the consumers but only the middlemen are benefited. The FCI centres are creating many more problems to the farmers while purchasing paddy from them. Mere fixation of socalled support prices for various paddy crops is not enough. It is most important to ensure that the prices so fixed are paid to the farmers.

The Centre has not properly considered the fixation of paddy price in comparison with other commodities. Every year, both at the official level meetings called oy Agricultural Prices Commission and at the Chief Ministers' Conference convened by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Government of India, the Government of Andhra Pradesh have been pressing for realistic support and procurement price for paddy, commensurate with the cost of cultivation. The cost of production of paddy during 1978-79 on an average worked out to Rs. 115.09 paise per quintal. However, even after the persistent efforts of the State Government, the Government of India increased the price of paddy only marginally i.e. by Rs. 8 per quintal for the crop year 1978-79.

Though there is general discontent among the paddy growers over the low support price of paddy as against the increasing cost of cultivation, particularly, the price of agricultural inputs, like, chemical fertilisers, the paddy growers have not raised their voice against Government policies.

I am very unhappy to bring to the notice of the Government that corruption, red-tapism and malpractices are widely prevailing in FCI purchasing centres. Unless the quality Inspectors of Food Corporation of India are pampered, paddy is not being purchased. During my visit last week to the villages of West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh, I learnt that the FCI officers are asking the farmers to bring new empty gunny bags themselves to procure the paddy even before fixing the price. I am unable to understand why the FCI is demanding gunny bags to be brought by the farmers. Samples of paddy are being examined at the centre and their quality is under-estimated. The farmer is quite unaware of these technicalities. Further, I am afraid, when the stocks are moved to the Government purchasing centres to the Government by the farmers and on some plea or the other, they are being rejected.

I want to bring one more specific instance which had happened in my constituency, Eluru, in Andhra Pradesh. In the villages of Eluru taluk some moneyed middlemen bought paddy from the small ryots at very low prices and sold them to the local FCI purchasing centres at Government fixed rates by mutual understanding with the FCI officials. It is learnt that within a period of one month in this season, a few middlemen earned lakhs of rupees with the connivance of the corrupt officials of the FCI. This corruption is prevalent in the entire coastal region of Andhra Pradesh.

In these circumstances, I appeal to the Government of India to make some arrangements immediately to put an end to these malpractices in the purchase and procurement of paddy. The Centre should also release substantial funds to the Government of Andhra Pradesh and arrange to open more purchasing centres by Food Corporation of India.

(ii) REPORTED DEATHS AND HEAVY LOSSES CAUSED BY HAILSTORMS IN CERTAIN STATES.

श्री राघव जी (विदिशा) : अध्यक्ष महोदय विगत दिनों देश के अनेक भागों में असमय भारी ओलावृष्टि हुई है । फलस्वरूप खड़ी फसलों को भारी क्षति हुई है जो करोड़ों रुपयों की है । हजारों छोटे छोटे मकान क्षतिग्रस्त हुए हैं । ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में अनेक परिवार इस ओलावृष्टि से बरबाद हो गये हैं । उन क्षेत्रों में ग्रामीण मजदूर भयंकर बेरोजगारी के संकट में फंस गये हैं । उनके भूखों मरने की नौबत आ गई है । यह तबाही मध्य प्रदेश, पंजाब, हरियाणा, उत्तर प्रदेश आदि प्रदेशों में हुई है ।

अकेले मध्य प्रदेश में इस ओलावृष्टि से 3939 ग्राम प्रभावित हुए हैं जहां दो लाख हैक्टर से अधिक

[श्री राघवजी]

की फसल पर ओले बरसे हैं । उसमें चार मनुष्य तथा 140 मवेशी मारे गये है, 7176 मकान गिर गये है। राज्य के 32 जिले इस ओलावृष्टि की चपेट में आ गये हैं ।

क्षतिग्रस्त क्षेत्रों में तत्काल राहत पहुंचाने की आवश्यकता है । प्राकृतिक विपदाओं जैसे बाढ़, अकाल साईक्लोन आदि के समय केन्द्र सरकार ने सदैव विपदाग्रस्त क्षेत्रों को तत्काल राहत पहुंचाई है । किन्तु खेद का विषय है कि इस महान विपदा के समय में केन्द्र सरकार अभी तक मौन है । राज्य सरकारें साधनों के अभाव में पर्याप्त सहायता करने में सक्षम नही है । किसानों की वर्ष भर की मेहनत, पूंजी स्वाहा हो गई है और वह भी उस समय जब कि फसल पक कर तैयार खड़ी थी ।

केन्द्र सरकार का यह दायित्व है कि वह तत्काल राज्य सरकारों के माध्यम से ओलाग्रस्त परिवारों को राहत पहुंचाने का प्रबन्ध करे एवं भविष्य में ओलावृष्टि की तबाही से बचने के लिये तेजी से अनुसंधान कार्य प्रारम्भ करे । मैं मंत्री महोदय से निवेदन करता हूं कि वह इस पर अपना वक्तव्य देने की कृपा करें ।

(iii) CLOSURE OF J. K. MANUFACTURERS LTD. KANPUR.

श्री पीयूश तिरकी (अलीपुरद्वार) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं नियम 377 के अधीन यह विषय इस सदन में उठाना चाहता हूं कि जे० के० मैन्युफैक्चरर्स लि० कानपुर 1 अक्तूबर, 1976 से बन्द है । 2500 श्रमिक भुखमरी के शिकार हैं, 40 अनाहार व दवा के अभाव में मर चुके हैं । मैनेजमैंट से मिल इंडस्ट्रीयल डैवलपमैंट (रैगुलेशन) एक्ट के अन्तर्गत लेकर चलाने के माननीय उद्योग मंत्री जार्ज फर्नान्डीस के दर्जनों बार के वायदों को मजाक बनाकर मशीनें बेच डाली गई हैं । मशीन खरीद करने वाली बम्बई की एक कंपनी पुलिस की संगीनों के साये में मशीनें खोद कर निकालने की जी तोड़ कोशिश कर रही है । मजदूरों व सरकार का करोड़ों रुपया, वेतन ग्रैच्युटी, बोनस, छुट्टी और टैक्स का कम्पनी पर बकाया है । मशीनें निकल जाने से मिल के अधिग्रहण की योजना खटाई में पड़ जायेगी और मजदूरों और सरकार का बकाया भी नही मिलेगा । गेट पर मजदूरों के कड़े प्रतिरोध से स्थिति विस्फोटक है और किसी भी समय गोली कांड होकर स्वदेशी गोली कांड की पुनरावृत्ति हो सकती है । मैं माननीय उद्योग मंत्री का ध्यान आकर्षित करता हूं कि इस सम्बन्ध में वक्तव्य दें ।

(iv) REPORTED HUNTING OF MCQUEEN BUSTARD IN SAURASHTRA (GUJARAT).

SHRI HARI VISHNU KAMATH (Hoshangabad): Mr. Speaker, by your leave, Sir, I proceed, under rule 377, to make a statement on the following matter of urgent public importance:—

Close on the heels of the alleged hunting of the great Indian Bustard in Rajasthan by some foreigners, comes the report of hunting and killing of the McQueen bustard, a protected species of bird, in Saurashtra (Gujarat) by a foreigner. This is an atrocious depredation by foreigners who seem to look upon our country as a happy hunting ground in more ways than one. The governmental and administrative supervision seems to be grossly lax and needs tightening up, lest worse befall. It is also necessary that a thorough inquiry should be held in order to ascertain how in this particular case of the McQueen bustard hunt, the foreigner concerned was able to commit a crime and go scot-free; and whoever, through laxity or negligence, abetted the foreigner's crime should be brought to book and awarded condign punishment.

MR. SPEAKER: Now we go back to the debate on the General Budget...

SHRI HARI VISHNU KAMATH: Sir, the Minister of State wants to make a statement on what I have raised...

MR. SPEAKER: I would not come in the way if he wants to make a statement. Probably he would like to think over the matter...

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): Unless the hon. Member desires that I should say something, I have nothing particular to mention.

MR. SPEAKER: He has desired. If you want to make a statement now, you may. Otherwise, we go on to the next business.

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU: I wanted to thank the hon. Member, a vigilant Member of this House, for bringing this matter to our notice. First of all, we have no information about it...