

12.16 hrs.

RE: INTERIM RELIEF TO VICTIMS OF
BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Finance Minister, through you he is present here about the need for immediate interim relief to Bhopal gas victims. As you know, Sir, the tragedy of Bhopal gas victims has been raised in the House time and again and as you also know, five lakh people of thirty-six Wards of Bhopal were the direct victims of the gas leak. You also know, Sir, that there are arrangements for payment of interim relief of Rs.200 per head per month for three years and the condition is that before the interim relief is over, the finalisation of the compensation cases will be settled. But out of six lakh cases five lakhs and one lakh added later on only 1800 or 1900 cases have been settled. You will be surprised to know that from 31st March, 1993, that interim relief has been stopped. During the debate on Madhya Pradesh Budget, we had raised it here in the House and the Minister present here repeatedly said that there is a budgetary provision for continuances of that relief of those five lakh people.

12.17 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

We objected because we had already raised the matter. The Bhopal Gas Peerit Sangarsh Samiti and other organisations also raised it again and again. We met Mr. Falero and Mr. Arjun Singh and repeatedly discussed the matter. We knew that there was no budgetary provision but the Minister insisted that there was budgetary provision. When I raised it again and again, the Speaker was kind enough to say that since the Minister was saying that the money was there in the budget, therefore, I should sit down. So, I was forced to sit down. But, Sir, you will be surprised to know that from the 31st March, that money has

been stopped and they are not paying the interim relief. So, on that issue, the Minister has deliberately misled the House. That also I raised. I gave a privilege motion against the Minister for misleading the House and the whole country, because it generated hopes among the five lakh victims that they were going to continue to get the benefit. But from the last 31st March, they are not getting a single pie. Many people will die because they were living on that paltry sum which has been stopped. Now their treatment will stop. This is a very inhuman, a very wrong decision on the part of the government. They have told that they will go to the Supreme Court to utilise the money we had got from the Union Carbide. But the Supreme Court has rejected that plea by saying that that money will be utilised only for the final relief, not for the interim relief. The Government has not kept the money in the budget. This is the situation. So, Sir, either you should accept the privilege motion or the Minister, who is present here, must explain why he deliberately misled the House.

We repeatedly raised this matter in the House. The hon. Minister is misleading the House. There is no money in the Budget. But in spite of that the Minister is misleading the House. Five lakh people are running from pillar to post. They are not getting money. They will die out of starvation. This is a serious matter. We want the hon. Minister to respond to it. (Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, this is a serious matter, people are starving. Government must respond. (Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): We want the Minister to respond. (Interruptions) We want him to be truthful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat. Shri Rabi Ray may speak.

[Translation]

SHRI RABI RAY (Kendrapada): Mr.

Chariman, Sir, this is a very important issue. I hope that the Member of ruling party will also support it for it is not a matter of party politics. You are aware that we have been raising this issue concerning five lakhs of people for several years in the House. Now due to the inaction on the part of the Government 5 lakh people are on the verge of starvation. This is nothing, but an attempt to kill the people in an other way. I mean to say that five lakh people were affected by gas tragedy in union carbide and a large number of people were wounded and killed in the tragedy but they are not getting interim relief. Shri Hannan Mollah has also drawn attention towards it. The present session of Parliament will be over on 14th of this month and after that we will be left to read in newspapers that persons are dying there. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Shri Murti is present in the House at the moment. I would like to submit to him that he could make a statement in this regard on behalf of the Government. This is because the present session will come to an end after two days and cause of those helpless people will be relegated into background. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, this House cannot be a silent spectator to this. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): I have also to make a submission in this regard. The issue of persons affected by Bhopal Gas Tragedy is of such a nature that the tragic situation still prevails in these areas. The persistent demands regarding inclusion of 36 wards for providing relief has not been accepted by the Government. Moreover, interim relief which was hither to being provided is now proposed to be suspended. This is likely to make the situation all the more horrible and the affected families are likely to face further crisis. I would, therefore, like to submit to the Government that keeping in view the miseries of the affected

people, it should restore the relief and the remaining the 36 wards should also be included in the list of areas that are to be provided interim relief.

[*English*]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, this is a very serious matter. We have raised this matter on the floor of the House a number of times, in this budget session also. The monetary relief which was continuing, has been stopped. Now the gas-affected people of Bhopal are dying out of starvation. Unless immediate steps are taken by the Central Government to revive the monetary relief, which has been stopped, they will not get the money which has been sanctioned for their compensation. Unless the relief which was continuing is revived and restored again, the gas-affected people of Bhopal will die of starvation. The hon. Minister of State for Revenue is here. He should respond and he should assure the House because this is not the demand of one section of the House but it is the demand of the entire section of the House.

For the last more than six years, lakhs of people of Bhopal gas tragedy are suffering. They are not getting their compensation. Not a single paise has been paid to them as compensation. The monetary relief has also been stopped. This is the demand of the entire House that the Government should respond and that the relief which has been stopped, should be restored forthwith. The hon. Minister of State is here. You, Sir, please direct him to respond and assure the House that the relief will be restored forthwith. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, let me add one or two words. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: You take a humanitarian view. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): Sir, the Minister is here. He should respond. (*Interruptions*) MR. CHAIRMAN: Nirmalji, you have all raised this issue in the House. At the

moment he does not want to respond to it.

[Translation]

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The Government is inhuman. The Government is not responding. The Government cannot assure the House. (Interruptions). The people of Bhopal are dying of starvation. Has the Central Government no responsibility? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly listen now without interruption,

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARAMURTHY): I will come to that point.

Sir, I have noted the concern of the hon. Members. The appropriate decision will be taken at the appropriate time. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Sir, when the interim relief, which has been suspended, will be resumed? If it is not done the affected families will die of starvation. (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Then people will die. When people die, the Government will take appropriate action. (Interruptions)

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY: Regarding the allegation by the hon. Member, Mr. Hannan Mollah that I have misled this House while discussing the Madhya Pradesh State Budget, it is not true. For that notice, I have given my reply to the hon. Speaker. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: This is not proper. People are dying of starvation.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Mr. Chariman, Sir, it is an important issue. The hon. Minister has not given a satisfactory reply. He should state whether the Government will resume giving the interim relief or not. The condition of the people is miserable. The gas affected families are in crisis. Perhaps you lack humane approach otherwise you would have thought about starting it again. (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: People will die of starvation and the Government is not finding any solution. What is your appropriate time, please tell us. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister has to speak. Please allow him to speak.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): No, no, Sir. The way the Minister is responding, it creates unnecessary irritation in the minds of the hon. Members. Let him state categorically what he is proposing to do. (Interruptions) MR. CHAIRMAN: Unless you allow him to speak, how are you going to know what he is going to say? Let him react.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri): What is the appropriate time? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahmed, please sit down now.

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY: Sir, even the Government is very serious about this problem. We have taken note of this problem and it is before the Government. We will come again before this House, Sir. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: When? (Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Sir, the interim relief has been suspended. It should be resumed and please direct the Government to come with a positive reply to it. (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRISAIFUDDIN CHOUHURY (Katwa): There has to be a categorical reply, Sir.

SHRIBASUDEBACHARIA: The response is not at all satisfactory. (Interruptions) MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly sit down.

SHRILALK. ADVANI (Gandhi Nagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is not at all a partisan issue. As you would notice, every person in fact, if some Members on this side have risen, I am sure the entire House is concerned about this tragedy and therefore, what was expected from the Government is a reply that reassures the House. The reply till now is that 'at the appropriate time appropriate action will be taken'.

Sir, the second answer given is, 'We will come to you at the appropriate time'. Sir, both these answers convey to us nothing. After all, a specific question has been put 'whether interim relief that was being given to the victims has been stopped and if so, when will it be resumed and what further action do you propose to take?' And unless a reassuring answer is forthcoming, how can this House be satisfied?

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY: Sir, I wish to add to the points raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition that the Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh have met the Prime Minister and submitted a memorandum. The Prime Minister is seized of the matter and he will take a decision.?

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: When will he take the decision?

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA

MURTHY: I cannot say that; it is for the Prime Minister to take the decision. (Interruptions)

SHRILALK. ADVANI: Sir, I would request for an assurance from the Government that before this House adjourns on the 14th the Government would come forward with a full statement on what it proposes to do on this matter. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR (Ballia): Mr. Chariman, Sir, it is very sad that the hon. Members are asking questions from the hon. Minister of State for Finance. He is not directly responsible for the budget of the State nor has he any information about it. This matter is with the hon. Prime Minister and he does not utter anything on any problem. He will not speak till 14th and after that if the people die then all of us will express concern over the news, which we would come to know through newspapers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, only you can do something on this issue and whatever the hon. Minister of State has said is not going to serve any purpose. The hon. Prime Minister like a philosopher believes that death is inevitable to mortals. He should come here and make a statement on the Bhopal gas victims. (Interruptions) If some people die, it makes no difference to him. Therefore, please try to bring him down to earth. (Interruptions) It seems he has directly descended from heaven and all the time he thinks of high idealism and philosophy. I am not saying this to make you laugh. The Government always maintains silence on the issues of death and starvation whether it is in Kalahandi or Bihar. (Interruptions)

Mr. Chariman, Sir, I shout sometimes, but I may tell you that shouting by these people there is not giving to make any difference. (Interruptions) The starvation issue is not at all important for the hon. Prime Minister. Therefore, the House should compel the hon. Prime Minister to come here and make a statement on

this issue. There is no use in arguing with the hon. Minister of State. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK): Mr. Chariman, Sir, rightly the Members are concerned about the situation regarding the Bhopal gas victims. But it is totally unfair for a senior Member, who is a respected Member of this House, Shri Chandra Shekharji to say that dying does not make any difference to the Prime Minister. It is very unfair to make a statement like this. The Minister of State Shri Chandrashekhar Murthy has said that the Prime Minister is seized of the matter and a decision will be taken in this regard. As far as Kalahandi and the situation in Bihar is concerned, the Members are aware that the Prime Minister has taken it very seriously; he called the Members of the respective States, he held discussions there also and measures have been initiated. So, to say a thing like this about the Prime Minister is absolutely unfair and it is uncalled for (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The Prime Minister should tell the House before the Lok Sabha adjourns as to what he proposes to do on this matter. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, after discussing the matter with him, a month and a half has passed since now. It is not yesterday that this has happened. He says he is serious about this matter. Please tell him that so much of time has passed and therefore, he must come with a response by tomorrow. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, in view of the strong sentiments expressed by large sections of this House and in view of the importance of the

subject, I would wish that the Government should make a statement on this before the end of the Session.

SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK (Phulbani): Sir, the whole world is greatly concerned with the ecological balance and environment. India is a great patron in this direction. But to our surprise and regret, in my constituency, Phulbani which is a tribal and hill station altogether regular smuggling of forest timber is taking place. It is found that very recently there has been massive tree cutting and tree felling—sal trees and piasal trees which has been brought to the notice of the State Government. Yet no action has been taken and nobody has been apprehended so far. The matter concerns with the Central Government also and it comes within the purview of the Central Government.

I strongly appeal to the Government to look into the matter and take strong action to prevent forest timber smuggling in my area of Baligud a sub-division of Phulbani district. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY (Jagatsinghpur): It is a very important issue. MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramesh Chennithala. I will allow you later.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam): Sir, the leakage of question papers and other serious irregularities in the examinations conducted by various Boards and Universities, particularly by the Delhi University have reached scandalous proportions. During the month of March this year and thereafter, the newspapers have reported a large number of cases of leakage of question papers of various examinations. Only the other day, the Controller of Examinations of the Delhi University was asked to proceed on leave after serious irregularities were noticed in the conduct of various examinations.

Last year, there were reports about the leakage of question papers of the Civil Services

(Preliminary) examination of the UPSC at Allahabad. The Times of India of Sunday, the 9th May carried a news item that the Delhi University cancelled the B. Com. (Pass) first year examination following the paper leak. In Delhi, the Directorate of Education has decided to conduct the examination of classes VIII, IX AND XI for the Schools in entire Delhi. But much to the delight of some students and their parents, question papers of various subjects were freely available in most of the shops for a price of Rs. 200 per question paper. In order to meet the problem a leakage of question papers, the CBSE introduced the multiple sets of questions in the examinations. But this has created another problem for the students. The syllabus is covered disproportionately in these sets resulting in easy questions in some sets and extremely difficult questions in some other sets.

This year another complaint heard from the students and teachers was that the question papers of Classes X AND XII contained questions which were out of course, particularly in Mathematics, Political Science etc.

From all this, it is clear that there is something basically wrong with the management of examinations in our schools and universities. If question papers are freely available in the market 48 hours before the examinations, what is the sanctity of our examinations? If this is allowed to continue, students who have the smartness and resources to contact the right persons or tap the right sources will score highest marks.

I would therefore request the hon. Minister for Human Resources to review the entire system and try to solve this problem. This has created a bad trend in our educational system. Especially in Delhi University, the students are very much disappointed by the regular leakage of question papers. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMNAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna).

Mr. Chariman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. The very existence of sugarcane growers of Uttar Pradesh is at stake. Shri Kalpnath Rai, who belongs to Uttar Pradesh is present here and he has recently toured the State. More than Rs. 3 billion is outstanding against the mills. In my constituency there are 14 sugar mills out of which 3 mills are under the Central Government. These mills have been running for seven months now. When we went there, we came to know that the payment is being made for the sugarcane received upto 12th January and the payment of five months is still pending. The farmers have postponed marriages and other important family functions. The Mahajans are not ready to pawn the payment slips issued by mills even for half rates. The people are facing lot of trouble. The mill owners were paid at the rate of Rs. 140 per quintal for sugar and more than Rs. 3 billion was paid by the State. The subsidy on molasses also runs in millions of rupees. I would like to urge upon the Government that the farmers of Uttar Pradesh have been ruined as the payment of sugarcane is outstanding *(Interruptions)* I would like to know what steps does Shri Kalpnath Rai propose to take to alleviate their sufferings. Three sugar mills have been declared sick. What would be their fate in future? *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALPNATH RAI):

Mr. Chariman, Sir, regarding the question raised by Shri Ram Nagina Mishra and our other colleagues, I would like to assure you that the payment will be made by 30th May. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMNAGINA MISHRA: I would like to request hon Chandrashekari to speak a few words about the sugarcane growers. *(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't record anything please. *(Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are going too much. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't record anything.

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi): Mr. Chariman, Sir, I come from Sitamarhi in Bihar. Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Vaisali Western part of Madhubani and eastern part of Motihari area have a population of around one crore, who is waging agitation since long for the development of Bajjika language but nothing has been done so far in this direction. The hon. Minister of Home Affairs is also present here, I would like to submit that I had also raised this issue at the time of presenting Demand for Grants of Ministry of Home and the Bajjika language, which is spoken by one crore people of Bihar should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, which may pave way for the development of Bajjika Language. The Minister of Internal Security has said in Bihar that Maithili and Bhojpuri language will be considered from the point of view of their inclusion in Eighth Schedule, we welcome it. I request that Bajjika Language spoken by 1 crore people should be included in the Eighth Schedule. I had raised this issue at the time of presentation of demand for grants but no response was given in this regard. The Government should be instructed to include Bajjika Language in Eighth Schedule. Like wise I also request the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that in Bihar a programme named Chaupal is broadcast and telecast, it should also be telecast and broadcast in Bajjika language

SHRI ANAND AHIRWAR (Sagar): Mr.

Chariman, Sir, recently in my Constituency Sagar, the result of Central School has been declared. Most of the students have been placed under compartment Ninety percent of such students belong to s/c and S/T: Such result is due to a malice toward them. They have played with their future. The present principal has been there for the last 15 years. I have already apprised Minister of his abominable activities but no action could be initiated against him. These students are compelled to sit on the back benches in the class. They are ill-treated on account of untouchability and even teachers in Central School are given such treatment. On many occasions, they were ill-treated and they made a complaint to me in this regard and I sent their complaints along with my letter to the Minister. I want to submit that an inquiry should be made into it and the Principals should be removed and with that copies of the supplementary exams should be re-evaluated. Of course, there is a provision of re-totalling but it will not solve the purpose. A strict action should be taken against those examiners. The hon. Deputy Minister of Education is present in the House, she should come forward with a statement in this regard.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: As you all know, we have to take up the impeachment matter at two of the Clock exactly. Therefore, I would not allow now anything else. We will now take up Papers to be Laid on the Table. Please excuse me. You can raise it tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

[English]

12.50 hrs.

PAPERS TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE

Report of the C & AG of India Union
Government No. 12 of 1992 Commercial
Indian Telephone Industries Limited

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE