.S. RAO: I do not want to take more time of the House. There was unanimity and there is unanimity among the Members of Parliament to whichever party they may belong, with regard to the problems of the farmers and the farming community. Remunerative prices, crop insurance, liberal lending at lesser rates of interest, rural training centres and cottage and agro-based industries must be taken care of before discussing for the second time the demands of the farmers. If this is done, problems of the farmers and the farming labourers will automatically be solved. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KEYUR BHUSHAN (Raipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are going to discuss the condition of the farmers. The entire discussion so far has been concentrating on the farmers and the rural areas. We find that the rural areas have developed a lot and conditions of the farmers have undergone a change. Though the villages form, 80 per cent of our economy, we have never viewed the village as a part of our economic system but we are going to do so now. From that point of view, we have to take the village as a unit and ensure its special developmental on the basis of its own resources. If our developmental activities are not based on the resources available locally, we shall not be able to make the required progress. We are giving substantial financial assistance to the farmers. The minimum wages for the agricultural labourers have almost been fixed everywhere. But they are not getting it regularly. In States, like Haryana and Punjab, there is no problem in this regard but in the backward states, the labourers are still not getting the minimum wages. In the Chattisgarh area of Madhya Pradesh also, the minimum wages are not given to the labourers. Majority of the labourers of that area go to Punjab for employment. Even in Maharashtra, there are only a few places where the labourers are getting minimum wages. Therefore it is essential to pay attention to it. But how can it be done? If we intend

to do it through the Rural Development Programmes, we shall not be able to do so. Therefore the required resources have to be mobilised locally. The biggest of the resources is land and it should be properly distributed. There are several places in Punjab even today where you will find farms measuring upto 300 to 400 acres. How is it so that such vast areas belong to the individuals? What has happened to the enforcement of land ceiling? Ceiling laws have not been enforced uniformly. In most of the villages, the capitalists hold sway. The traders have turned big farmers. The true farmer is he who tills the soil himself. All others are landlords. When the Zamindari system has been done away with, how do these Zamindars happen to exist? They are businessmen as well as landlords. The cooperative banks are meant for the farmers but do the real farmers have their hold on these banks? It is the businessmen turned agriculturists who are getting the full benefits of this system. This situation must change. The businessmen have purchased land in the name of their wives, children and other relatives and have become farmers. We should guard against such a situation.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): From this point of view, the Birlas should be the biggest farmers as they own 450 acres of farm land in Delhi.

SHRI KEYUR BHUSHAN: They have acquired 750 to 800 acres of land in Gwalior to set up a sugar factory there. But sugarcane is not being grown. If you sincerely want to improve the conditions of the small farmers and agricultural labourers, the illegal occupation of agricultural land as it was mentioned yesterday that a trust was set up in the name of a temple, for withholding the land, should be checked. Thousands and lakhs of acres of land are under the occupation of religious places. I would suggest that all surplus land with these temples, mosques and Gurudwaras should be acquired and distributed among the landless. This will solve many of our problems and the landless will also get land. Many people have land holdings in different names. You

will find that those who have big land holdings are either businessmen or are in very high positions carrying attractive salaries. They own large farms. The officials occupying top positions in the Government also own large farms. They own such a land in the name of various persons. I want that such cases should be thoroughly examined and the land found surplus with them should be distributed among the landless. I would even suggest that individual right of ownership of land in the villages should be done away with and the entire land should belong to the Gram Sabha for the purpose of its management. It is essential to change the prevailing system. It will enable us to develop the villages and make progress. If we want to develop the villages in its own form, then their development should be done in the perspective of the villages itself. I would suggest that the produce of the villages should be processed in the village itself and then sent outside. For example, what harm is there in processing sugarcane, tomatoes, potatoes produced in the villages? The small and cottage industries should be promoted in the village so that 'gur' 'shakkar', 'Boora' etc. may be produced locally and supplied to other parts of the country. Similarly, other agricultural items may also be processed there. Small and cottage industries may be set up in the villages for this purpose and the processed items may be packed and canned there for the purpose of supply to other places. Villages are the main supply centres of milk, hence it may also be similarly processed into butter and ghee and sent outside in the tinned form for its sale in the urban areas. This will alleviate unemployment in the rural areas and provide the village people with employment opportunities in the villages itself. Our Hon. Prime Minister has stated clearly that we are to provide employment to at least one member of every family to alleviate rural unemployment but how can we do it? The aforementioned suggestions can be a way out. Therefore, arrangements have to be made for the processing and packaging of the agricultural items produced in the villages and their supply to the urban areas in the tinned form.

On one hand, it is necessary to develop the villages for the development of the country as a whole, on the other hand it is also necessary to conserve the cattle wealth like cows and oxen and lay due emphasis on the development of the horticulture and water resources. If we cannot supply quality breeds of cows, buffaloes, oxen etc. to the farmers, will it be possible to develop agriculture and thereby the whole country? We cannot make progress by depending merely on tractors. Where will you get the required fuel for the tractors? When we have decided to march speedily towards 21st century, we shall have to supply quality breeds of cattle to the farmers. Today, the Sahiwal breed of oxen is on the verge of extinction in Punjab.

Therefore, it is essential to look to it as to in which direction we are heading. It is equally important to conserve the good breeds of cows and oxen.

Today animals of good breeds are being slaughtered in Kerala and West Bengal. I would like to request my sister Gitaji who is present in the House to take some steps so that good breeds of cows and oxes may not be slaughtered. If this slaughter is stopped, economic condition of West Bengal will improve and the agriculturalists in the country will also get good breed of cows and oxes. There will be rapid development if we protect them. I would like to warn the Government that if slaughtering of our useful cows and oxes continues in this way we will not be able to make progress. We will have to change the existing laws so that the good breeds of animals may be protected. The cows and oxes are first crippled by blinding them and breaking their feet and then they are slaughtered. This practice is in full swing in Bombay. We will have to stop it for the sake of development of farmers. If this situation is allowed to continue, a day will come when even cowdung will have to be imported from foreign countries in the same manner in which we are importing seeds, fertilizers etc. and spending our valuable foreign exchange. Will the Government import even the cowdung from America? Our hon. Agriculture Minister is himself a farmer and Shri

[Sh. Keyur Bhushan]

Yadav himself belongs to the Yadav dynasty. They know each and everything and I would like to request them to bring a change in this situation. I am not saying these things here under the fascination of religious feelings. I do not believe in any religion. I am saying all this just to protect the good breeds of cows and oxes for the development of agriculture. I very firmly say that if these things are done we will be able to make progress very rapidly.

17.10 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[*English*]

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you know that 80 per cent of the total population of our country are the peasants or the agricultural labourers. It is also a hard fact that about 50 per cent of the population are the poorest of the poor in our country. They are half-clad. They have no clothing. They have no food. This is the condition.

A few days back, in the AICC session, you passed a resolution "*Garibi Hatao, Bekari Hatao*". But before that, you must be aware how many times you have given such slogans. I say, it is a slogan just for vote-catching.

You know that in the Avadi Congress at the time of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, you raised the slogan 'Socialist pattern of society'. What was the fate of that slogan? You know that in the time of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, you raised the slogan of '*Garibi Hatao*'. You know what is the fate of that. What is the condition of the poor people of this country?

Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee referred to the Labour Sub-Committee's Report. Mr. Madan Pandey was a Member of this Committee. What is that report? After so many legislations, after so many programmes, what are they getting? It is only Rs. 3-

4 per day after eight hours of hard work. That is the tragedy. According to that particular report, you know for how many days they are getting the work. It is hardly for 75-80 days. Will Shri Bhajan Lal tell us, when they get work for about 75-80 days, what do they do during the remaining days of the year? You may say that they are still alive. Yes, they are still alive. They are trying to live by selling their ploughs. The womenfolk are selling their chastity. It is not in any other place. Mr. Vora is here. In the report, it is mentioned about Madhya Pradesh. What about the other States? This is the position. Are you serious about implementing the RLEGP and NREP? Are you serious in Orissa? What is going on in Kalahandi? After so many visits of the Prime Minister, the people are dying there. There are starvation deaths. That is the tragedy. It is in the report. (*Interruptions*)

Many Members from that side and also from this side spoke about the peasants' problems. We are hardly speaking about the remunerative prices. It is also a great tragedy of the Indian peasantry that the peasants and the workers, who are producing paddy, wheat, jute, sugarcane, tobacco by their sweat and blood, are not getting the remunerative prices for their produce. It seems to be the bitter harvest which brings no sweet for them.

On the one side, it may be said that there had been a sharp increase in the prices of agricultural inputs like fertilisers, pesticides, diesel, kerosene, irrigation water, power, implements, seeds, etc. If we make a study on the Reports of 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83, 1984-85, 1985-86, the increase in the prices of agricultural inputs, had ranged from 83 to 151 per cent. On the other hand, during the same period 1980-81 to 1985-86, the prices of agricultural produce have increased on an average from 27 to 38 per cent. It means that the agriculturists are losing by 56 per cent on an average. Have you gone through this report? In your green book you have not mentioned that.

Then, have you gone through the report of the Reserve Bank? If you go through the

data from 1980-81 to 1985-86 given by the Reserve Bank, you will find that the agriculturists have to pay 49 points on an average more to industries than what they received as consumers.

Now, I come to another study made by nobody else, but by Dr G. S. Phulla, a former Chairman of the Agricultural Prices Commission. That report came in the different newspapers a few days back. That report revealed that the farmers owning land up to 7.5 acres of land had negative household savings and those who are holding land from 7.5 acres to 25 acres may be compared to Class IV staff of the Central Government.

Then, subsequent studies made by the Punjab University have shown that the annual earnings of a Government clerk in 1983-84 were Rs. 15736 as compared to Rs. 12135 of a cultivating farmer who possessed land more than 7.5 acres of land.

This is the standard and this is how you treat them. This is because they are not organised; they cannot speak for themselves and cannot shout. That is why you are exploiting them.

Will the Minister please tell us if they are really sincere for the development of the rural poor? I think, they are not serious at all. I charge you on that point.

Now, about the raw jute from which you earn Rs. 300 crores foreign money every year. About forty lakh jute growers and two and a half lakh persons are working in the jute mills. Can you tell me their condition? The hon. Prime Minister just before the elections in West Bengal in November 1986 had assured creation of Rs. 150 crore jute modernization fund, creation of Rs. 100 crore jute fund to look after the jute growers, removal of import duty from high technology jute mill machines and mandatory use of jute goods.

Let us have a look at the second promise, namely, creation of Rs. 100 crore jute fund to look after the jute growers. What is

the net result after two and a half years? Out of that fund of Rs. 100 crores, only Rs. eight crores have been spent so far and out of those Rs. 8 crores, six crores through JCI and two crores through Agricultural Department. That is the tragedy. That is your promise. It was only an election stunt and nothing else. Sir, are these 197 JCI Units and 305 cooperative units sufficient to purchase the raw jute? It is not only the case in West Bengal but the same is the case with Orissa, Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura. Is it possible for them to purchase these 70-80 lakhs of bales of raw jutes? It is impossible. But even then you are not doing anything. Under the Essential Commodities Act when you are promising everything, you have withdrawn the statutory price of raw jute. The Support Price is also very minimum. It is for the purpose of the Jute industry and not for the Jute growers. So, Sir, the attitude is quite different, and it is anti agriculturists, anti-Kisans and anti-agricultural labours.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, farmers and labourers are the soul of India. The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had launched an agitation to get justice for the farmers and labourers alongwith the agitation for the freedom of this country. This had always been the policy of the Congress Party to provide all possible facilities to the farmers and labourers and to improve their lot. According to this policy, Congress has always been trying to improve their condition by formulating various schemes. There is no doubt that Government has been helping farmers by way of providing electricity, loans, subsidies etc. but as far as Bihar is concerned, unpredictable floods are so devastating that these facilities have no meaning in their case. In Bihar, thousands of acres of land is destroyed by flood every year. Consequent upon this, the farmers rush towards cities because their hard work is nullified by floods. The farmers of Bihar are always hit by floods, droughts, failure of monsoons and heavy downpour. The farmers of Uttar Pradesh are also facing the

[Sh. Ram Bhagat Paswan]
same situation. The Government have formulated plans worth crores of rupees but sufferings of the people have increased after the formulation of these plans because no arrangements have been made for the drainage of flood water. The decision of constructing dams, wherever these dams have been constructed, was not taken judiciously, that is why the condition of farmers have become more deplorable. Bihar has 2-3 problems and there are 3-4 schemes to solve these problems. The hon. Agriculture Minister might have been told by the people during his visits to Bihar. There are three rivers in Bihar. There is need to construct dam in the barrage area of Nepal upon Kosi river to prevent the floods of this river. Similarly, dams should be constructed at Shishpani in Nepal upon the Kamla Banal and at nanuthar upon Bagmati river. If the Government constructs dams at these three places, there will certainly be no flood in Bihar. This will also ensure irrigation facilities to farmers in regulated manner. The agriculture land of Bihar is the most fertile land of India. Unless and until Government completes these three schemes to control the floods, the conditions of farmers will not improve.

The dam upon Kamla Banal has been left incomplete. The result is that the whole area of North Bihar where the dam has been left incomplete, is submerged by the flood water. At least 30 hundred crore rupees might have been spent by your engineers but of no use. Money meant for these schemes have gone into the pockets of engineers and officers. The farmers have not got any benefits. Therefore, these schemes should be implemented strictly so that the farmers may derive some benefits from these schemes. Otherwise the farmers of Bihar have already come to Delhi and started living in jhuggi-jhoperies.

As far as the labourers are concerned, there has been no improvement in their lot. They are being exploited even today. They may be the bonded labour or the agricultural labour, their condition in Bihar is that even today they have no house to live in. They

have to face vagaries of the weather in the open. They do not get enough food even after working for 12-16 hours daily. In Delhi, the labourers can be seen sleeping, working and breaking the stones on the roads even while suffering from fever with a temperature of 104 degree C. What arrangements the Government have made for these people? Gandhiji had launched the agitation for their welfare also. I would urge the Government that arrangements should be made to provide shelter for those labourers who work in the agricultural fields, on roads, and engaged in construction of the houses. They are being exploited. The Government may get it investigated. Arrangement should be made for at least providing them houses. They also have children and have aspirations for the better future of their children. Today, their children are studying in engineering but are living in jhuggi-jhoperies with their parents. The Government should pay attention towards them also.

Enforcement of minimum wages in Bihar has resulted in the killing of many persons. With regard to the land ceiling, Shri Keyur Bhushan has correctly asked as to who is a landlord today? Today, the landlords are big engineers, doctors, Tatas, Birlas, Dalmia etc. These big landlords do not plough the fields but are in possession of land. The person who is in possession of 4 thousand acres of land here is residing in America... (*Interruptions*)... I would like to urge upon the Government to ensure minimum wages to labourers and they should also be got freed from any sort of litigation. Besides arrangements should be made to provide houses to them and for education of their children. With these words, I conclude. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister will reply at 5-30 p.m. Now Dr. Datta Samant.

DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central): We know the very pitiable conditions of the agricultural labour. They are from the backward classes. They are the poorest

men in this country, uneducated and exploited. I do not know who stopped this Government from improving their condition during the last forty years. For the last four years I have been continuously speaking in this House, asking whether you have got the minimum urge or any sympathy for, or got anything to do with the poor.

Just going to Tamil Nadu and talking to the poor people and their families is not the way of solving the poverty in this country. What have they gained in the last forty years? Three commissions had been appointed, but their reports have not been implemented. The fourth commission is there now. After two years, something will again come up. The committees' reports say that the rural labour is denied even the statutory minimum wages in most of the areas. This is what the report by the MPs of this House says. Who stopped you from doing the things necessary with regard to this minimum wage? I say that this Government has got nothing to do with these labourers. If agricultural labourers are given the guaranteed minimum wages, 50% of the poverty in this country will be removed. What for do you have your machinery, what for all these tehsildars, labour commissioners, inspectors and others? Why are you not telling them to go and implement these programmes? Do not leave it to the unions. The unions cannot work at the village level. You have decided after a long time that Rs. 11/- will be the wage. This is quite insufficient. Make it Rs. 20/-; link it with some D.A. after every three years. During the last four years, prices have gone up by 60%. When the prices of implements rise, the poorest man suffers because these are essential commodities for him. These are the simple rules, but this Government has no will, practically; and, therefore, the agricultural labourers are not getting work all the year round. You give some guarantee about this. When there is famine, these labourers go from one area to another, and suffer in those areas.

Many such points are there, which I can discuss. But there is no time. There is no will on the part of the Government. I am in that

committee on Labour, but I do not like to move about with others in that committee, thus incurring additional expenditure, because Government is not going to listen. Even after these reports on farm labour, they have not done anything about them during the last two years. Again, last week, 14 commissions have been appointed to study bonded labour, to study minimum wages etc., thus going on just fooling people in this House, fooling people in general and fooling the bonded labour, because they are not reading these reports. This is the pitiable condition of the agricultural labourers. I strongly protest against this. If you do not want to do anything, do not discuss these matters in this House.

You have been discussing about the agricultural labourers and farmers in this House, especially the labourers, but you don't want to do anything for them.

In Haryana, you had talked about giving concessions to the farmers worth Rs. 260 crores; you had made a political issue of it on which you had lost. In Maharashtra, Mr. Sharad Pawar has given concessions to the farmers worth Rs. 200 crores, but, on an average, it comes to Rs. 400 per farmer. It is a political announcement. The big houses, Tatas and Birlas of this country have deceived the banks and the Government Corporation Boards; they have deceived them by Rs. 4000 crores. What did you do for them? They are swallowing money. The sick industries are increasing. In Bombay, the textile owners have swallowed Rs. 700 crores of the banks but to all the farmers of Maharashtra you are giving Rs. 200 after 40 years. This shows your will and how you are helping them.

You are giving concessions to Tatas, Birlas and other big houses in export. For textile garments, you are not allowing them income tax. On export you are giving them 10 per cent subsidy. You are giving them a lot of import concessions. The economy of this government is working for the top people who are creating the black money and you are only discussing the welfare of the farm-

[Dr. Datta Samant]
ers and the agricultural labourers.

In Mexico and the African countries where Pepsi Cola has gone, there is a bad report about it. I request this House to study this. If you study this, then you may get to know about it.

The farmers are suffering for want of remunerative prices. Immediately, they may get a little more. But if you compare it with the national economy and tomorrow if the cost rises, then these multinationals are going to exploit the situation. For what? Will they do it for potato chips or fruit juices? Why are you not using the Bangalore technology? This government wants to be a spectator to all these.

For the last four years, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has been in power. You have given more than Rs. 2000 crores to the multi-nationals because you are allowing them to remain in this country.

For wheat prices, you are giving Rs. 1.83. In the last four years, they went up by 20 paise. The government's procurement price for the wheat went up by 20 paise in the last four years.

What is the agricultural cost for the fertiliser? It went up by 50 per cent. You have no machinery to stop this. Your FCI is taking Rs. 1.03 for transport and storage charges. What is this? They have to pay 70 per cent and the food subsidy is Rs. 1000 crores. Who is ruling this country? When the price announced here was Rs. 1.83 I went to Bombay and enquired about it. There it was Rs. 4.50. This is the fate of this country. In between the big traders, industrialists and your supporters are trading in this country. Therefore, I appeal to the government to change the whole strategy and activities. This is a pure basic economic change; and if you do not do that, there is no use just having an academic discussion in this House.

You have done an injustice to me. You are not allowing me more than five minutes.

I have got other points to make. Anyhow, I will express my views on some other occasion.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will get so many opportunities to explain your points.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK (Sonepat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel very sad when very learned Members of the House do not speak to the point... (*Interruptions*) The subject, which is under discussion today, is very simple. But many of our hon. colleagues delivered speeches just to catch votes of farmers. The subject is very clear. Shri Mahendra Singh Tikait organised a rally in Delhi. What are the demands of farmers and agricultural labourers and how much help should be rendered to them... To speak on this subject we should keep in our mind as to what are the demands of farmers and do we consider them justified? We have to consider these points.

The two demands of farmers are more related to State Governments than the Central Government. For example, I may say that the electricity charges should be uniform throughout the country. This is a State subject. The demand was placed before the Central Government because they did not want to launch agitation against the State Governments which were exploiting them. Their second demand was about the prices of sugarcane. This is also a State subject. Their three demands were firstly, they wanted remunerative prices of their produce. Their second demand was about the insurance of their produce and that the village should be treated as a unit for the insurance, I would like to say in this regard that this matter has not been discussed with all its seriousness in which it ought to have been discussed. Unfortunately, we spent three days in discussing Bofors and at the time of that discussion, the House was full to its capacity. But today when the issues regarding farmers are being discussed only three Members belonging to the opposition benches are present here. I am thankful to

the members belonging to the Congress party who are present in the House in sufficient number. What I want to say is that we only want to get the sympathy of farmers by raising their issues but in reality we are not concerned about their exploitation.

I want to say that the farmers represent 80 per cent population of the country and in the Parliament. There are 80 per cent representatives of farmers. But it can be seen that how many speeches are made in support of their demands. I will not speak more on this subject but I would like to raise my objection against the demand made by one of the hon. Members from my state that agriculture should be declared as an industry. The industrialists are having their own farm houses for concealing their black money now-a-days. This will not do any good to the farmers. They are innocent people. They are misguided by such utterings. Instead of declaring agriculture as industry, minimum and maximum limit of credit that a farmer could be provided be fixed. For farmers having up to 5 acres of land, limit of loan should be Rs. 25 thousand and that of having upto 10 acres of land, the limit should be Rs. 50 thousand so that he can take loan upto this limit as and when he requires.

If the farmers are freed from the present exploitation heaped on them, it would certainly bring a lot of benefits for them. They do not get remunerative prices of their produce. Besides, there are a large number of middlemen operating in agriculture sector. Elimination of middlemen will certainly bring prosperity for farmers.

I would like to submit yet another point that the farmers are not getting remunerative prices of their produce because a large number of white collar personnel such as Inspector, sub-inspector and others are engaged in agriculture sector at farmer's cost. With the increase in number of research centres and persons working therein, burden on farmers is also increasing. Agricultural labourers are also affected due to this. I, therefore, would like to submit that these white collar personnel should not be

made a burden on farmers. So farmers should not be burdened by increasing the number of white collar personnel in agriculture sector. The loan system should be simplified in order to save the farmers from exploitation. An indepth study about the problems of the farmers is required to be made and if the problems are solved and the procedures for providing facilities are simplified, they can be saved from the losses and can be satisfied with the current prices of their produce.

It is our good luck that Chowdhary Bhajan Lal is holding the portfolio of the Ministry of Agriculture and persons like Shri Yadav and Shri Shastri, being born in farmers family are well versed with the problems of the farmers, are there to assist him. Today, the farmers expects that justice will be done to them and they should get justice.

With these words, I thank you.

[English]

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD YADAV (Madhepura): I have heard the speeches. The speakers have gone to the extent of so much help the farmers. But one thing I find that this society is integral whole, not fragmentation. It is a total organism. Of course 80 per cent of the Indian people are living on farms. They are farmers. Every group or class is not independent. Rather, I think, they are inter-dependent either the individual or the group of people. Yes, it is a fact that the farmers should be helped to the maximum possible extent. They are down-trodden; they are helpless on account of drought, floods, this or that. I agree. But which portion of the society is to be excluded from the list of help? There are lakhs of young people having education technical or general, and are loitering in the streets. They are not getting employment. Is any MP here prepared to forgo the emoluments that he is going to get? What is the national average that per individual should get? I think, no educated person, young man or IAS or IPS, no sector of the society is going to leave his share. Only fools give the feast and the wise

[Sh. Mahabir Prasad Yadav]
eat it. The simple question is that the organised sectors like the people are taking the lion's share and those 80 per cent of the farmers are living in sub-standard way. They are not living upto the standard expected of them.

One thing I have to say. Our people speak of Russia and China. I am quoting the Russian figures. The Russian Government is giving Rs. 1.98 thousand crores as subsidy on food only. Can India give this much of subsidy? This I am stating from the editorial of the *Times of India* dated 4th of November: "The budgetary deficit in Soviet Russia in the current year is of the order of 36 billion Roubles, equivalent to about Rs. 80,000 crores. The Soviet budget is strained by subsidies totalling an astronomical Rs. 2,34,000 crores equivalent. Food subsidies alone account for an estimated Rs. 1,94,000 crores." Can India bear this much? The farmers ought to get help but we have to help the country in an integrated way. We have to treat the country as an integral whole, not in parts, not in fragmentations. The organised sectors take the lion's share. Now, what is to be done for the farmers class? I have two suggestions in mind. China is having an inflation rate of 20 per cent and India has come to the inflation rate of about ten per cent. So, the Indian budget has got to be framed in such a rational manner that all the classes get their due share according to the national average. The Prime Minister is not to see only the farmers class, he has to see the whole nation. We know that a good number of youth are unemployed. That has got to be taken into consideration. Every individual has got to be taken into consideration, every sector has got to be taken into consideration.

The Indian economic situation has got to be considered in the Indian context. The complexity of the Indian reality must be considered in such a way that complications and complexities are removed by the Government for the whole class of people.

One factor that I must say is this that the

Opposition always makes mountain of a mole hill. There is only one Communist Member sitting here. In West Bengal, they have not given the Central scale of pay but those Communist members 9 come to Bihar and they give the slogan that Central scales of pay should be given to the Non-Gazetted officers. I simply suggest that farmers should get their due and the integrated budget of the whole country should be framed in such a way that the whole country and the whole class of people get their due share.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate the farmers and scientists for their contribution in making magnificent achievements in increasing foodgrains production as it is they who are instrumental in achieving self-sufficiency in the field of foodgrains. As I have very short time, I would like to confine my speech to the main points only. The hon. Minister of Agriculture replied to a question with regard to Crop Insurance Scheme. This scheme is being made on the basis of Patwari circle. Our district, which has been suffering from drought for the last many years, will also be benefited from this scheme. This is a beneficial scheme, so it should be implemented immediately. In the desert areas, Central Arid Zone Institute has been working for the last 30 years, but its achievements are insignificant and the farmers are little benefited from it though crores of rupees are being spent on it. I repeatedly say that when such an institution has been established, it should provide some sorts of benefits to the desert areas, but they are not providing any benefits. I would like to say that Krishi Vigyan Kendras should be established. Such Kendras should be set up in Barmer, Jaisalmer. Our problem is this that in the desert areas the definitions of small and marginal farmers do not apply there. The small and marginal farmers are not getting full benefits due to this. The definitions of small and marginal farmers for the irrigated areas are the same throughout the country. In the irrigated areas in the desert areas, irrigation is done through

lifting water from the wells which are as deep as 250 feet whereas in other irrigated areas, irrigation is done through canals. Throughout the country, a farmer having zero to 0.75 hectares of land has been defined as marginal farmers whereas a farmer having 0.75 to one and half hectares of land has been defined as small farmer. For the farmer of desert areas, we have to consider this aspect in right perspective. Only then, they can get any benefit. For the unirrigated areas, a farmers having 10 hectares of land has been defined as small farmers. It means that a small farmer will have 62 1/2 bighas of land.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
 (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): 120 bighas make 10 hectares.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN: 62 1/2 bighas make 10 hectares 75 bighas of land is allotted to them. A farmers after having been allotted 75 bighas of land is considered a big farmers. In our areas, there has been consistent drought for the last five years and production is almost nil. That is why the ceiling has been fixed at 420 acres and it was fixed on the basis of yield in one standard acre of land. This is a very scientific basis. In view of that, the definitions of small and marginal farmers have been correctly spelt out, so that we can get benefit from it. Our farmers have to face drought for many years, so they have been given many facilities. One of them is that compound interest will not be charged from them. In view of the drought situation arising continuously for the two-three years, some concessions should be given on the loans taken by them. In those areas, where production is very less, loans should be waived or some concessions be given. Today, the differential rate of interest is 4 per cent and it is very much beneficial for the poor. But I think that only one per cent people are benefitted by this differential rate of interest. In order to provide benefit to the small and marginal farmers from this differential rate of interest, if this limit is somewhat increased, then to my opinion, farmers will get more benefit due to which foodgrain production will also increase.

So far as land reforms is concerned, our Planning Commission has always put emphasis on it, but as it was not properly implemented, we are not getting the full benefit. Benami transactions have taken place. To my view, a serious view is required to be taken to implement the land reforms afresh. Unless the Act is drastically amended, we can not get its benefit.

Today the thing which is most needed is this that if we really want to develop the desert areas and to make the farmers prosperous, we should complete the Indira Gandhi Canal immediately so that its water can reach the desert areas. This will increase our production of foodgrains. With the arrival of green revolution in the desert areas of our country, not only Rajasthan but the whole country will rapidly make progress and we will be self-sufficient in all respect. We will be able to come at par with Punjab and Haryana and can contribute greatly in the development of the country. With these words I thank you.

CHOUHDARY KHURSHID AHMAD
 (Faridabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today the House is discussing the problems of farmers since morning. All the hon. Members from both the sides, Congress as well as the Opposition, have expressed their views on the subject. The only thing which has been emphasised by both the sides is that besides ensuring the availability of basic requirements like electricity, water etc. to the farmers, we should also ensure them the remunerative price for their produce when they bring it in the market. Everything will go useless if the farmers do not get the remunerative price for their produce. Every one is aware of the pitiable condition of the Indian farmer. The Government fixes the price of the crop when it gets ready for marketing. The support price of wheat which was Rs. 173 per quintal has been increased to Rs. 183 per quintal this year. This means that when a farmer brings his crop of wheat in the market, he will get its price at the rate of Rs. 183 per quintal. Today the condition of the Indian farmer is such that he does not even have enough to eat. His produce reaches

[Choudhary Khurshid Ahmad]

either the Government godowns or is grabbed by the hoarders and blackmarket-eers. I can claim that you can not purchase wheat from the market even at the rate of Rs. 250 per quintal what to talk of Rs. 183/- per quintal. The profit is taken away by the middlemen and the farmer do not get it. Has the Government ever paid attention to this fact. This results in the demands from the farmers and dharnas by people like Tikait. His union will go insignificant if the farmers constitute a union of their own. All the Indian farmers then may be benefitted. Tikait merely had the support of the farmers of a few places. If we take an overall view, we find that the hoarders, blackmarketeers etc. in collaboration with the Govt. have formed a nexus and our farmers are falling a prey to it. The poor man is thus in a great problem. Today the situation is such that the consumers do not even have enough money to buy goods and they have to pay very high prices for the goods they want to purchase. In this way our policy is failing. Today the farmer demands a support price of Rs. 35 per quintal for sugarcane. The Government fixes the support price on the basis of the data furnished to it by the statisticians who collect such a data. The farmers have got nothing to do with it. They are innocent people. They would like to sell their produce to one who pays them a little more.

But the statisticians in the big sugar mills present such a picture which show that if the farmer is paid Rs. 35 per quintal, the sugarmill will go in total loss. But this is not so. All the sugar mills in Haryana are running in profit despite the fact that the farmers are being paid at the rate of Rs. 35 per quintal. If this price can be paid at one place, then why the same cannot be paid in other States which have more number of sugar mills?

18.00 hrs.

This is our weakness that we are very stiff towards the farmers and polite towards the industrialists. As regards subsidy to the farmers, the Government adopts very strange methods. The Government claim

that a subsidy of Rs. 3 thousand crores has been paid for the fertilisers. But to whom this amount has been paid? Everywhere the subsidy is given to the fertilizer industry and not to the farmers. The beneficiary is one who has links directly with the Government. You provide the subsidy to the fertilizers' factories which swindle Rs. 3-4 crores in the name of farmers by showing inflated figures of their expenses. The Government should review this matter and provide the subsidy direct to the farmers. If at all it is to be provided to the fertiliser factories, then they should produce fertilisers which may be distributed at cheaper rates. What happens here is that many factories supply sub-standard fertilizer and the traders supply totally sub-standard fertilizers. As regards seed corporation, there was a question also this morning on the subject, everybody wants specialists to be posted there. But the biggest agricultural specialist of India is the farmer himself and he gets no representation anywhere. There were 25 or 27 members in seed production and we would like to know as to how many of them have produced seed. You can appoint scientists and experts but the majority of them should be of the seed producing farmers, who know at what time and in which way is a particular thing required. There is a bungling with them. Their seed samples are changed. In view of all these things, has the Government provided any relief to the farmers? Some such via media is found where everything goes wrong.

The farmers have presented their demands here but here too, there was no right approach adopted towards them. The Government bows down in front of small units. Shri Tikait came here and captured certain portions of lawns in front of India Gate as a result of which you had to move to Red Fort for your rally. But where will you go when Shri Tikait reaches Red Fort for a sit-in. Therefore you recognise the power of the farmers and remove their problems and then fix the reasonable price for the consumers.

Just now our colleague told us about the quantum of subsidy provided in Russia. You

should increase the food subsidy if you want to serve the interests of the poor consumer. But the farmers should be paid remunerative price for their produce. He is exploited in every way and nothing is done for him. A lot of money is spent on construction of roads, on electricity and water under urban development but the farmer in the villages is ignored. His standard of living goes on falling and he has become helpless. In order to avoid these things we should do something immediately.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now it is already 6 O'clock. I am having a list of 8-9 Members more to speak. Shall we continue this debate tomorrow?

PROF N.G. RANGA (Guntur): I have got to speak. I will take only 5 minutes. We will continue tomorrow.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): Several hon. members have expressed their views and now

there is a possibility only of repetition. I require at least one hour's time to reply to this debate. Therefore my submission is that if there are some more speakers, who want to express their views on the subject, the time may be extended by half-an-hour. In case they do not want to speak today, you may decide as you like.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Can we extend the time by half-an-hour??

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD (Hingoli): It is better we have it tomorrow morning.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Tomorrow we are having Private Members Bills also. Any-way, we will continue tomorrow.

The House stands adjourned to re-assemble tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

18.04 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, November 18, 1988/Kartika 27, 1910 (Saka)