

Clauses 2 and 3 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed".

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

17.45 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

UN-UTILISED STOCK OF FOOD-GRAINS UNDER 'FOOD FOR WORK' PROGRAMME AND REVISION IN ALLOCATION OF FOOD-GRAINS

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, this Indira Government has started a treatment with the West Bengal Government in an area which concerns human-beings' stomach and hunger. I am talking of the Food for Work Programme. In that sphere, there are two important features. One is that they are playing politics with hunger, as I have just now said. Secondly, they are making a desperate attempt to consolidate their bureaucratic control over the heads of the representatives because that Party has very little strength there. These are the two main features, to start with. They are adopting double standards. One standard is for the Cong. (I) States and the other is for the Left Front CPI Government.

Now, in the Food for Work Programme there are four things basically: (1) what the West Bengal Government demanded; (2) what the Central Government allotted; (3) what the Central Government released; and (4) accountability and guidelines. What did the Minister say on the 17th November, i.e., this month, on the first day of the Session? He said certain things which are highly inaccurate and amounts to** He has misled the House and we shall take appropriate action in that regard.

In his speech he said that the carry-over quantity was 95,000 tons. Now, according to the Food Secretary Mr. Varma's letter of 3rd June, the quantity is 87,607. But the point is that the 'carry-over' means it is promised but not released. We want a correct picture from the Minister in regard to this.

Then he has said:

"The West Bengal Government has been showing figures different from what the Central Government has in the matter of utilisation of foodgrains allotted."

In fact, the Central Government is doing the same thing. We know exactly how much we received, how much we have utilised and what certificates have been given.

Then he says:

"After that, the West Bengal Government assured us that, as in every other State in India, the District Magistrate/Collector would be the Convener of this Steering Committee at the district level..." etc.

The District Magistrate himself is now the Convener of the Steering Committee. I have got a note from the Chief Minister himself.

**Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

Then he goes on to say:

"So, they have now a total of 1.45 lakh tonnes. Out of that, so far, we have received the utilisation certificates in respect of a quantity of only 45,188 tonnes."

This is an unmixed untruth,** there is no truth in this. In fact, it is 53,000 tonnes upto 11th November, 1980.

Then he says:

"The utilisation certificates received showed much less than 50 per cent of the foodgrains as having been utilised."

In fact, upto August, 1980, the utilisation against actual release—and we have given the account—is 86 per cent. The Finance Minister and Development Minister has made it absolutely clear.

The Central Food Secretary, in his D.O. letter No. M.13015/12/80-FWP dated June 3, 1980, writes to the Chief Secretary, West Bengal Government:

"As you know, a quantity of 2,15,000 metric tonnes of foodgrains under normal and special 'food for work' programme was released to your State last year. In addition, there was an unutilised quantity of 29,885 metric tonnes carried over from the previous year...."

He does not say, how much of 29,885 metric tonnes is undelivered. They had only done the exercise of paper work.

Then he admits:

"Against this, utilisation reports upto January, 1980, only have been received and these indicate a total utilisation of 1,57,278 metric tonnes."

It represents 64 per cent of the cereals supplied.

So, how could Mr. Birendra Singh say that we have not provided the utilisation certificate in due time and

in due manner? They are all** nothing but** He has only misled the House and slandered my State Government.

About the politicking, I will show just now.

This is the letter from Dr. Ashok Mitra, Finance Minister and Development and Planning Minister, D.O. No. FDM-265/80 dated the 12th November, 1980, to the Union Planning Minister; he says:

"The total allotment of foodgrains to the State under the Programme during 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 amounted to 416,000 tonnes. The actual amount released to the State Government out of this total allotment was, however, only 374,351 tonnes by the end of 1979-80; of this quantity, the West Bengal Government had submitted by March 31, 1980, utilisation reports covering 320,912 tonnes. Thus, by March 31, 1980, utilisation reported was 77 per cent of the allotments for the three-year period and 86 per cent of the actual releases."

After that, how can any civilized man say that they have not complied with the guidelines, that utilisation certificates have not been given? Let there be a Joint Commission set up with Central and State Government representatives and let the matter be thrashed out as to who is telling the lie.

Mr. Chairman, you will realise this; you are a mature politician. One can give utilisation certificate provided one gets the commodity in hand. We cannot give utilisation certificates against paper releases or paper allotments. Unless actually the cereals are received in hand, you cannot give any utilisation certificate.

Then, Dr. Mitra says:

"Theoretically, the difference between the total allotments during the three preceding years and what

**Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

were actually released to us, amounting to 95,288 tonnes, was available to us for utilisation during the current fiscal year, and to this could be added the quantity of 20,000 tonnes released in May, making a total of 1,15,288 tonnes. However, of this amount, the Food Corporation of India has till now released only 86,373 tonnes. By the end of September, the State Government had sent reports of utilisation covering 45,000 tonnes out of this quantity, or for more than 52 per cent. By yesterday (on 11-11-80), the State Government has sent reports to utilisation covering 53,000 tonnes, or for more than 61 per cent. Thus, in our humble view, the non-release of foodgrains by the Union Minister for Rural Reconstruction cannot be said to be because of our failure to send' utilisation reports of at least 50 per cent of the stocks already released."

Therefore, Sir, I expect that you will agree with me that I have made out a foolproof case.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In other words, you want to stress on what the Food Corporation of India had been doing. Do you mean to say that?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: There are two things here—one is the paper release and the other is the actual release. Utilisation certificate can be given only when actual release is made and the responsible Minister. Number 2—the Finance-cum-Development Minister—himself has categorically stated under his own signature that these certificates are being given. Now Mr. Rao has come here. I am more inspired by the presence of my old friend here. See how Mr. Rao is politicking. I shall show you one example. In reply to starred question No. 726 on the 28th of July, 1980—I would only speak about the States where the election was due—you will find how the allotment and release beautifully match each other. You start with your State to see how votecatching gadget functioned during the election period.

State	Foodgrains allocated under Normal Food For Work Programme (1980-81)(M.Ts)	Foodgrains released under Normal Food for Work Programme (1980-81)(M.Ts.)	Food grains allocated under Special Food for Work Programme (1980-81) (M.Ts.)	Foodgrains released under Special Food for Work Programme (1980-81) (M.Ts)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Bihar	40,000	40,000	70,000	70,000
Madhya Pradesh	25,000	25,000	1,74,000	1,74,000
			Come to Maharashtra, another election State.	
Maharashtra	25,000	25,000	15,000	15,000
Orissa	12,000	12,000	70,000	70,000
Rajasthan	30,000	30,000	1,00,000	1,00,000
U.P.	50,000	50,000	1,45,000	1,45,000
			Now come to my step-mother, son West Bengal	
West Bengal	20,000	—	50,000	20,000

Do you now see the double standards and how beautifully the food for work programme is being utilised by their vote catching gadget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bosu, you mark the thing. Don't you see our Agriculture Minister here? When you are on your legs, he has personally come to listen to your arguments.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I have high regard for him outside. Here he becomes a different man.

श्री ज्योतिर्नय बसु : नौकरी बहुत कराव
जाता है। अच्छे आदमी को भी बुरा बना
देते हैं। मैं उनको पन्द्रह बरस से जानता
हूँ। मंत्री काइ बन जाता है तो वह बदल
जाता है।

Sir, I have talked about double standards and I have given the figures. If he wants I will lay a photostat copy of the same on the Table of the House.

Now, let us see what they are doing? Rural development is a State subject and the State government pays one-third as cash component. Is that right or not? Are we not partners in 'Food for Work Programme'? And what they are doing? They are unilaterally and arbitrarily drafting guidelines and the essence of the guideline is to put the bureaucrats—as if they are godfathers—on top of the elected representatives. The reason is very simple. (Interruptions).

They want the district Magistrate to control everything. The simple reason is that they want to use the State machinery—police and bureaucracy. As they have no organisation of their own worth the name that is why they want the bureaucrats to cover their political interests, thus encroaching on our fundamental rights for political purposes. This 'Food for Work Programme', Rao Sahib, is it a property of the Indira Congress party or a property of the nation? Are you doing a charity? (Interruptions).

Sir, I was the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and I have seen how Rs. 400 crores—if I remember correctly—were squandered away and it found its way into the pockets of the selected few in the EACP. Then in respect of Rural Employment Cash Programme Rs. 250 crores found its way in the pockets of the political elements beautifully. The PAC reports are available. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bosu, my suggestion to you would be that you kindly keep your remarks confined to the subject under discussion.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, I take your advice. or 18 years in West Bengal they did not hold panchayat elections. Now, after seeing the peoples' mood and mind they are alarmed and panicky.

Sir, in most of the States—I dare say—for the 'Food for Work Programme' they are using contractors and a big loot is going on and the vested interests are jittery about it as in West Bengal we use nobody else except panchayats. I would like to know from the Minister who checks and audits the utilisation certificates given by the States? (Interruptions).

18 hrs.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South): Do you want that the people should elect the magistrates or the bureaucrats? What you are asking, I don't understand. (Interruptions). You know nothing..

SHRI DARUR PULLAIAH (Anantapur): Sir, Panchayats and party are different. Parties are not elected. (Interruptions).

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: You always depend upon the bureaucracy. (Interruptions).

AN HON. MEMBER: You cannot shout. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bosu, kindly go on.

SHRI ANANDA GOPAL MUKHOPADHYAY (Asansol): Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I ask this: Has Mr. Bosu got the guts to demand a committee of the House to go into the question? *(Interruptions)*. Let Mr. Bosu have the guts to demand a committee of the House to go into the question. The biggest scandal is there. Let Mr. Bosu tell us about this, is it true or not. Let him tell us whether it is a fact or not that 135 of the Panchayat Gram Sabhas have not submitted the returns for food-for-work programmes. Sir, nine Anchal Pradhans have been arrested. Let Mr. Bosu take up this challenge. Let him demand a committee of the House to enquire into it. This is CPI(M)'s biggest scandal. Everything will be unearthed. Mr. Bosu is only saying this because his boss came to Delhi only three days before and his boss has taken him seriously, saying, what you are doing in Parliament? So, Mr. Bosu is doing this. Let him accept my challenge. I challenge you. Let a committee go into the question. This will prove to be the last nail in the coffin of CPI(M) in West Bengal. Let a committee go into the question. The biggest scandal will be unearthed. *(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All of you may please take your seats. Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, please continue.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: When I stand up, nobody should stand up. Kindly listen to Mr. Bosu.

(Interruptions)

सभापति महोदय : आग्रह सुन लीजिए शास्त्री जी, आपने शास्त्र में पढ़ा हो या नहीं, लेकिन शास्त्र यही बतलाता है कि जब बेयरमैन खड़े हों तो औरों को बैठ जाना चाहिए ।

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: My question to the hon. Minister is this--or, rather, one of my questions to the hon. Minister is this. Who checks and audits the utilisation certificates? Is it done at all? *(Interruptions)* West

Bengal has new, enthusiastic, young men handling these affairs mostly. They have come to panchayats by people's popular votes. You cannot stop them. There may be a few errors or lapses, but we want decentralisation and panchayat raj to function. Do they or do they not want to eliminate the strangle-hold of bureaucracy and vested interests? Do they want politicking with food, because, it is most important? Sir, there is full supervision of the permanent administrative machinery there. The District Magistrate, the Chief Executive of the Steering Committee and the Convenor also, the District Planning Officer, District Panchayat Officer, District Relief Officer, Executive Engineer, District Manager, Food Corporation of India, Official representatives of the Development and the Planning Department are members of this Steering Committee. I do not know where the officials are lacking. Now, what is the place of the performance? The place of performance of West Bengal with regard to Food for Work Programme is on the top. I will read out. It is in reply to the Question No. 793 dated 17-3-1980 regarding the mandays generated. It is the prime object of the Food for Work Programme. Generation of employment figures have been given. Bihar is the highest. I congratulate. It is 641.21 lakhs, if...

MR. CHAIRMAN: In case of Bihar, you say 'if'...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: If their figure is correct, it is 641.21 lakhs. I congratulate them. Gujarat—601 lakh mandays; Haryana—30.03 lakh mandays; Karnataka—44.71 lakh mandays; Madhya Pradesh—415 lakh mandays; Maharashtra—143 lakh mandays; Rajasthan—567.4 lakh mandays; Uttar Pradesh—223.88 lakh mandays and for West Bengal, compared to the size of the State and the quantum of food, it is 533.2 lakh mandays.

(Interruptions)

In one year under the durable assets creation programme, 4,45,210 hectares

have been created. More than one lakh acres have been brought under minor irrigation.

Then in reply to Unstarred Question No. 912, it has been mentioned in the Statement No. 1 that the average number of persons engaged per day in Food for Work Programme is as follows: In Bihar it is 4.72; Haryana—0.02, Himachal Pradesh—0.4; Madhya Pradesh—0.46; Orissa—3.55; Rajasthan—7.65; Uttar Pradesh—4.65; West Bengal—8.0 and for Jammu and Kashmir, figures are not available. For Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh figures are not available. Did you withhold the supply of serials? (*Interruptions*).

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RE-CONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): West Bengal is 40 times of Haryana.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You have sent 2 officers. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: In consultation with all the Members present, the discussion had started at 5.45 p.m. Now, I find that only half-hour has been allotted for this discussion.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI DARUR PULLAIAH: It is only a Half-Hour discussion. You are going on allowing him to speak. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can we allow him to continue his speech?

SHRI DARUR PULLAIAH: How long? There should be some time-limit. Two Officers were sent to West Bengal to inspect on behalf of the Headmaster. I have nothing against them personally but, I am compelled to say, I have seen another report, most of it amounts to talking through their hats because we have got 6,500 village panchayats and in three days time, hardly three days time, they made a survey and gave a report that these are the lapses and said they went out of their jurisdiction and Chief Minister had clearly pointed out re-

garding what those officials had said in his letter dated 28th of October, 1960. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Sir, I have on several occasions tried to clear the position in the House but there seems to be some obsession with Mr. Bosu and certain other friends under which they have been working and it may be beyond me to try and cure them of this obsession.

So far as this Government is concerned, we have been more than fair in the case of West Bengal.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Generosity.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The poor people of West Bengal, the rural unemployed, are not the sole responsibility of West Bengal Government. Government of India is also responsible for looking after them and I would emphatically declare here that even if West Bengal fails, the people of West Bengal, the Central Government, Government of India will not fail those people.

I know you are not trying to help the people. You are playing politics with the people of West Bengal. I do not know how far that will... (*Interruptions*). This matter had been discussed in the House. I had replied to several questions I had also replied to discussions. There was even a privilege motion raised against me. There has been an endless correspondence to try and satisfy some hon. members; and the Chair was satisfied that whatever I had stated earlier on every occasion was true to every word.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I have photostat copies with me. May I lay them on the Table of the House?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As I have stated earlier, in the beginning I would like them to understand that allocation of foodgrain under the food for work programme was made on a certain basis which had been accepted by the Government of India in con-

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substantiation with the Planning Commission. The number of families, poor families, and agricultural labourers were identified; and on the basis of population and the number of these families, the allocation was made. The Minister of Agriculture or anybody for that matter in the Government of India does not have the authority to go beyond those norms. The share of every State is allotted and that share goes to that State. But we have a right to insist on certain guidelines to be followed. That is what we have been trying to convince about the guidelines to be followed and sincerely implemented by West Bengal Government. But, unfortunately, in spite of what they say in the House, they have not bothered about the difficulties that might have been experienced by the people for whom this foodgrain was intended. At every time, they have come forward to say that, in spite of their not agreeing to our guidelines in the interest of the people, some allocation should be made. We went out of the way to give them more foodgrains. On First April, they had a carry over from the last year of 95,288 tonnes. That was released this year. This quantity was released to West Bengal. If it was not utilized by West Bengal, it is not our responsibility. After that, 70,000 tonnes more of foodgrain was allotted in April 1980. Out of this, 20,000 tonnes of foodgrain was released for utilization, although requisite certificate for 50 per cent utilization or above was not furnished by West Bengal Government.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: That is not true totally.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: If you add 95,000 plus 20,000 tonnes, it comes to 1.15 lakh tonnes. A further release could be made if they had furnished a utilization certificate upto 50 per cent of the total allocation made. That would have come to about 57,644 tonnes to be exact. A utilization certificate in respect of 57,644 tonnes should have been furnished to the Govern-

ment of India. But this was not done. (Interruptions) You can calculate on the basis of 50 per cent. Even the last return which the West Bengal Government has submitted to us shows that only a quantity of 44,188 tonnes has been utilized.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Upto?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Up to end of August. And this return too was furnished on 28th of October. After that no return had been sent by them. So, the total utilisation certificate with us was for 45,188 tonnes, to be precise. This is a return, I have got photostat copies of it, they can look at it and I can even place it on the Table. But in spite of this lapse on the part of the West Bengal Government due to which we should not have made any further release, one Mr. Jyoti Basu, as a friend asked me whether we could allow the West Bengal Government to purchase 20,000 tonnes of foodgrains for utilisation. I told him, "Why do you want to purchase? We have got foodgrains for you. Why don't you send us the utilisation certificate? Instead of 20,000 tonnes we shall give you much more." Sir, they wrote a letter through their Secretary—Secretary, Development, West Bengal. No certificate was provided. Nothing. No returns were submitted. He only wrote a letter saying that "we have utilised more than 50 per cent of the foodgrains released."

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Jadavpur): What was the date?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It was on 15th of October. Letter from Secretary, Development Department, West Bengal. In his letter saying that 50 per cent had been utilised by West Bengal Government, though the return is only for 45,000 tonnes or so, he said that some more releases should be made. Only on the basis of that letter we have released them 30,000 tonnes more. If this is not partiality to West Bengal, what else can be partiality? Sir, I stated it before,....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Partiality because of your intimate friendship with Mr. Bosu? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I can never think that he can be so unreasonable. He has not been unreasonable outside the House. We two are intimate friends. (*Interruptions*). Outside the House he is also a much better man. Inside the House he acts as an advocate of West Bengal Government as a Party-man and I don't blame him for that but I am duty bound to try and satisfy the House.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is the right spirit. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: He has made insinuations that we have discriminated against West Bengal and we have favoured others. I brought the statement to him. He has looked into that statement. There are two kinds of schemes. One is normal 'Food for Work' programme and the other is 'Special Food for Work' programme. Whatever additional allocations he quoted as having been given to U.P., Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, they were under the Special Food for Work programme.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: What about Andhra and Gujarat?
(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: What was given was given under Andhra also was given under normal 'Food for Work' programme. Not under 'Special Food for Work' programme. (*Interruptions*) Shall I read it again?

SOME HON'BLE MEMBERS: No, No. (*Interruptions*). You have done a good job.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am prepared to put these photostat copies on the Table if my friend wants to look into them. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I am satisfied with this.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Whatever I am saying is all truth and nothing else.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANANDA GOPAL MUKHOPADHYAY: Sir, a Sub-Committee of this House should go into this question.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The irregularities—I may even go to the extent of saying, the malpractices—that were indulged in West Bengal have been looked into by an evaluation committee. The report was also widely published and my friends know how some of these foodgrains were used against our guidelines. Mr. Bosu says that we are against panchayati raj system. Panchayati raj is part of my ministry and we want to involve panchayati raj system in all development work. This is being done in every State. We want panchayats to take increasing responsibilities in these matters and we have never objected to the West Bengal Government executing these schemes through the panchayats. Our only request to them has been that the panchayats are a large body of people . . .

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You did not do election for 18 years in West Bengal.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: People of all views should be associated with the work that is carried out by the panchayats. I do not know how far they have done it. But to my mind, they have not done it.

As regards the steering committee at the district level, every other State had been following our guidelines, except West Bengal. They were not accepting our proposal that the District Magistrate should be the convener of the steering committee at the district level, so that as a civil servant he could be held responsible for anything

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that went wrong. They were refusing to do it. Now I am very happy and I am grateful that due to the good offices of Mr. Bosu and may be other friends also the West Bengal Government has informed us that there is no objection to putting the District Magistrate as the convener of the steering committee. After that, this one main objection of the Government of India has been met.

There has been an allegation they have made in the past—may be even today, I was not here when Mr. Bosu started speaking; I was attending a Cabinet meeting—they have been saying that there was no foodgrain in the FCI godowns.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I have not said that.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The responsibility for not utilising properly and fully the quantities released is not that of the Government of India, because we had enough foodgrains in FCI godowns throughout the year in West Bengal. I can give you those figures also.

SHRI M. M. LAWRENCE (Idukki): There is not enough foodgrain in the FCI godowns in Karala.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am sorry he did not hear me properly. I was talking about West Bengal.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I did not say that today at all.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am glad you have changed your stand today. Now you are convinced that we have been maintaining adequate foodgrain stocks in West Bengal throughout and we have seen to it that it is replenished. West Bengal Government has been lifting huge quantities for the public distribution system. No shortage was ever allowed to occur in West Bengal for the public distribution system. I am glad you are not saying that,

but if there was discrimination, there could also be discrimination in the supply of foodgrains.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: We never said that. We said that that had not been released.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: This is a very wrong insinuation. There is no single complaint made by the West Bengal Government, nobody ever raised this question that the Food Corporation was not releasing the foodgrains allotted to them. I challenge you to prove on record that the West Bengal Government ever said that the FCI godowns were not releasing the foodgrains. The godowns were full of goodgrains. They did not lift the foodgrains.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (Dum Dum): They had written to you that rice was not available in the godowns. (Interruptions)

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: When Shri Mukherjee goes to his constituency he says that you are not getting food because the Centre is not releasing it. When he comes over here, he supports the Centre. It is very strange.

SHRI ANANDA GOPAL MUKHOPADHYAY: It is not true.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It is a baseless allegation that the West Bengal Government has been discriminated against. The foodgrain stock had been maintained in West Bengal even throughout the drought period. The position was much better than in any other State in that area. In January, we had 7.43 lakh tonnes of foodgrains in our stock in West Bengal. In February, because of heavy lifting, it came down to 4.81 lakh tonnes. In March, it was 4.42 lakh tonnes; in April-3.58, in May-4.57. In spite of heavy consumption, we were supplying foodgrains and replenishing the stocks.

In June, it came down to 4 lakh tons, July 3.80, August—3 lakh tons, September—the same figure, October 2.73 and in November 2.75 lakh tons.

There are 232 issue centres of FCI in West Bengal. That is comparatively much more than in any other State in India. That is how we are looking after West Bengal. Even then they allege discrimination.

For Public distribution system, they have lifted 1.56 lakh tonnes from our godowns in April, 1.82 in May, 1.72 in June, 2.09 in July, 1.69 in August, 1.96 in September and 1.77 lakh tonnes in October.

If all this foodgrain was available to the public distribution system, how can they say that foodgrain was not available for Food for Work programme. But they never wanted to lift it. They did not want to utilise the foodgrains properly.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: There may be stock but the question is this: whether it was made available to the Government of West Bengal?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: If there was any fault on the part of the FCI in releasing foodgrain, you would have created a bigger hue and cry than what you are doing now.

You never made any complaint about this. So, all your allegations are absolutely baseless and malicious.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Why should I be malicious?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I do not know. You might be wanting to take political advantage of it. You want to show that everything that we have done for West Bengal (Interruptions) It is very difficult for me to shout, because I have a very bad throat.

They have taken the stand that it is not possible to get the returns of utilisation from the panchayats in time. This is one of their alibis. We are following the same system all over the country. All this work is being done through the panchayats. If every other State in India can furnish the utilisation certificate from the panchayat in time, why cannot the West Bengal Government do it? It simply means that the administration in West Bengal is wanting in this respect, it cannot get the returns from the panchayats in time. That is the fault with your Government. You should try to improve your machinery.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Do they get the certificates audited?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Yes. I assure you that we get these certificates right from the panchayats, through the State Governments, in time. Before we release any quantities of foodgrains, under this Programme, we always get certificates of 50 per cent utilisation. There has been on deviation from this practice and we have been doing the same with West Bengal. But we have tried to show a favour to them, making a certain allowance. It was only in your case that we have made an exception. In no other case have we done that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are four names in my list. Each of them can ask one question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDR HALDER (Durgapur): Sir, I hope you will allow me a few minutes to frame my question (Interruptions)

SHRI SUBASH CHANDRA BOSE ALLURI (Narasapur): Sir, how long are we sitting? . . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: If he wants any elaboration or clarification of the observations made by the Minister, he may do so. Rule 55(5) reads:

"Provided that not more than four members who have previously intimated to the Secretary-General may

be permitted to ask a question each for the purpose of further elucidating any matter of fact”.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Sir, I strongly protest against the remarks of the Agriculture Minister, directed against the West Bengal Government and its panchayats. They are absolutely not true. There are no malpractices in the Food for Work programme implemented through the panchayats(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: (Jadavpur): Sir, on a point of order. You have been kind enough to remind us of the rules. But should the Member not be allowed to put the question. Now the Members on the other side suddenly wake up and prevent a Member(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him put the question.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It is not a question. He is protesting against my remarks.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: That is a preface to the question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: He is always in the habit of misleading the house and misquoting figures.

He was saying that he wanted to table the photostat copy of West Bengal's communication. Regarding land reforms and land distribution he misguided the House, and he always wants to misguide the House.

Earlier, my hon. friend Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu quoted the Food Secretary of the Central Government as admitting on 3rd June that they have received 64 per cent of the utilisation certificates for the food for work programme. Again, the West Bengal Finance Minister, Shri Ashok Mitra, has said that up to 31st March, 1980, utilisation certificates for 77 per cent of the allotments for the three year period, i.e. 80 per cent of the actual re-

leases, have been furnished. These are convincing facts. So, what Mr. Rao said earlier is not correct.

In 1978 when there was a flood; it was the West Bengal Government which successfully tackled it through the panchayats through the food for work programme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please co-operate. One hour has already elapsed. Kindly put a question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Is it not a fact that the Food Secretary, Central Government, on 3rd June wrote to the Chief Secretary of the West Bengal Government stating that for 64 per cent of the release utilisation certificates had been furnished? Is it not a fact that the West Bengal Finance Minister, Shri Ashok Mitra, has written to say that up to 31st March, 1980, utilisation certificates covering 3,20,912 tonnes, i.e., for 77 per cent of the actual releases for the three year period had been furnished? Is it not a fact that it comes to 80 per cent of the total actual releases?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: If there is a specific question and the wants a clarification, I can give it, but he cannot go on making a speech and wasting the time of the House.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: He talked about guideline regarding the food for work programme. The Zila Parishad Sabhapati is the Chairman, and he has admitted that our State Government has said that the district magistrate will be the convenor. Regarding your guidelines I want to know how many States have followed your guidelines. I want to know the break up of the figures of all the State Governments.

I want categorical answer. Being the Central Minister for Agriculture, do not try to mislead the House and the Nation on the Floor of the Lok Sabha. If you mislead, it means you are attacking the federal structure of our Constitution. If you vilify and malign the

State Governments and misquote the figures on the Floor of the House, it will not help the Centre-State relation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are not asking the question. You are making all sorts of insinuations. *(Interruptions)* You put one question.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: How many States have followed your guidelines?

SHRI ANANDA GOPAL MUKHOPADHAY: There is no quorum in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The bell may be rung to ascertain whether there is quorum.

Now the bell is ringing.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The bell is ringing and nothing will be recorded. . . . I asked the quorum bell to be rung. It

has been ringing for quite some time. I find still there is no quorum.

One thing can be done. About Half-An-Hour Discussion, there is Direction 19 which says:

"When half-an hour discussion under sub-rule (1) of rule 55 is interrupted for want of quorum or when there is no time for the Minister to give a full reply to the debate, he may, with the permission of the speaker, lay a statement on the Table of the House."

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am now asking for the quorum bell to be rung for the second time. Let the quorum bell be rung. . . . I find that there is no quorum even after the bells were rung twice.

I, therefore, adjourn the House till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

1901 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, November 25, 1980/Agrahayana 4, 1902 (Saka)