

[Shri R. Venkataraman]

May, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding revised rate of exchange for conversion of Swiss Francs into Indian currency or *vice-versa*.

(xxxiv) GSR 265 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 16th May, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding revised rate of exchange for conversion of Pound Sterling into Indian currency or *vice-versa* in supersession of Notification No. GSR 239 (E) dated the 25th April, 1980.

(xxxv) GSR 268 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 20th May, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding revised rate of exchange for conversion of Japanese Yen into Indian currency or *vice-versa*.

(xxxvi) GSR (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 23rd May, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding revised rate of exchange for conversion of Pound Sterling into Indian currency or *vice-versa*, in supersession of Notification No. GSR 265 (E) dated the 16th May, 1980.

(xxxvii) GSR 282(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 28th May, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding revised rate of exchange for conversion of Pound Sterling into Indian currency or *vice-versa* in supersession of Notification No. GSR 276(E) dated the 23rd, May 1980.

(xxxviii) GSR 297 (E) and 298 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 7th June, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum exempting Potassium Sulphate containing not more than 52 per cent, by weight of Urea, Composite Fertilizers Di-Ammonium Phosphate,

Ammonium Nitro-Phosphate, Ammonium Phosphate Muriate of Potash and Kyanite salts from auxiliary duty of Customs. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-859/80].

(8) A copy each of Notification Nos. GSR 132 (E) and 133 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 27th March, 1980 together with an explanatory memorandum specifying areas along Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Nepal borders as being vulnerable to smuggling and also specifying silver bullion and coins exceeding market value of Rupees one thousand as goods requiring transport vouchers, issued under section 11-H and 11-K of the Customs Act, 1962, respectively. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-860/80].

(9) A copy of the Twelfth Valuation Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Life Insurance Corporation of India as on the 31st March, 1979, under section 29 of the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-861/80.]

12.05 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

SERIOUS DROUGHT SITUATION IN VARIOUS
PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR (Hamirpur): I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Serious drought situation in various parts of the country."

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): On the 17th March, 1980 in

this House I had given some details about the drought conditions through which a large part of our country has been passing since last year. The on set of the monsoon last year was delayed by about a fortnight and there have been continuous dry spells stretching from 4 to 9 weeks till the end of August, 1979. Eleven States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were particularly affected by drought. The rainfall from October, 1979 to May, 1980 continued to be deficient of scanty practically in all these States so much so that the States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and even Gujarat sought Central assistance during the current financial year. In the eleven States mentioned earlier 220 million people and a cropped area of 386 million ha were affected. The twelfth States of Gujarat has reported 6 million people and 1.1 million hectares of cropped area to have been affected by drought.

As I had indicated in my statement of March this year, on the basis of the recommendations of the Central Teams and of the High Level Committee on Relief, ceilings of expenditure amounting to a total of Rs. 156.95 crores had been approved by the Government of India for the purposes of Central assistance to the eleven drought affected States during 1979-80. During the current financial year requests for more Central assistance were received from eight States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Their requests were considered immediately. The Central Teams visited the States again and on the basis of the recommendations of the Central Teams, further expenditure amounting to Rs. 177.37 crores was sanctioned for six of the States. Central

assistance to the remaining States of Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat is under active consideration. The Central assistance sanctioned so far includes Rs. 22.39 crores for subsidy to the small and marginal farmers for agricultural inputs, Rs. 59.87 crores for drinking water schemes, Rs. 179.50 crores for employment generation schemes and Rs. 65.11 crores for gratuitous relief, fodder and transportation of water, etc.

Besides the above, the Central Government advanced a total short-term agricultural loan of Rs. 163.10 crores to the drought affected States since kharif last year.

Over and above the monetary assistance, the Central Government released to the drought affected States a total quantity of 27.20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains during 1979-80 and allocated a further amount of 9.17 lakh tonnes during the current financial year. For pre-school children, pregnant and nursing mothers, aged, infirm and physically handicapped persons, 1 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were provided as also 2500 Metric Tonnes of edible oil and 1500 tonnes of skimmed milk powder.

The scheme of giving subsidy for seeds, pesticides, and fertilisers including nitrogenous fertilisers for the small and marginal farmers in the monocropped area where the damages have been more than 50 per cent has also been extended upto September this year. The interest liability on current loans in areas where the crop loss was more than 50 per cent was also waived under certain conditions.

I myself wrote to the Chief Ministers/Governors of the drought affected States to accord the highest priority to agriculture, so that the demand of diesel for agriculture can be met in full. We had also advised the State Governments that at least 50 to 60 per cent of the electric power should be made available to the rural areas for rabi production, if necessary by

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

curtailing consumption of power intensive consumers like arc-furnaces, steel-rolling mills, etc.

As the summer set in, availability of drinking water posed serious problem in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. About 50,000 villages have experienced serious shortage of drinking water. The Prime Minister has been extremely concerned about this problem and at her instance the States of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra gave massive help to the drought affected States by sending their own rigs along with the crew for boring drinking water wells in the hard rock areas, and 72 such rigs are working on multi-shift basis in the affected States. In April this year the Cabinet agreed to sanction Rs. 11 crores for purchase of 98 indigenous rigs and Rs. 4 crores for 10 Swedish rigs for supply to the drought affected States. At present in all about 300 fast sophisticated rigs and 1000 slow rigs with a monthly capacity of 4000 borings are operating in the affected areas. The assistance of the Armed Forces and the Railways has been made liberally available to the States for transport of water to the remote villages.

The Prime Minister herself has been touring the remote desert, tribal and other areas affected by drought in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. A 12-Point Programme on Drought Management was recommended to the States and Central Ministries were requested to give all assistance to the States in meeting the situation. The Drought Management Programme provides for appointment of full-time officers, setting up of monitoring cells, strengthening of public distribution system for supply of foodgrains, edible oil and kerosene, curbing the anti-social elements who try to exploit the scarcity conditions, effective implementation of

Food-for-Work Programme by ensuring continuity of work and regular payment, mounting of massive afforestation programme, contingency plans for supply of water to the affected villages and setting up of cattle and relief camps. I also visited the affected States of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Gujarat, West Bengal and Haryana while my other colleagues also visited the drought affected areas of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh on the directions of the Prime Minister.

A Task Force in the Department of Agriculture as well as a monitoring group of the Department of Food have been regularly monitoring the movement of foodgrains, allocation of diesel, deployment of rigs for drinking water, etc. in consultation with the various Departments of the Central Government and the Railways and also the resident representatives of the State Governments in Delhi.

A Weather Watch Group has also been functioning in my Ministry since last year for keeping a watch on the weather situation and advising the farmers and the State Governments.

It is said that in its intensity and spread, the current drought has been the worst in the living memory. However, it should be a matter of great pride for all of us that we have not asked for a single grain of food from any country and have not allowed a single starvation death. By the end of last month more than 65 lakh persons were being employed daily in the drought affected States. Many drought affected villages have now permanent source of drinking water through the massive programme of boring wells in the drought affected hard rock areas that was taken up since the beginning of the year. Out of 50,000 villages seriously affected by drinking water scarcity about 32,000 villages have been covered already by our programme of providing durable sources of drinking water.

Though we are not yet completely out of the woods, I can say with confidence that the situation has been handled by the Central and the State Government during the last few months with complete dedication and is fully under control. The manner in which the drought has been managed on the various fronts of agriculture, drinking water and relief deserves commendation from all quarters.

Fortunately, this year the onset of the monsoon wherever due has been on time and the western coast, West Bengal, the North Eastern region and many of the drought affected areas have received welcome rains since the beginning of this month. The behaviour of the monsoon so far has been satisfactory but is being closely watched. We are advised that the monsoon is likely to be normal in the Peninsular area and slightly above normal in the North-western parts of the country. I can only hope that our expectations will come true but nevertheless we have always to be prepared for the worst both on the long-term as well as short-term basis. In the formulation of the revised Sixth Plan we will be taking due account of the long-term measures which will mitigate the effects of recurrent drought, floods cyclones, etc., which visit the various parts of our country from time to time.

While concluding, I must salute the Indian farmer who has been braving the drought with fortitude, patience and enterprise. In spite of the fact that about 38 million hectares of cropped area was affected, the shortfall in the production of foodgrains during the Kharif season was about 14 to 15 million tonnes with a small shortfall in Rabi production. Our irrigated areas especially in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh gave an extremely good account of themselves in insulating agricultural production from the effects of drought. With proper land and water management and a scientific cropping pattern based on identified

meteorological behaviour, we hope to mitigate the effects of drought in a more effective manner.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: As is clear from the Hon. Minister's report and also from Press reports, the present drought happens to be the worst since Independence and since the time we can think of—that is, in living memory. It is not only in India but also in other parts of the world, even the World Food Council has warned of a decade of famine in the years to come. All that is required is that we have to plan ahead and plan well.

In various parts of the country the situation is very serious on three fronts. One is that of drinking water. In most of the areas, especially in our State of Himachal Pradesh and areas bordering the State of Punjab and some places in Uttar Pradesh we find that even the perennial sources from where the water used to flow down to the plains have been going dry and the water level in the lakes has gone so low that it has become virtually impossible for people to carry water from there. There is a very famous lake called the Renuka Lake in Sirmur District, which has recorded the lowest level for the first time in the century. Similarly in the Rewalsar Lake, which is very famous for the Buddhist Temple the water level has gone down at the moment.

Apart from this our suffering has been increased by the fact that all these things which the Minister has pointed out, that is, carrying water by railway trains and Army trucks etc., have not been sufficient in States like Himachal Pradesh because the villages are located in places where no roads are there. Naturally, water pitchers have to be carried on the head; and long queues of people can be seen. So, immediate arrangements for supplying water for drinking purposes in villages have to be thought of as an immediate measure.

The Minister has made a statement regarding provision of Central 1951-

[Prof. Narain Chand Parashar]

tance for the State of Himachal Pradesh. He has indicated that it is under active consideration. Sir, the monsoon may come within a month or within a fortnight, but our point is that it will not solve the problem because grasses will not grow immediately and the drinking water has to be regulated for the purpose of drinking. Therefore, the task is more difficult than can be imagined: it cannot be solved by the onset of monsoon. We have to plan for immediate assistance for supply of water for drinking purposes to the people. What has happened is that even people in villages where there used to be water, have moved with the cattle and the cattle has come to the riverside, mostly from Himachal. They have come down to the Sutlej and other areas, and the movement of cattle has created another problem—that is, the problem of fodder. We find that fodder has to be rushed to these places.

The last and the most serious problem is that of food under the Food for Work Programme. The Hon. Minister has been indicating certain allocations but I find a very interesting restriction. The Planning Commission has evolved a formula whereby only 5 per cent of the Annual Plan allocation can be given as financial assistance under the programme for relief work. I do not find any justification for this because in one State it may be more serious and in another State it may be less serious. So, why stick to this rigid formula? May I ask the Minister to kindly explain how this is going to be implemented because I find from his own statement that whereas the ceiling fixed by the Planning Commission was earlier Rs. 145 crores, increased assistance to the State was given by this very Government—the Central Government—keeping in view the serious situation, and Rs. 17 crores was given in addition to this Rs. 145 crores. So, what I can find out from the formula is that the ceiling was rather too low and the requirement was very high.

Therefore, we have to plan in such a manner that the requirements are met.

In the case of Himachal Pradesh, our Chief Minister and we Members of Parliament from Himachal Pradesh met the Hon. Minister day before yesterday and made a request to him to allot immediately 10,000 tons of foodgrains because, while our requirement for the year is 60,000 tons of foodgrains, we immediately require ten to fifteen thousand tons. The problems of Himachal Pradesh and similar hill States are different from other States because where, with the onset of monsoons the problems of other States would be almost over, in Himachal Pradesh they would not be over because there are lands where there would be certain blockades on roads and movement by buses and trucks would be blocked, and it would be difficult for the people to reach the interior. So the State machinery has to be evolved and energised in such a manner that we can meet the needs of every human being. The Himachal Pradesh Government has been doing well on this front but the resources have been very limited. We have been supplying water by trucks. About 205 points of distribution of drinking water were fixed by the State Government and water was carried but, as I have pointed out earlier, there are hills and hills and on those hills the people live—where trucks cannot go and mules cannot go—and pitchers of water have to be carried. For this we need increased assistance. Any formula which is applicable to the plains for drought relief assistance will not be adequate for hilly places like Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and other such areas. So, I would request the hon. Minister to point out clearly that this limit of five per cent of Annual Plan expenditure for relief work will not be adhered to strictly in the case of Himachal Pradesh.

Secondly, a permanent solution to this problem by the setting up of Water Development Boards in every

State with the help of State Government and Central Government would also be a step in the right direction. They should be manned properly. Here, I refer to a report that has appeared in the *Hindu* of 4th June.

MR. SPEAKER: Please try to conclude.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: The report that has appeared in the *Hindu* says that the Water Board in States where they have allegedly been set up, like that in Bihar, are not functioning properly because of the technical knowhow being lacking. So, I request the hon. Minister to see that this permanent problem of drought-prone areas is solved to an extent that it does not recur again. It is a point to be considered that, initially, for many years, drought has been there in our country; about 20 per cent of the area and twelve per cent of the population are subject to drought every year. When this is the problem, I would require his attention on two fronts: number one, immediate solution; and number two, permanent solution....

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: For immediate solution, I would request him to pay immediate attention to food-for-work programme, fodder and drinking water.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We are fully conscious of the serious problem being faced by Himachal Pradesh. Only the other day, the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, along with the hon. Member, Prof. Narain Chand Parashar, met me. We had already sent a Central Team, by about the end of May, to visit Himachal Pradesh. Their report has been received, and we are trying to meet the demands of Himachal Pradesh to the extent that we can possibly do. 8,000 tonnes of foodgrains for Food-For-Work-Programme were allotted last year. This year we are going to al-

locate a substantial quantity on the recommendation of the Central Team which visited the State for the second time at the request of the State Government and according to the demands made by the Chief Minister. I hope there will be no difficulty in carrying on the Food-For-Work-Programme for employment generation and to meet the immediate demands of the poverty-stricken people.

The difficulties in supplying drinking water to the villages in the hilly areas, mentioned by the hon. Member, are quite genuine. I can assure the House that all expenditure on supply of drinking water to the needy villages will be fully met by the Central Government.

AN HON. MEMBER: In all the States?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am talking about Himachal Pradesh. If there is a similar demand and there are the same type of difficulties in other States, that will also be considered.

He has mentioned about the ceiling of five per cent laid down by the Planning Commission. There is no difficulty in considering a larger demand on merits in the case of Himachal Pradesh. As I have said, we have already received the report of the Central Team. The damage due to drought has been very extensive in Himachal Pradesh. There has been 50 to 90 per cent damage to the crops. The apple crop has also been very badly affected. We are proposing to provide a substantial amount to meet their requirements.

As regards additional foodgrains, we have already received the recommendations, as I have said. The demand of the Himachal Pradesh Government is for 10,000 tonnes more, and I hope that we shall be able to fully meet their demand; we shall take a decision today or tomorrow. I do not think that there is anything else I have to answer.

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

With regard to Water Board for the whole of India it is a good suggestion for consideration. We are taking measures, as I said in my statement, for mitigating these difficulties on a long-term basis.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI (Sambalpur): The Minister has given a beautiful picture for combating the drought situation in the country. Actually, this year throughout the country people have suffered and particularly, more so in Orissa. The Orissa government has submitted a report to the Central Government. Out of 3600 Gram Panchayats, two-thirds have been affected by a severe drought and most of those are in the western part of the State—that is nearly 1440 Panchayats are chronically drought-affected. May I know from the Minister how many times the central teams have visited Orissa and what was their recommendation and how many times the State Government has given memorandum to the Ministry of Agriculture and even to the Prime Minister?

The Minister has also given us a very beautiful picture for combating the drinking water scarcity, for supplying fodder to the cattle and also of the food for work programme. The

12.27 hrs.

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil in the chair]

picture is not so bright especially in Orissa because people are leaving their hearths and homes to different parts of the State and from places of chronic drought to irrigated areas and other places where they are getting employment. May I know from the Minister what was the requirement of foodgrains which was given by the State Government last year and this year and what was the allocation? I know from the State Government officials that in the food for work programme, the food has not reached the destination in time and

people as a result have suffered a lot and they are suffering from a severe anaemia and hypo-protein-anaemi in most of the western districts of Orissa like Padampur sub-division, Naopara, Bangomunda, Khaprakhal and Chandahandi. In 1965 the drought condition was not so much and the central assistance has reached the States in a very big way but this time I am afraid the Minister has not felt the need of the people of the western districts of the State because now also if a parliamentary committee will go and visit those areas which I mentioned just now as chronically drought-affected areas, they will see that people are in chronic starvation and are suffering from acute anaemia.

With regard to drinking water, in the highlands more than 50 per cent of the villages do not have any drinking water and in the western districts particularly, more than 60 per cent of the villages are suffering for want of drinking water and the cattle also do not have any water or fodder and are dying. It is not a fact that the cattle got the necessary fodder and the people are having the drinking water facility. May I know from the Minister what was the requirement of foodgrains and fodder which was given by the State Government and what was the supply. I am pleading that the State's plan does not provide so much to combat the drought situation in a big way. At the same time, the Prime Minister has also felt that more than 70 per cent of the people of Orissa are below the poverty line and Orissa, as you know, is always in the grips of a drought, floods and cyclone. For that reason, I will urge upon the Minister as to what are the measures taken this year. Though it is a State subject, the State machinery previously was not in a position to combat the situation. So they have asked for central assistance. I understand the State has asked for an assistance of Rs. 55 crores from the centre...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member should ask the question.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: I am asking the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It cannot be so big.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: Unless the picture is given, I think the Minister will not be able to reply properly.

I will now put a categorical question. For solving the drinking water problem, I want to know, what permanent measures is the government going to take? I would urge upon the Minister that special attention should be given to the State of Orissa. Will the Minister agree to my proposals?

Secondly, I want to know whether there are more than 1440 Gram Panchayats in Orissa which are chronically drought affected for more than 3 years and 50 per cent of the crops have been lost in the last six years.

That was the pattern in Maharashtra and other States. I want to know whether the Government of India will agree to this proposal. The Finance Minister has categorically asked all the M.Ps of Orissa to come with a proposal to write off of loans of all types in those areas—because there is no differentiation between small, marginal and medium farmers as all are suffering.

May I request the Minister to answer categorically what was the proposal from the State Government about the writing off of loans to the Finance Ministry and whether Government is considering the writing off of the loans in those chronically drought affected areas? If the answer is in the affirmative, then what was the pattern?

Secondly, for the food for work programme, what is the allocation to be made for the coming year? Comparing the situation for employment in the State, what would be the requirement....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I draw the attention of the hon. Member to Rule 197(20) which says:

“There shall be no debate on such statement at the time it is made but each member in whose name the item stands in the list of business may, with the permission of the Speaker, as a question;”

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: Already I have asked many questions. I hope the Minister will reply.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I rise on a point of order. Would you kindly enlighten the House as to how much time was given to Shri Narain Chand Parashar? Kindly get it from the Table.

There should not be a double standard. There should be one standard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not a point of order. The hon. Minister may please go ahead with his reply.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am not in a position to say anything categorically about the demand of the State Government for writing off of the loans. When a decision is taken by the the Finance Ministry, it will be conveyed to the State Government.

We have taken good care to see that employment is provided to the people in Orissa. The food for work programme is in full swing. I am happy to tell you that there is no migration from any area due to drought to any other area. It is because in Orissa employment has been provided to the people under the food for work programme.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK (Kendrapara): The Minister perhaps has no idea.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: When Mr. Biju Patnaik was in power here, in the year 1979-80, for the first time, allocation was made for drought

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

relief. Only Rs. 14 crores was sanctioned then. But, on the recommendations of Orissa Government, later on, after this Government took over, within ten days, the Central Team visited the State for the second time and I am glad to say that Rs. 17.39 crores additional sanction was given to the State for drought.

श्री रामावतार झास्त्री (पटना): उसका इस्तेमाल हो रहा है या नहीं असल सवाल यह है ।

श्री बीरेन्द्र सिंह राव: पूरा हो रहा है, फिक्र मत कीजिए, आप बिहार की फिक्र कीजिए ।

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: With the monsoon coming in, will you kindly explain what was the work done there? Why are you trying to bluff?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: In the year 1979-80, a total of 2.77 lakhs tonnes of foodgrains was allocated to Orissa. On the demand of the Orissa Government, for these three months, we have released an additional quantity of 12,000 tonnes under the normal food for work programme and another 70,000 tonnes for the special food for work programme. That will look after the problem upto the end of this month and there have been fraily good rains already in Orissa. I hope grass will be growing soon and there will be no danger of cattle perishing now. We have got over the difficulties by the grace of God. Although cattle camps are the responsibility of the State government we are providing all help to the State government and we have not received any complaint about cattle perishing for lack of provision of fodder.

SHRI P. K. KODIYAN (Adoor): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister in his long statement had drawn out a rosy picture in regard to the

settling of the drought situation. In his statement he says:

"Though we are not yet completely out of the woods, I can say with confidence that the situation has been handled by the Central and State Governments during the last few months with complete dedication and is fully under control."

He has also that not a single starvation death has been reported and not a single cattle has been allowed to perish whereas in another part of his statement he says:

"It is said that in its intensity and spread, the current drought has been the worst in the living memory."

Now, Sir, the reality is that starvation deaths have taken place and large-scale migrations have taken place not only in one State but in several States. I can tell you from my own experience as one who works among the rural poors that a large number of agricultural workers and other rural workers have migrated from the villages and are wandering in the urban areas. People from Madhya Pradesh have gone to Punjab and Haryana and he says that no migration has taken place.

Sir, though according to him everything is going smoothly and according to schedule I want to ask him some pointed questions. Firstly, whether some complaints have been received that adequate quantities of foodgrains have not been received by some States under this food for work programme and whether there also has been the complaint that the foodgrains allotted to some States under this programme have not been fully utilised. Secondly, whether there was a report about serious corruption in handling food for work programme. Whether any such complaint has come to his notice and, if so, whether any investigation has been made and what are the results thereof. What is the total number

of actual destitutes affected by drought and how many of them are provided with the free food?

Now, Sir, with regard to the long-term measures, it is, I suppose, within the knowledge of the Minister, that there are certain areas in the country which are affected chronically almost by drought not only this year, but almost every year. Of course this year's condition is really unprecedented. But almost every year such things happen in some areas in certain States. I want to ask him: What long-term measures are being taken to solve the problem of these chronically-affected States? Is there any thinking at all on the part of the Government to set up a Drought Control Board especially for solving the problem of these chronically drought-affected areas? This is my question, Sir.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Sir, the Member perhaps misunderstood me when I said that there had been no migration from the drought-affected areas. I was only replying to the question raised by the hon. Member from Orissa and what I said was in relation to the condition in that State only. I know that more about 3.55 lakh people are being employed daily in Orissa under the 'Food-for-work' programme. In certain States like Rajasthan migration is a sort of normal feature. Every year some people migrate from one area to another and I would say that my statement does not cover the whole of the country.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Does he know that 11 lakhs of people in Orissa migrated during this drought period? It was 11 lakhs.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As regards drinking water we have provided a very large number of rigs—fast and slow rigs—for boring tube wells, to provide permanent sources for supply of drinking water in the villages. As I have already stated in my detailed statement, more than 32,000 villages have already been covered. Every State has a large number of rigs. We have already sent this to them.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Are they working?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: These tube-wells are working.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: All of them?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: 75 per cent of them are not working.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Sir, they have been sent only to provide water and not to remain idle. As regards the destitutes, free food for work is provided for them under the Food for Nutrition Programme. And for that purpose separate quantity of food-grains has been provided as has been stated in my detailed statement.

Then, Sir, I do not have any firm figures which have been received from any of these States as to the number of destitutes. This is an area where there is responsibility on the part of State Governments. We give them additional food, as also skimmed milk-powder and edible oil for running camps for the destitutes, old and infirm people, etc.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: It does not reach them in time.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As regards the establishment of a Board as the Member pointed out, our party said in its manifesto that a National Disaster Commission would be set up. Sir, the matter is still under consideration. But I wish to point out this that we have already got a mechanism for providing relief immediately for persons affected due to natural calamities like flood or cyclone or drought. So, we have already got a mechanism and there is no difficulty on that account; and if necessary, we will do something more and decision will be taken soon about it.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, according to your strict instructions I go into the question almost directly—only

[Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee]

please allow me one minute and I start first with offering my wonder-inspired congratulation at the Minister's capacity to live in a make-belief world in such a big way. I had gone through some of these States during the election period. My question is this. Is he not aware, is his Ministry not aware of the fact that in the State of Bihar the Food-for-work programme has become really an instrument for looting the people by the contractors and many of the officers and I do believe that this is also done in collaboration with some members of the ruling party. Will the Minister enquire into how in Bihar the food under 'Food for Work' was utilised during the President's rule and upto the elections? Is it a fact that in Bihar, the CPI Unit of Bihar complained to the Government about 12 starvation deaths? Will the Minister go into the matter and find out the facts? Is the Minister aware that the CPI Unit in Bihar has alleged that the Famine Code is not being followed there? As you know, it is a must for drought relief. Will he enquire into this and find out whether it is a fact?

As far as I am concerned, my own experience in Bihar says that the beauty of the statement which has been made here lies only in this print, paper and stationery and it is not reflected in the actual lives of the people there. Will the Minister go into the tall claims about supply of drinking water? Is it not a fact that a wide section of the press reported during the days of election campaign that many of the Government projects were to be seen only on papers. When they got down to examine, they found that many of the projects were not to be seen anywhere. In the district of Mirzapur in U.P. in one of the blocks it was said that all ponds had been filled with water, but the correspondents of many newspapers reported that all the ponds were actually dry. What has actually happened to the drinking water projects? Will the Minister go into the

question of how all the rigs worked? I must say that though the rigs were there, they did not work either due to the failure of electricity, or absence of petrol, or non-availability of spare parts. Will the hon. Minister go into the various aspects of this?

In my own State, in the drought-affected areas, this year, the 'Food for Work' programme did not work as it should have been during the famine days. Is the Minister aware of its reason? It was because of the shortage of rail wagons for transporting the foodgrains. Will the Minister sanction to the State of West Bengal central funds for providing drinking water to the districts of Bankura, Purulia, West Midhnapur and part of Birbhum as being requested from here

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The hon. Member while talking about looting at the hands of contractors and malpractices in running the 'Food for Work' programme was perhaps thinking of the conditions prevailing before January this year.... (*Interruptions*). Things have improved vastly since this Government took over and after the President's rule in Bihar. I have been personally to Bihar and West.... (*Interruptions*). I can state categorically that contractors have been totally eliminated from this programme according to our guidelines since we have started looking after the administration in Bihar. There have been no starvation deaths, as alleged by the hon. lady Member.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: A letter has been written to the Governor giving instances.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA (Serampur): It has appeared in the newspapers.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There were some complaints about the Famine Code not being enforced in Bihar, before this Government took over. But at present it is being implemented fully. (*Interruptions*) we have written to the Bihar Governor time and again, and it is his positive report that

the Famine Code is being followed in Bihar.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: No, not at all.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: With regard to the hon. lady Member's question about West Bengal, that State was visited by Central teams, twice. When I went to West Bengal, I came to know that some districts had difficulties about drinking water. Famine was serious there. I asked the West Bengal officers why they had not finalised indents for any rigs; and at my instance, they have finalised order for rigs for installing tube-wells. That programme is being followed. (Interruptions) For the Food for Work Programme in West Bengal, sufficient foodgrains were provided. (Interruptions) Out of a total of 2.45 lakh tonnes of foodgrains, West Bengal has failed submit utilization certificates even for 50 per cent.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: What about other States?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We had sent officers for enquiring as to how foodgrains meant for the Food for Work Programme were utilized. (Interruptions) And the enquiry reveals that the foodgrains meant for that Programme, i.e. for providing relief to the poor people to the small and marginal farmers and agricultural workers, have been utilized, in many instances, in West Bengal, to give help to private landowners to repair their private tanks—against our guidelines and (Interruptions) to level the fields. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will request Members not to interrupt.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, I am suffering from ear pain. He is making a mistake between rigs and rigging.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bosu, the answer to your Member's question is affected, when you are interrupting like this.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: If some hon. Members feel that proper assistance, in monetary terms, has not been given to West Bengal, I would like to tell them that while we have sent Central teams to various States, on the asking of the State Governments, the West Bengal Government has so far not approached the Central Government to send a team again to see the drought situation there. In the case of West Bengal, we have been extremely considerate and soft even though the conditions were not fulfilled for the release of further quantity of foodgrains for food for work programme. On the spot, I released 20,000 tonnes against our policy for West Bengal just to provide relief to the people in seriously affected districts, because we do not want that for lack of any compliance of Central Government's guidelines or directives by the West Bengal Government, the poor people should suffer.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): I think you will allow me to put a question arising out of the statement which has already been read by the hon. Minister and also the statement he had made in course of his reply to the supplementaries. My first question is that the statement betrays lack of proper understanding, particularly in relation to the magnitude and depth of the problem. There is a total lack of scientific approach to the problem.

The approach is a something like a fire fighting operation than to have a comprehensive strategic policy to deal with the drought itself and the

[Shri Chitta Basu]

drought prone area to have a comprehensive policy to meet the exigency arising out of the drought. It is necessary to have a comprehensive programme of development of drought prone area. I think Mr. Chairman, you would agree that the statement does not reflect any of that approach which is needed now very much seriously. My second question is whether the government considers it desirable to completely change the approach in the matter of drought management which is the perennial source of distress, hardship and suffering to a large number of people of our country spread in different parts of the country. In the course of his statement, he has given figures. I do not want to quote them in order to save time. Central assistance has been given to several State Governments. Would the hon. Minister take pains to explain whether this central assistance which has already been given, sanctioned for the State Governments is in the nature of advance plan assistance or in the nature of outright grant. The question is that if the government is serious to provide relief, succour to the drought stricken people, they should give it as an outright assistance, not as advance plan assistance, because the concept of advance plan assistance denudes the State Governments of the right or the possibility or the scope to develop their own States in accordance with the plan frame. Therefore, that is the point which requires to be clear. Another point is about the brave performance his government has made with regard to supply of drinking water. With your permission, I would like to quote from the editorial of the *Statesman* dated 27th May, 1980. It says:

“A survey of 1971-72 showed that only 24,000 out of 5,76,000 villages in the country had reasonably protected water supply. The rest had inadequate or unsafe drinking water in varying degrees. Some 1,53,000 villages identified as problem vil-

lages had either no water within easy access or only water.....”

13 hrs.

“Of this 1,30,000 still remain to get water.” The *Statesman* editorial says that there are still 1,30,000 villages which are to be provided with protected drinking water.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is exactly 1 p. m. now and should rise for lunch. Then the hon. Minister would reply to him and then we would rise for lunch. Now, please conclude.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I have no complaint against the Minister. My complaint is that in the statement the government has expressed a spirit of complacency. The allotment for drinking water is only Rs. 58 crores. This is a paltry sum and it cannot solve the problem of water famine. Would the government see that in order to combat the problem of water famine larger amounts of money are placed at the disposal of the State governments so that water famine can be combated in a proper way.

Lastly the hon. Minister has in his wisdom indulged in certain vituperation against the government of West Bengal. He says that utilisation certificates were not available as required by the government of India from the West Bengal government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put forth your question. Rules do not permit for a debate like this.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Because he has indulged in vituperation, I have to say this. You cannot allow the Minister to go scotfree after saying something which is not correct. (*Interruptions*). According to the government of West Bengal the total quantity of food for work was to the tune of 1.64,000 and utilisations certificate was given for 1,32,000 and only in respect of 32,000 it remains to be given. I think there were certain difficulties in some panchayats.

How is it that the Ministers of the Central Government, without informing the Chief Minister or the State Relief and Rehabilitation Minister of the Government of West Bengal, go and get in touch with the Chief Secretary or the departmental secretary? Is it not contrary to the normal behaviour expected of a Central Minister. He comes here and says something which is against the Government of West Bengal. He should be ashamed of his behaviour, he should be pulled up by you.

An Hon. Member: He should answer this question: is he ashamed

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The statement does not find favour with the hon. Member. In the factual statement, we wanted to inform the House in detail about the problems that this government had to face and the measures we have so far taken to face those problems. He has been touched by my statement on West Bengal.

I think, as I have earlier stated we have been more than good in case of West Bengal throughout. Out of a total food grain allocation of 2.45 plus 20,000 that we specially released, the West Bengal Government has upto-date sent us utilisation certificates only for 1.26 lakh tonnes. I hope the hon. Member will take up the matter with the West Bengal Government.

He has mentioned about my visit to West Bengal. Of course my visit as a Minister of this Government was intimated to the West Bengal Government. Some officers of the Government came to meet me because I had stated that I wanted to discuss all the problems about drought drinking water, food for work programme and other things.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: But there is a method. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I do not know, I do not mind at all. I do not know; how could the Chief

Secretary come without the permission of the Chief Minister? How can it be said that the Ministers and the Chief Minister were not informed and yet all the officers of the Government came to the meeting? Anyway.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: They were courteous to you. It was necessary on your part to be courteous to the Chief Minister and the Cabinet and to seek permission. It was a courtesy.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am courteous to you, my friend, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu. I am bound to be more courteous to others in West Bengal.

SHRI ANANDA GOPAL MUKHOPADHYAY (Asansol): The Deputy Chief Minister, West Bengal Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu is here.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I was asked about the financial assistance that Government provided.

Plan assistance, Advance Plan assistance and non-Plan assistance—quite a substantial portion of it is gratuitous relief on account of drought.

West Bengal has received the largest financial assistance of all the States in the country. The total margin money in case of West Bengal was Rs. 13.04 crores, whereas even in the case of a large State like Uttar Pradesh, it is only Rs. 10 crores. You should be quite happy about that. (*Interruptions*). You should be very happy. I hope you will be grateful too.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: We are very happy with your presence in the House.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Rs. 8|94 crores is gratuitous relief. That should set the doubts at rest. (*Interruptions*).

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

We have already taken long term measures for making permanent arrangements for drinking water supply and for reducing the hardships in future on account of drought. As the hon. Members know various schemes have been launched like the drought prone areas programme and the Desert Development Programme. There is an All India Co-ordinated Dry Land Agricultural Project for development of areas which are frequently affected by drought. Then in the matter of water supply, we are taking special care that all these villages which lack good sources of drinking water should be provided drinking water supplies and a large number of rigs have already been provided. We have also raised the allocation under the Central Scheme for Water Supplies— from Rs. 60 crores to Rs. 80 crores, this year.

That is only to meet the problem of drinking water which a very large number of villages are facing in India.

13.11 hrs.

The Lok Sabha adjourned for lunch till ten minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Fifteen Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV in the Chair]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): With your permission, Sir, I rise to announce that Government Business in this House during the week commencing 16th June, 1980, will consist of:—

(1) Consideration of any item of Government Business carried over from today's order paper.

(2) General discussion on the Railway Budget of 1980-81 from 17th June, 1980 onwards.

(3) Consideration of a motion for concurrence for reference of the Visva Bharati (Amendment) Bill, 1978 to a Joint Committee.

(4) Consideration and passing of:—

(a) The Company Secretaries Bill, 1980.

(b) The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 1980.

(5) General discussion on the General Budget for 1980-81 from 21st June, 1980 onwards.

As members are already aware the Railway Budget for 1980-81 will be presented on Monday the 16th June, 1980, after disposal of questions and the General Budget for 1980-81 on Wednesday the 18th June, 1980 at 5-00 P.M.

श्रीमती प्रमिला बंडवते (बम्बई उत्तर मध्य): सभापति महोदय, लोक सभा के अधिवेशन के ता. 16 से शुरू होने वाले सप्ताह के बिजनेस में मैं निम्नीलिखित तीन आइटम्ज को इन्कलूड करने की प्रार्थना कर रही हूँ—

Violation of the Flag Code by citizens and institutions.

इस आइटम को इस में शामिल किया जाय।

As per Flag Code of India Section 4, Sub-Section (4) "Incorrect Display of National Flag" is an offence. Sub-section (4) of Section 4 states. "The flags shall not be used as a Feston, Rosette or hunting or in any other manner for decoration, nor shall other coloured pieces of cloth be so arranged as to give the appearance of the National Flag."

The above said display of flags was recorded as a corrupt practice under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, vide Section 123 (3).

पिछले चुनाव में कांग्रेस (आई) की ओर से नेशनल फ्लैग का इस्तेमाल चुनाव के लिए