

of the Bill."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

The motion was adopted.

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Clause 45, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

MR CHAIRMAN: The question is:

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

"That clause 46 stand part of the Bill."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

The motion was adopted.

"That the long title stand part of the Bill"

Clause 46 was added to the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1 Short title, commencement and application

The long Title was added to the Bill.

Amendment made:

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister may now move that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

Page 1, line 6,—

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, I beg to move:

for "1993" substitute "1994"

(2)

(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR CHAIRMAN: The question is:

MR CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill"

"That the Bill, as amended be passed."

The motion was adopted.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

16. 37 hrs

Enacting Formula

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Amendment made:

Heavy Loss Life and Damage to Property due to Floods in many parts of the Country—Contd.

Page 1, line 1,—

[English]

for "Forty-fourth" substitute "Forty-fifth"

(1)

(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

MR CHAIRMAN: Now we shall take up the next item— discussion under rule 193.

Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the subject of discussion today is a very important one. Our country is prone to drought and floods every year and has to incur great loss on this account. There is loss of life and property and even at places where there is no such loss, there are great many problems there. Calling this situation of drought and floods as a national tragedy will be no exaggeration. Vast amount of money has been spent on controlling floods and droughts since 1952, Great schemes were formulated but we could not control these despite the development of science and technology.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are equipped with the technology of forecasting about what is going to happen where, yet we could not control floods and droughts. This scourge still exists there. There was a loss of Rs.35,918 crores in 37 years from 1953 to 1989 and of Rs.17,413 crores during the last five years. This speaks clearly about the fact that the loss has been more during the past five years as compared to that of 37 years. Many countries of the world are affected by floods but this scourge has acquired serious dimensions in India. Every year 3,26,60,000 people are affected by floods in India alone and 60,000 people are affected by the calamity.

As per a specific data, 1,523 people die of floods every year and property worth 917 crores is lost. The management and control of floods is taken up two levels in our country- configurational and non-configurational.

Under it, schemes of constructing embankments on rivers is formulated and executed and water reservoirs are made. The

rivers ways are widened, river beds deepened and water drained out. Floods are controlled by changing the direction of flow of rivers. But all these measures have proved to be ineffective in combating floods in our country till date. We have had to face many problems. Under this head, Rs.27 thousand crores have been spent till the end of seventh plan. 14000 kms. long embankments were constructed and 29000 kms. long canal dug. Flood prevention measures were taken up in 546 cities and 47000 villages of the country but a review of all these measures will reveal that the scourge of floods remains the same today. It is taking the joke of human lives, damaging crops and incurring loss the same way it did earlier. I am of the firm opinion that it is due to a faulty system. There is corruption here. I may cite an example of my constituency. Shri Uttambhai Patel is present here. He visited the constituency recently. There was dearth of water. On the one hand, there are floods and on the other there is drought. The people of the villages are not getting water. A demand of installing handpumps was raised there. The Uttar Pradesh Government was provided with some handpumps but they were not installed there. About a dozen rivers including the Ganges, Gomati, Sai, Magai and Udanti flow through my constituency. They are affected by floods every year. Soem towns and villages like Patna, Kharaula, Hathoda, Devehandpur, Jalalpur, Devkali/ Niyar Bela, Saidpur-Bhitari, Tetarpur etc. get inundated in water every year. Crops of thousands of acres of land are damaged. some people are killed but despite repeated requests, as the district Magistrates and other responsible people of the districts are aware, no action is being taken.

This year we were under the impression that drains will be constructed under Jawahar Rozgar Yojna and water drained

out through them. A decision of constructing Shivdaspur Kauria drain with Rs.76000 was taken. Rs.1 lakh was granted for constructing Mangari drain, Rs.92 thousand for Barhara drain and Rs.50000 for Ubraon drain. Surprisingly enough, this sanction was made on papers alone. This issue was raised many times in this House. We had demanded that the State Government may be asked as to why no work was done by the money granted under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. The people of the district also raised voice for this and there was a police report on it. Though a few culprits were apprehended and some Engineers were sent to jail, yet they could not be indicted. Therefore, how can the floods be controlled? For the villages mentioned by us drains have been constructed only on paper. I would like to tell the hon. Minister of Agriculture to also monitor the utilisation of funds disbursed if permanent solution is to be found. Though crores of rupees are released lumpsum on demand to the State Governments in time of floods, yet in the absence of proper monitoring it remains unknown as to how the funds have been utilised.

Sir, I submitted earlier also that there is total mismanagement and most of the State Governments are quite perfunctory. I would like to submit frankly that the funds disbursed to the State Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh by the Centre for flood relief last year and in earlier years, have been grossly misutilised. This tendency needs to be checked and monitored. Floods are always damaging and their consequences are heart rending. Even then some persons welcome floods as it gives them the opportunity to indulge in looting in the name of flood relief. These persons on receiving news of floods start weaving dreams. Contractors, BDOs, relief Officers, "Lekhpals", Tehsildars and Pargana Officers on seeing the rain clouds get into festive mood and

start dancing like Peacock in anticipation of amassing money.

I would like to submit that in the name of relief embezzlement and plundering is going on all around and nobody cares about the consequences. In most of the States concrete steps are not being taken to control floods. Many embankments are broken and cutting of forests continues as ever.

In fact flood control measures were first initiated in India in 1954 when under the leadership of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru the National Flood Control Commission was set up. A three phase scheme was adopted to build dams, development of canals, and to rehabilitate villages in high places and to save life and property in towns and cities. From 1956 to 1961 this was the main motto of the Commission. In 1964 a Ministerial Committee was set up which suggested some tenable measures for controlling floods. However, all these suggestions became redundant later on.

If the permanent solution of the floods is to be found out then we should find out permanent solution of the problem. We are witnessing debates on floods and droughts and for giving relief whenever these strike. It would be better if discussion are held even before the floods strike for finding out concrete solutions and to take effective measures.

Though the hon. Minister is quite experienced yet I would like to give him a few suggestions. In India we have several small rivulets, the names of some of these I just now mentioned in the House. As soon as rains set in these rivulets are in spate and cause extensive damage to the adjoining villages and crops. If permanent solution of floods is to be found out then the Centre should issue instructions to the State Gov-

emments in this regard. 4-6 months before the floods strike instructions should be issued to the State Governments for connecting these rivulets. If rivers and rivulets are connected then water will not get collected in any one river and flood damage could be checked. This will improve irrigation facilities as water reservoir capacity will increase and flood damage will be controlled too. This will protect us from floods.

Secondly, I would like to submit that a scheme should be formulated to tame the rivers and flowing through Uttranchal i.e. Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and upto Assam originating in Himalayas for controlling floods. I do not want to dwell into the issue of floods in flood prone regions of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam, which cause widespread damage. Recently the newspapers widely reported about the extensive damage caused by floods in Karnataka, Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. However, all flow towards Uttranchal, where these assume devastating proportions. To tame these rivers and to find permanent solution the Government should evolve a scheme for traversing the course of the rivers originating in the Himalayas.

Thirdly, I would like to submit that development is the talk of the town. The Central Government, the Hon. Prime Minister and everyone is quite serious about the development of the country. For the sake of development roads and rail bridges are constructed embankments and dams are built for controlling floods and new cities are built but proper evaluation of rains and floods is forgotten.

Recently a road was constructed in my constituency between forked course of a river and the people had difficulty in crossing the river in the absence of bridge. Therefore, the villagers damaged the road and the

surging water of the river inundated the villages downstream the villagers had to bear heavy loss due to it. Therefore, while undertaking the development works instructions should be issued to the Engineers that all these aspects should be taken care of.

Sir, fourthly, I would like to submit that forecasts regarding floods and rains are made by the Central Water Commission. This Commission is playing a vital role in this regard. However, 50 per cent of the forecasts made by the Central Water Commission prove to be wrong. I would like to submit that in the world new techniques have been evolved. Therefore, either these latest machines should be imported or the scientists should be properly trained in utilising the available techniques, so, that the forecasts of rain and floods turn out to be correct.

Sir, there is the need to mobilise the Government machinery even before the excessive rains or drought. We witness that the Government machinery gears up only after floods and by that time the havoc caused is widespread. The concerned machinery is unable to control the floods and the Armed Forces are called for assistance. This causes hue and cry among the masses. Therefore, I would like to suggest that advance instructions should be issued even before excessive rains or drought, so, that the machinery gears up for relief operations.

Sir, sixthly, I would like to submit that pollution is assuming alarming proportions. Industries of all types are mushrooming. River Ganges originates in Gangotri and flows down to the plains starting from Rishikesh upto Bengal. Filth of number of villages and industries set up on the banks of the river is drained into the river Ganges. The Ganges is not being cleaned. I am in favour of cleaning of the Ganges and in-

creasing its depth traverses in River path should be straightened.

Sir, I hail from Benaras and my house is located on the banks of the Ganges. I remember during my childhood we used to cross the river by boat. In those days the Ganges had a very wide stretch and more. However, now people get down in the middle from the boat and cross the river on foot or swim as water is not very deep there. Therefore, we are seeing that the depth is declining. If rivers are not deep then water will naturally cross the banks and cause havoc. All this could be witnessed in Mirzapur, Gazipur and Ballia and during rainy season they get submerged. Water there flows two or three metres above the danger level. The main reason for it is that no attention is being paid towards depth of the rivers.

Sir, crores of rupees have been spent on cleaning up the river in Benaras but all the money is merely being spent on paper. Time and again through questions and other means attention has been drawn towards this fact in the House. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the former Prime Minister, made a good statement in Benaras. He stated that if my dream materialises then Kashi will regain its lost glory. I would like to submit that even after spending crores of rupees floods are being witnessed and people are facing difficulties. Therefore, there is the need to look into it.

Sir, seventhly, I would like to submit that forests are being indiscriminately cut. There is the need to look into it. During the discussion in the morning in the House it was mentioned that trees are being planted in barren lands to cause rains there yet on the other hand indiscriminate felling of trees is going on. We see that in some forests in Uttar Pradesh vast tracts of forests land have been almost denuded.

I do not want to go on and on about this, but we find that in some jungles regular felling of trees and smuggling of wood is still going on. You will have to check it.

We are glad to know that our present Prime Minister has taken several concrete steps for the implementation of flood control schemes. He has even sought assistance from International Financial Institutions and has been successful in that to a larger extent. A meeting of Secretaries of various Ministries had also been convened. The States have also been issued directions but these directions should not remain directions only, these should be followed also.

Our Minister of Agriculture and Ministers of Rural Development are present here. Both are experienced persons but the Minister of Agriculture is highly experienced, it is my submission to them to seriously consider those issues and chalk out plans to check floods forever.

Our country had attained Independence in 1947 and it has been more than 47 years after that, that we make plans every year and spend billions of rupees in checking floods but there is no permanent solution. Unless good schemes are chalked out, the public money will continue to be wasted on flood-related programmes.

With these words I thank you.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE (Nagpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are discussing floods here. We have seen that the areas having heavy rains suffer from floods. Our colleague, Shri Sonkar has just said that there is a lot of corruption and no work is done in States. But I would like to say that there were heavy rains in Maharashtra from 12th July to 14th July which were dealt with effectively by the Maharashtra Government.

Wherever there was damage caused, the Chief Minister immediately visited the area and provided relief.

I belong to Vidarbha region and Nagpur city is my constituency. I have never seen this area being affected by floods. This is a natural calamity. There were 15 inch rains on the night of 12th and on the 13th of the month. The whole city was ravaged by such heavy rains as were witnessed earlier 90 years back. This city inhabits 25 lakh people and especially those 4-5 thousand poor people who were residing by the side of the nullah had to bear the fury of the rains. The Chief Minister visited the area and provided relief. But everybody could not get the relief. One day 11 persons were killed in Nagpur city. The Chief Minister immediately announced a relief of Rs.25 thousand to the kins of the deceased and those families got the assistance. Last year the kins of those killed in riots in our area had received Rs.2 lakh but the families of those drowned in floods were given only Rs.25 thousand. It is my request that the families of the deceased should get assistance from Pant Pradhan Nidhi also. I have written a letter also to Pant Pradhan Nidhi in this regard. 31 people were killed in Vidarbha. 4 to 5 thousand jhuggies were washed away in Nagpur. The city had faced floods for the first time which caused a large scale destruction.

17.00 hrs

The 542 villages of our constituency Vidarbha are affected by floods. 45 people were killed as a result thereof and seven thousand people were displaced. The crops of 64 thousand hectare area were damaged. There has been heavy losses of lives and property due to over flow of water. You should give more attention to rehabilitation

work. Though the Maharashtra Government is providing assistance yet the Central Government should also provide full assistance. Jakhar ji has a lot of information about Nagpur.

Nagpur is a very big city. The agricultural work is not undertaken here. For the first time such a large number of people as seven thousand have been displaced. The Maharashtra Government has said that people living in slums will not be helped. We have requested the hon. Chief Minister that all the flood-victims should be helped. When a big city is affected by a large scale calamity then help is provided through Pant Pradhan Nidhi. You may provide relief through this fund.

My constituency has seen such a havoc after 90 years. The victims neither have anything to eat nor have any employment. Their houses have been washed away. Though the Maharashtra Government is helping them yet they need more help. Our hon. Prime Minister knows our Constituency. When Maharashtra had been hit by a Severe earth-quake everybody had provided help. Crores of rupees were provided as assistance. But not much help is being given to our constituency. The Central Government should provide full assistance to our constituency. I conclude with this request.

* SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): Mr. Chairman, sir, Floods have almost become a regular feature in our country. This year also the country has experienced floods in a larger scale. It is evident from what the Hon. Members have pointed out that the present floods have

occured with unprecedented severity. Reports flooding from various parts of the country show us a picture of immense loss of human lives, properties, crops, cattle etc. Government has instituted various commissions and programmes to find an effective solution to the havoc caused by floods that occur annyally with prompt regularity. But In spite of all this, the painful fact remains that we have not been able to find a permanent solution to this apparently perennial problem, so far. Instead of running for temporary relief measures whenever floods or drought occur, we have to think about a permanent solution. Sir, I would like to urge upon the Government through you, sir, to make use of whatever studies and reports are available with a view to formulating and implementing effective and long standing measures to prevent the damages caused by floods.

Sir, I also feel that deforestation is one of the prime factors that cause floods. Strong action has to be taken against the elements that destroy the forests. We know that this year's floods are more severe than those of the previous years. But, so far the Government has not taken proper and effective measures to resolve the crisis caused by the floods. This fact is very much evident from the speeches made by Hon. Members belonging to various states. One thing I would like to point out in this connection is that it is highly regrettable that the Hon. Members belonging to the opposition have kept away from the House when such an important discussion is being held. At a time when the country is facing such a crisis, it is unfortunate that the Opposition Members failed in performing their duty to the country. I would like to term their action as a sign of indifference to the problems of the people of our country.

17. 04 hrs.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, all the fourteen districts in my state, Kerala are in the grip of devastating flood. 4,82,875 persons have been directly hit by the flood. Hundreds have lost their lives, thousands have lost their livelihood. Landslides have occurred in various places and road transport system has been disrupted extensively. Almost all the districts in Malabar have been affected severely. The districts of Kozhikode, Palakkad, Malappurm, Kannur, Wayanad and Kasargod are virtually under water. Extensive dameages to human lives and properties are being reported from these districts. It is reptred that 110 persons have died so far. 3,500 houses have been destroyed totally and around 20,000 houses suffered partial damage.

Sir, the flood that has unleashed its cruelty in the northern districts have begun to spread to the southern states as well. Road transport and even rail transport have been disrupted extensively. The southern districts are also now exposed to the mischief of the Nature. In short, the whole state of Kerala is facing the havoc caused by floods.

Sir, it still needs time to estimate the total loss caused by the floods and get a view of the magnitude of the damages. Since vast areas of agricultural land and farms are still under water, it is not yet possible to draw a true picture of the mishap. Especially, in the case of paddy fields, not only the crops are destroyed but the soil has eroded. There are cases where the relief requirements exceed even the value of the land.

Thanks to many factors, Kerala is dif-

ferent from other States. The economy of the state is sustained by cash crops. The cash crops like Coconut, Rubber, Pepper, Cloves, Cardamom, Cashew etc constitute the backbone of Kerala's economy. The speciality of these crops is that they require an average time span of 10 years to yield. It only accentuates the misery of those unfortunate lot at the receiving end. It goes without saying that any damage occurs to the cash crops in the State will have irreparable consequences on the economy of Kerala. I mention this factor emphatically to drive home the point that Kerala's condition is different from that of any other state. While formulating the relief measures, this point has to be taken into serious consideration. The damage to the cash crops in Kerala which bring in considerable amount of foreign currency cannot be treated at par with damage occurred in any other state. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the basis of these important factors, I urge upon the Government, through you, sir, to have a different perspective towards the flood havoc in Kerala. Let me make use of this opportunity to bring this point to the kind attention of the Hon. Agriculture Minister.

Sir, as per the allocation made by the 9th Finance Commission, Kerala's allotment is Rs.31 crores. Out of this amount 25% has to be met by the State Government. It means that the Central assistance would be a mere Rs. 23.25 crores. This is a pittance compared to the extent of damage caused by floods in the state. This amount is insufficient to meet the actual relief requirements in the state. The Hon. Chair is aware that for a state like Kerala which is facing acute financial crunch it will not be an easy task to raise a huge amount required for the relief operations. What I would like to submit to the Government, through you, sir, is that since the total loss in the state may exceed Rs.200 crores, atleast Rs.100 crores has to

be allotted to the state immediately. The Hon. Chief Minister of Kerala Shri K. Karunakaran has already submitted this demand and an extensive report of the flood situation to both the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Agriculture Minister. The flood has not subsided till today. As incessant rain has been on for the past two weeks, it is almost certain that the actual damage will far exceed the figures shown in the report.

Another point I would like to point out is that many areas in the state face a peculiar problem of having to face drought in the summer and floods in the Monsoon. A permanent solution has to be found to solve this otherwise unending problem. Large amount of water is being wasted in every monsoon. It is high time a study was conducted as to how the water being wasted in Monsoon could be stored for use in the summer.

I would like to say a few words about my district also. Places like Attapady in Palakkad district and several other places in the districts of wayanad and Idukki are prone to landslides and mountain slides. Large scale landslides have already occurred in these places. Those at the receiving end in all these instances are tribals who are otherwise suffering from various mishaps like contagious diseases.

Malampuzha in Palakkad district enjoys a pride of place among the dams in Kerala. This is the dam that irrigates Palakkad which is known as the "foodgrains store of Kerala". Recently a breach has appeared on a side of the dam. If this is not looked into and attended to properly it may lead to tragic consequences. The magnitude of series of tragedies that might be triggered off by a possible collapse of the dam could not be gauged. This is a matter that requires immediate attention.

Sir, I would like to cite an example which would clearly show the serious dimension of the flood situation in Kerala. Apart from causing damage to human beings, residences, agricultural lands, crops etc floods have caused damage to animals. The river 'Kunthipuzha' which originates from the famous silent valley, which was over-flowing has washed away an 'elephant'. I cite this example here to point out the terrible nature of the flood Kerala has been subjected to .

Sir, I do not want to take much time of the House. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Agriculture Minister into the serious situation in Kerala. I would also like to make a request to him to allocate more funds for the relief operations in the state. I would also urge upon the Hon. Minister to look into the peculiar problem of Palakkad which falls under the rain-shadow region in the Western Ghats of having to face severe drought in the summer and heavy floods in the Monsoon. With these words I conclude. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI BALIN KULI (Lakhimpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, this year the early monsoon has caused devastating floods in several States of our country. Among these States, particularly Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Assam have suffered very badly. Properties worth tens of hundreds of crores of rupees have been destroyed, hundreds of thousands of dwelling houses have been washed away there. Standing crops worth hundreds of thousands of rupees in those States have been damaged. The Central Government has taken appropriate urgent steps to help the distressed people. The hon. Prime Minister has immediately released Rs. 15 crore from the PM's Relief Fund for the flood relief

works. This kind reaction of the hon. Prime Minister is very much appreciable.

Sir, coming to my own State, Assam, it has been regularly hit by the severe waves of flood every year. This time two districts of the State have suffered a lot due to heavy floods. They are Dhamagi and Sibsagar. Dhamagi district which falls under my constituency has been hit severely by three consecutive heavy floods. This district is inhabited mostly by the OBC, Tribals and SC and ST people. Standing crops worth several crores of rupees have been damaged there. Thousands of acres of cultivable land have become useless due to silting. Hundreds of thousands of people have become homeless as their houses have been washed away. Ten people have lost their lives. Hundreds of cattle have died. Poultry and piggery farms have been completely damaged. About one hundred kilometers of embankment has been washed away. Almost ten lakh people have been affected by the recent floods. Thousands of people are still in the camps.

The State Government of Assam with its limited resources has taken up relief and rehabilitation measures. But that is not sufficient particularly in the matter of rehabilitation of the affected people. The State is in a financial crisis. So my humble request to the Central Government is to extend a helping hand to the State Government, so that the unfortunate people could be rehabilitated immediately. Assam is economically a very backward State. It has been under severe financial crisis. It cannot take the extra burden of giving relief to the victims of the natural calamities like floods.

The formula of central relief or assistance given to the States should be changed. The 9th Finance Commission at present has given a formula of 75 per cent relief

assistance from the Central Government and 25 per cent to be managed by the State Government.

This formula of the Finance commission is not realistic. The Finance commission should take a realistic approach considering the financial condition of the State Governments, particularly of the Government of Assam. It is good that the Central Government has taken up a Centrally sponsored Integrated Watershed Management Scheme. From this Scheme, the Central Government should allot more funds to the State Governments to meet the emergency situation arising out of flood and other calamities. Finding a solution to the flood problem of Assam deserves to get the immediate attention of the Central Government. The people of Assam still feel that this problem has been remained neglected by the Central Government. On this occasion, again I want to raise the issue of Subansiri Dam Project which has been kept suspended for a long time. This has been the long pending and a strong demand of the people of Assam. This Project should get priority in the agenda of the Water Resources Ministry; and it should be taken up with right earnest. This will help in finding a solution to the flood problem of North bank of Assam. I hope the Water Resources Ministry will not delay further in taking up the Subansiri Project.

Sir, erosion is also a very big problem of Assam. During and after the monsoon, the mighty river Brahmaputra and its tributaries are eating up thousands of acres of cultivable land and inundating villages every year. 900 kilometers long Brahmaputra's both the banks have already eroded the townships like Sadiya, Dibrugarh, Paragbari, half of the famous river island Majule, Mancachar; and further threatening the townships like Dibrugarh, Dhubri,

Dhemagi, Dadia, Mangaldoi, Sualkuchi, etc. If this continuing erosion is not stopped, then, almost all the cultivable land would be lost due to erosion, thereby causing unemployment to the agricultural labourers and it will hit the very basic economy of the state of Assam.

Therefore, the Central Government, particularly the Water Resources Ministry should come forward with a viable project to check the erosion with right earnest. To check erosion and floods, the mighty river Brahmaputra must be tamed and controlled. For this purpose, the Subansiri and Dehang Projects which have been kept pending must be implemented fully in letter and spirit. This is the demand of the people of Assam for a long time.

With these words, I conclude.

MR. DEPUTY- SPEAKER: Shrimati Tharadevi Siddhartha has sent in a letter saying that she wants to go somewhere. If you all agree, I may call her name to speak.

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir, you are in the Chair; you can decide.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I always seek the advice of the House. So, I now call Shrimati Tharadevi Siddhartha to speak.

SHRIMATI D.K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA (Chikmagalur): Sir, the unabated torrential rain triggered by the South-West monsoon has caused destruction; and human misery is also spread across seven States including Karnataka, Assam, Gujarat, Kerala. The flood havoc has claimed more than 600 lives; thousands of people have been displaced and rendered homeless. They have lost their properties; they have lost the standing crops worth crores of rupees. My state, Karnataka is badly affected by the

incessant rains and severe flood havoc. Due to heavily rain and attendant floods in hilly areas, districts like Chikmagalur, Coorg and parts of coastal and North Karnataka have been badly affected.

The floods have spelt misery to the people. The intensity of floods during the last 1-1/2 months has been so much that large areas have been submerged. The loss to property, both private and public, due to excessive rains and floods in eight districts has mounted to more than Rs. 100 crore. Overflow of river water has made thousands of acres of fertile land into silted land.

My parliamentary constituency, Chikmagalur, is one of the worst affected constituencies in the Karnataka State. During my intensive tour of flood-affected areas in the district, I saw the plight of the people. The landslides everywhere have blocked the roads and disrupted the traffic. A number of villages have been cut off from the rest of the district. For days together, because of wash-off of bridges and breakdown of electricity and non-availability of essential commodities, the situation has further worsened.

Thousands of people, whose villages and houses were marooned by water, have been evacuated and shifted to some other places. Uncertainty is haunting them. They do not know how long they should live like homeless people.

The worst affected people are farmers. In our area, this is the transplanting season. Paddy nurseries raised for transplanting have been washed away. Overflow of water on to the paddy land made the fertile land saline. Most of these people are small farmers owning half-an-acre to two-an-acre to two acres. This year's crop has been lost. They do not have money to remove the silt

deposited on their land. They also do not have money to develop the land to make it good for cultivation of next crop. Whatever money they saved or took on loan has been spent in this year's crop cultivation. They have been ruined completely. They do not have an alternative source for their livelihood.

The State Government of Karnataka and the Chikmagalur district administration have been doing a commendable job in the most difficult situation. But because of paucity of funds and the magnitude of the damage caused by floods, the assistance from the State Government alone is not enough to meet the situation. It should be matched generously by the Central Government assistance also. I request the Prime Minister and the Agriculture Minister to give financial assistance to the State Government and to provide seeds and inputs, like fertilisers and pesticides, on a subsidised rate to the affected farmers. The Union Government must come forward to help the farmers to remove silt deposited on their land and to develop their land.

I appeal to the Central Government that those farmers, whose land has been silted and whose crops like potatoes, cabbage and other things have been completely damaged, should be given some flood loan. The flood loan should be interest free. This will definitely help them. They can use this money to get other inputs and prepare for cultivation of the next crop.

The flood loan should be given to the small farmers without any interest. Those farmers, who have come above the income limit, have also suffered very much. They should also be given the loan with a marginal interest. The same facilities should be extended to the small and cottage industries.

Such people whose shops, etc. are completely washed away, should also be given assistance by the Government.

Since the beginning of this decade, Karnataka has been continuously facing natural calamities of one type or the other every year. Since last four years, successive drought and flood havoc, besides the earthquake in 1993 and communal violence have drained the State exchequer to a great extent. Karnataka has to spend a lot of money on relief work. This time, the destruction caused by heavy rains and flood is very severe. The state Government alone cannot tackle the situation very effectively. Our State Government has already submitted a memorandum to the Central Government seeking an interim relief of Rs.100 crore as a grant to the State to carry out relief work.

I request the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Agriculture to release financial assistance immediately to help the people of Karnataka particularly those who have lost everything in these floods and who are in need of relief very badly.

Sir, I thank the hon. Prime Minister for sending the Minister of State for Defence, Shri Mallikarjun to Karnataka to tour the flood affected areas and assess the loss. His visit has created a hope in the minds of the people that the Prime Minister will give adequate funds to the State.

I also thank the Prime Minister for announcing a compensation of Rs.50,000 to the next of the kin of each deceased from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

Sir, the development of our country is highly uneven. We have built houses, shops, colonies, industries and townships on land which is generally regarded as flood-prone. In other countries, there is a criterion for

development. Here no such criteria exist at all. According to one estimate arrived at by the National Flood Commission, out of a total geographical area of 329.3 million hectares in the country, nearly 40 million hectares are declared flood-prone. But as things stand today, the Government is in a position to save only 14 million hectares of that land. The rest of it continues to get washed away year after year. No one is in a position even to assess what is lost and nor are we in a position to do anything to stem the rot and stop this loss.

In this connection, I would like to request that the Government should view natural calamities as a national problem and not as a problem confined to certain States only. This problem should be tackled with the help of properly funded and well devised central sector projects. Otherwise, despite spending millions and millions of rupees every year on construction of new embankments, drainage channels and other structural controls, the menace continues to defy solution.

I conclude with these words and I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this very important subject.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There are more than 20 hon. Members who are very eager to participate in the debate. The time allotted is already over. But I can understand the feelings of the hon. Members. If you promise to be very brief and make your points in just two minutes each, then I will permit. As the proceedings are telecast, people from all over the country watch the TV and your participation, from that point of view, is also very important. Please cooperate with me and be brief. I will call according to the list. Shri Sarat Pattanayak will speak.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Bolangir):

Sir, every year some parts of the country are affected by natural calamities like flood. This results in loss of property, human life and livestock. Every year, out of Natural Calamities Fund, assistance is provided to State Governments to overcome the losses. I would like to say that there is lack of a definite Flood Control Policy. If an integrated approach—in consultation with the Ministries of Water Resources, Agriculture, Environment and Forest, Rural Development and Surface Transport—is adopted, perhaps the loss due to these natural calamities can be minimised.

I would suggest that there should be a three-tier approach—at the national, state and local level. At the national level a National Level Water Policy should be framed by linking major rivers. At the State level, the check-dams, dikes and diversion walls should be strengthened prior to monsoon. Priority should be given to the rivers and tributaries which are to be connected and in local level Catchment area treatment should also get the priority. The river beds should be maintained properly. Floods occur mainly due to deforestation and, therefore, massive afforestation programme should be launched.

Now, Sir, coming to the havoc caused by floods in Orissa, we are grateful to the hon. Prime Minister for sending a Central Minister to our State to assess the losses. The State Government has asked for the Central assistance but due to inactive attitude of the State Government the people of Orissa are facing a lot of difficulty. The relief measures undertaken so far are inadequate. There is no adequate provision to drain the flood water. The estimated loss due to this natural calamity in the whole of Orissa is about Rs.200 crore. In Bolangir alone, which is my constituency, the estimated loss due to flood is about Rs.10 crore.

Due to the partisan attitude of the State Government the people are facing a lot of difficulties. The State machinery has failed to act in time leaving people at the mercy of nature. Unless Central assistance is provided immediately the economy of the State will be ruined. Due to the lack of safe drinking water in the flood-affected areas there is likelihood of outbreak of epidemics. So, I would request that adequate medical facilities should also be provided to our State of Orissa. For the student community the tuition fees should be waived. For the farmers recovery of agricultural loan should be deferred.

A Technology Mission on flood control should be set up by the Central Government. In some parts of Orissa, especially in various Blocks of the Dhenkanal district—Bhuban, Kamaksya Nagar, Hindol, Babanda Dampha, Tikrapada and Atmalik—more than 22 people have died and the State Government has not given any assistance in regard to this. Some 4-5 days back, after the intervention of the Hon. Minister, Shri K.P. Singh Deo, the State Government has started taking relief measures in the flood-affected areas.

A natural calamity like the flood affects each and every person living in the affected area but, unfortunately the ruling Janata Dal Party is giving a step—motherly treatment to the people affected by flood. All our cries and requests for giving help to these people have fallen on the deaf ears of the State Government.

I request the Central Government to take urgent steps to ameliorate the condition of people affected by flood.

SHRI A. CHARLES (Trivandrum):
Thank you Mr. Deputy-Speaker for giving me this opportunity to speak on this very

important debate. Floods have affected Kerala and more particularly Trivandrum this year which is my constituency.

The hon. Members who have spoken before me have already explained that several parts of this country have been very seriously affected by unusual floods. Floods have ravaged this country and particularly the States of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and several parts of Orissa and Kashmir during the last one-and-a-half months. In Kashmir, in one block, more than 60 lives have been lost and the latest statistics from all over the country shows that more than 600 lives have been lost. In a small state like Kerala, it is reported that more than 60 people have lost their lives and a few persons are still missing. Now, the latest figure which is made available to us says that it has gone up to 192.

The report which has just now come from Trivandrum says that almost the entire area of Trivandrum is under water. Sir, about 30 kilometres of the coastal belt is in my constituency. Every year, during monsoon, the coastal belt gets washed away and thousands of traditional fishermen of our area cannot go for fishing. Their huts are washed away and they are taken to the relief camps. Almost 1100 villages are affected by floods. My friends from Kerala have already explained about the damages caused due to floods. The loss comes to more than Rs. 160 crore. but the fact is that still most of the areas are under water. We cannot estimate the loss of food crops and other agricultural products now. We cannot even estimate the damages caused to the roads. In Trivandrum, we have two rivers which are overflowing. The people of Trivandrum are also facing a lot of difficulty due to this. Under such circumstances, I feel that we have a responsibility to see that the people who are now very seriously affected by

floods are given sufficient help. It happens every year. Thousands of families are uprooted due to floods. Sir, 150 families are accommodated in one school building. It is a very miserable sight. Therefore, I would like to suggest that we should have a permanent scheme or plan in order to see that the areas which are affected by floods every year are protected on a permanent basis. There was an effort to construct a sea-wall in the coastal belt. During the Seventh Plan, some work was carried out but it is unfortunate that the scheme has been abandoned. Now, that scheme has been left to the State Government. How can a State like Kerala which has the longest sea-coast complete such a huge task costing several crores of rupees. If that scheme is started again, especially, the States like Kerala, where the cost of land is very high, will benefit.

Before this debate, we have had a very nice discussion on the Airports Authority Bill. We have an International Airport which is 200 feet away from the side of the sea-coast. If floods occur, even the International Airport may be washed away. So, some special assistance will have to be given.

On the recommendation of the Ninth Finance Commission, a very inadequate amount viz., Rs.31 crore had been granted to our State. I am unable to understand how such a limit had been fixed for a state like Kerala which has suffered a damage to the extent of several crores of rupees. This meagre assistance that is coming from the Central Government will not be sufficient at all. Our Chief Minister had written a letter earlier seeking an assistance of about Rs.100 crore as a one-time payment but till date no reply had been received from the Central Government.

I am sorry to say that our Agriculture Minister who is supposed to be present

here is not present. We do not blame him. He may be having several other engagements.

More than that, he had been to our State several times. So, he knows the geography of our State. He knows how floods will affect our State. So, it is not always necessary to come and have an aerial view of floods. He knows what is happening there. What I mean is that the whole position is known here. So, some efforts should be made to extend all possible help to those States which are constantly affected by such floods.

We have to discuss floods and natural calamities together. Today, there are floods. A few months from now, there will be drought. This is the fate of Kerala. At one point of time, there will be floods; a few months later, there will be drought. Unless some permanent scheme is envisaged such as building of dams, our State will always be affected by these natural calamities.

The entire water of monsoon flows into the sea; that is being wasted. We have to store that water so that it will protect the State from the next drought. Even that is not done. When there is drought, we release some relief fund for the drought prone area; when there are floods, we again think of giving some temporary relief. So, this temporary relief will not do any good. Now, immediately, some fund has to be released for the Centre. Unless that goes there, the representatives of the people will be in a difficulty. Every day, telephonic calls are coming and we have to explain to them about the relief measures taken by the Government. On Saturdays and Sundays, we go there. When the affected people are in the relief camps, there is no ration for them; there is no electricity; they do not have clothes. The affected people are

dumped like cattle in such relief camps. How can we go and see them in these conditions?

So, I request the Government of India to give a serious thought to this and immediately some relief should be rushed to our State. The request of our hon. Chief Minister for immediate relief of Rs.100 crores may be accepted as a special case.

Similarly, help should be extended to all parts of the country. I am not confining myself to my State. After all, this is a big country and several parts of this country are affected by floods and drought; and we have to do something to help the people who are seriously affected by them. Compensation will have to be given for the livestock also.

I again request the hon. Minister that immediate relief should be rushed to Trivandrum and Kerala and other parts of the country may be taken care of.

DR. KARTIKESWAR PATRA (Balasore): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to take part in this debate. It is said that Indian agriculture is gambling with monsoon. Every year, several parts of India are severely affected or are being severely affected either due to floods or cyclone or drought— all sorts of natural calamities.

This year is an abnormal year during which several parts of the country have been severely affected due to floods. The hon. Minister of Agriculture has said that the number of casualties throughout the country is 539; but it is more than that. It was stated that only ten casualties were there in my State; but, subsequently it was found that they were more than 18.

My State, Orissa is being affected se-

verely due to floods because the rivers Subarnarekha, Vaitarini, Mahanadi and Brahmani are overflowing. Fifteen districts of our State have been affected. The number of blocks affected is 22.

The number of ULBs affected is 7. The number of Gps affected is 596. The number of villages affected is 2606 and the number of total population affected due to the recent floods is more 90,14,872. The number of human casualties is more than 18. The crop area affected is about 2,25,256 hectares. The number of breaches occurred in several embankments is 159. The number of minor irrigation projects affected is 295. The number of lift irrigation projects affected is 1,065. The districts affected are Cuttack, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Puri, Sambalpur, Nayagarh, Balasore, Boudh, Sundergarh, Koraput, Sonepur, Angul Kendrapara and Khurda.

Here I want to congratulate our hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of State for Agriculture that they have made necessary arrangements for visiting these flood affected areas in several parts of the country. Hon. Minister Shri A.K. Antony has been very kind to visit our State.

Sir, it is found that the State Government has failed to discharge its responsibility in distributing relief supplies, in taking pre-flood precaution measures and in taking all sorts of steps to redress the grievances of the flood affected people of our State. It is found that the State Government has not taken sufficient precautionary measures for repair of embankments, construction of paths, etc.

Due to devastating floods in river Subarnarekha some villages have been washed away. Some hundreds of houses have been washed away completely and

those people were taken to safe places. But the present State Government has not repaired the embankments. That is why so many breaches occurred. The entire money has been misappropriated by the present State Government. It was the responsibility of the State Government.

The Central Government has adopted a liberal policy and declared that a State could spend whatever money it requires and the Central Government would pay for it. For that a ratio of 3:1 has been fixed by the Central Government, but the State Government is not taking any precautionary measures. No food stocks have been released though a very little quantity has been kept for this purpose. We were there and even for 4-5 days after placing the matter before the BDOs and Collectors, we could not do anything. They say that no stocks have reached there. They procured some chura and rice and distributed them in the flood affected areas. People are in panic in marooned villages as the communication with them has been cut off.

They were there in their houses. They were detained there. Still they are there. Relief work could not reach them because the State Government has not taken proper care. Sir, in some places, fair mounds were earlier made during the time of the Congress Government in the State. But those flood mounds were totally destroyed and no protection has been given to those flood mounds.

Sir, you will be astonished to know that this is a man-made flood because many people had brought to the notice of the State Government that this portion has been weakened and this portion of embankment should be strengthened. This could not be repaired. In some places, people had brought it to the notice that this embankment would be

washed away. Somebody has said that in Banganbadi, a big breach was there and the houses would be totally washed away in floods. We have been informed that somebody put one polyethylene pipe of four inches from the river to his post through that embankment and that could not be replaced and repaired. He is Member of that Ruling Party. Like that, relief work was made on partisan basis. And wherever Congress People are there, they could not get any relief. Some Janata Sarpanchs and some Chairmen outrightly sold all the relief stocks. We arranged relief through our Party funds. We and our PCC Chief visited the affected places and arranged relief through our Party funds. But the State Government is very much reluctant in doing this. We do not say anything to our BDOs, Sub-Collector and Collector because they are taking steps. In spite of our united approach, the Government could not do anything.

I would like to submit one thing to the Central Government. The Central Government should come forward to survey the places, where this sort of calamity is perennial and permanent due to non completion of Chandil Dam at Subarnarekha river in Bihar. My constituency has been perennially and severely affected every year. Sir, you would be astonished to know that this year in Bhograi Block, 16 Panchayats and 83 villages consisting of 60,000 population with a crop area of 9,344 hectare have been totally affected. Similarly, in Baliapal Block, 14 Panchayats and 81 villages consisting of 55,000 population with a crop area of 6,000 hectare have been totally affected. In Jaleswar Block Baliapal Block, 12 Panchayats and 67 villages consisting of 35,000 population with a crop area of 5,500 hectare have been totally affected. In Basta Block also, four to five Districts have been affected.

Sir, the Chandil Dam project is an inter-state project. It should have been completed in the Seventh Five Year Plan. But it could not be completed because for the last four years, wherever non-Congress Government is there, the State Governments of Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa have not paid their share. Due to that, the drainage schemes could not be completed. The Dam has not been properly fitted with gates. It is still without a gate. And because it is without a gate, floods are coming and severely damaging and affecting the vast area in my constituency.

I would like to submit before the Minister for Agriculture that steps should be taken for immediate completion of Chandil Dam and the irrigation projects in Deogarh.

Sir, if we take steps to complete all these projects under a time-bound programme, then this sort of miseries would not have visited the people. These miseries are caused only because we are neglecting our duty in the completion of these projects which have been pending execution. These projects should, therefore, be completed under a time-bound programme.

I would like to mention the steps to be taken by the State and the Central Governments. The State Governments should prevail upon the centre to take steps to give house relief grants immediately so that the people who are rendered homeless can be rehabilitated and those people whose houses have been washed away by the floods can rebuild them. For the construction of the houses, loans should be given under the Indira Awas Yojana or some such scheme so that they can be permanently settled.

Also, loan assistance should be given for second crop. Supply of fertilizer, seeds and pesticides at subsidised rates should

be ensured. Either the loans should be waived or their collection should be stopped till next year. This sort of measures should be taken by the State and the Central Governments.

I submit that the Central Government should be very vigilant about the States where the Congress Government is not there to ensure that they are fully cooperating with the Centre and they are fully conscious of the fate of the flood-affected people of the country.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say something about the condition of Kerala after the havoc played by floods. The condition caused in Kerala by heavy rains is a matter of grave concern. Earlier the northern areas of Kerala were hit by severe floods. Now, the same kind of damage is being done in the Southern areas. Charlesji just talked about Kerala's floods in detail. I do not want to go into that again. The Government must pay attention to landsliding taking place in my constituency and hilly areas of other states.

18. 00 hrs

Such a situation has arisen that several people have been forced to live in camps and other safe places. We have to do so much. The State Government and the Minister are making efforts to provide essential items to Relief Camps but as you are aware, the economic condition of Kerala is not sound, it is in doldrums. Our coffers do not have money to even pay salaries to Government officials. Such a situation requires the Central Government assistance.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the desire of the House that we shall sit for half-an-hour more?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Let him complete his speech.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Alright, we will allow him to complete.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: The norms prescribed by the Finance Commission need to be changed. We get an amount of Rs.32 crores as per the prescribed norm. The situation caused by floods cannot be effectively tackled by this amount. That is why this norm needs to be changed. You are also aware of the situation of Kerala. The prescribed relief amount is not sufficient. Thus, it is my submission to the hon. Minister that it needs to be reconsidered. Whenever an area is hit by a natural calamity, a relief should be provided only after getting an investigation conducted. The Government should consider providing financial assistance keeping in view the status quo before the Finance Commission had prescribed the norms. Only then the grievances of the people could be redressed and people could be helped. The damaged roads could be reconstructed, the damage caused to the houses of the people could be repaired and they could be helped.

The Kerala Chief Minister has sought a grant to the tune of Rs.100 crores. We have been informed that the Minister of Agriculture is coming to Kerala to see the plight of the people. It is true that Jhakarji has visited Kerala on several occasions but he must come this time also.

I have received information today from my constituency that all the trains starting from South and Kerala have been suspended. The communication with those areas have come to a standstill and the situation continues. It is going to get worse in a day or two.

That is why, it is my submission that the Government should consider it and take decision of providing assistance to Kerala to the tune of Rs.100 crores in view of its deteriorating economic condition. The Central Government should expedite taking steps to redress the grievances of the people and provide immediate relief to people in distress in hilly areas and low-lying areas.

With these words I urge upon the Central Government again that the Minister of Agriculture should visit Kerala and in view of the worsening economic condition provide more and more financial assistance to Kerala.

[English]

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now the House stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow at 11.00 A.M.

18. 03 hrs

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, August 4, 1994/
Sravana 13, 1916 (Saka)*