

13.23 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL), 1980-81—contd.**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
MINISTRY OF RURAL RE-CONSTRUCTION**

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We shall now take up further discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Rural Reconstruction. Shri D. M. Putte Gowda.

SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA (Chikmagalur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Rural Reconstruction. Much has been said on agriculture yesterday and day-before yesterday. Now I shall confine myself more to the rural reconstruction aspect and make a few points on agriculture. Rural Reconstruction pertains to 75 per cent of our population. Rural reconstruction is necessary from all angles, in all spheres especially education, health, housing, communication, scientific research at village level rural economy besides agriculture, cottage industry, family planning and regulation of alcoholic drinks

I like to emphasise that rural reconstruction is an important subject with which we are dealing at present. I say that rural reconstruction at the national level should be taken from all angles and a body at the national level should be set up for rural reconstruction synchronising with all other departments. As we know, no significant improvement has been made so far in the income of an average rural family. Over the previous years sufficient money has been spent, but with what results? Government should take stock of the position, see how much amount has been spent so far and find out the reasons for the present state of affairs. At least in future, the government should think of these things: The amount spent in rural development, rural programmes and the achievement. At least we can rectify the mistakes that we committed previously.

A major factor that is before the villagers is the fair price to their commodities. I emphasise proper marketing should be there by establishing a national level body or board to look into the important factor of marketing. Education in family planning programme, and its implementation is an important aspect in rural areas. We know the land available for each agricultural family. In the 40s, if a family had five acres, it has become almost a fraction of an acre in 80s. Much has not been done in educating the rural people about the implementation of the family planning. At the present rate of family planning, I do not think that we will meet the challenge of the population outburst. Something should be done in this regard, especially in villages where land is being fragmented and a family is getting very low income. They are not able to feed their children or give proper clothes or send them to good schools or to give them proper training.

The next problem is about the alcoholic drinks in the rural areas. I shall give a few statistics. A taluk contains nearly 80,000—1,00,000 adults and comprises nearly 30,000 families in most of the states. Where alcohol drinking is allowed, Rs. 2-4 crores worth alcoholic drink are consumed every year, whereas government is spending about Rs. 10—20 lakhs on development works. Nearly Rs. 50 lakhs goes to the state government in the form of taxes and excise evicted amount nearly one crore—will go unaccounted, and the national economy, it leads to inflation. consumption, the youth in the rural area take to it as an evening habit, let alone the elders with whom it has become a habit. The law and order situation in the rural areas becomes a problem. The figures given are for a Taluka, not for a district. Apply some restrictions to overcome this problem.

I have already mentioned that many of the schemes that are implemented by the State Governments and the

[Shri D. M. Putte Gowda]

Central Government do not bear fruit for a long time so far as rural reconstruction is concerned. I would like to quote one. I was the President of the Talulka Board. I had been in that position for six years. I know the developments that have been made in each Taluka. There was a programme called Applied Nutrition Programme. This programme is supposed to supply nutritive food for school children especially the rural school children. Nutritive food was to be given in the form of vegetables, fruit, fish, etc. Crores of rupees have been spent on construction of wells, pumps, fences, construction of fish ponds. Much has been spent on this programme. Special jeeps were provided for supervision. In spite of all these things wherever the phase of the programme is over, now we see there is neither vegetable, fresh fruit, nor fish. I do not know where has everything gone. Everything is dead. When we implement a programme, it must bear fruit at least in the near future or it must have some effect on the rural population; otherwise such a programme will be only for the purpose of statistics and propagan-da. I request the hon. Minister to look into it. There are so many programmes. As I have no time at my disposal, I do not list them one by one.

I come to another scheme—Employment Affirmation Scheme and Food for Work Programme. Sufficient amount has been set apart in this Budget also. I welcome it. I urge upon the Government to take necessary steps to monitor the work as a huge amount—Rs. 340 crores—has been set apart for the purpose.

The amounts are released at the fag end of the year. In most of the States Community Development Grants are released in February or on 15th March or on 30th March and they are asked to complete the programme. This upsets the whole programme. I wonder how the Block Development Officers can comply with the directions of the Government and how they are going

to implement the programme. In such circumstances I do not know whether money is going to be spent on work to be executed or it goes in the pockets of somebody else. It is a matter of concern. I request the Government to take a note of it and see that the grants are released in the first or the second part of the year so that the programme can be started and implemented.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude

SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA: Rural communication has not been attended to, so far. Especially the village roads have not been constructed. Last week I travelled in the Northern States. With this much of rain there is slush and one cannot go, especially in the rural areas. I am from an area where the rain fall is 100 to 200 inches. We do not have proper roads.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude. You have already taken fifteen minutes. You do not stick to time. Many of the speakers are not getting a chance. Then they misunderstand me. When you are taking more time, it means you are taking the time of other Members of your party.

SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA: I shall take two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude in one minute.

SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA: I urge upon the Government to look into all these matters and set up a body at the national level to look into rural reconstruction. I hope they will do it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Chiranji Lal Sharma: You will take 10 minutes. You will be the last speaker. Then I will call the Minister.

(Interruptions)**

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The position is that all parties have exhausted their time. Because the other speakers have taken more time, there is no

chance. We have got to complete it within half an hour. Now, Shri Sharma.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA (Karnal): When they are standing and interrupting, how can I speak?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Whatever they say will not go record. You go ahead.

(Interruptions)**

SHRI A. T. PATIL (Kolaba): On a point of propriety. The Demands of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Reconstruction cover more than 15 per cent of the total budget. Therefore, it is in the interests of the House and the nation that more time should be allotted for that 10 hours are not enough.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. The House has already approved the allotment of 10 hours. I cannot go against the decision of the House. Now, Shri Sharma.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Reconstruction, on which the discussion has been going on for the last two, three days. This is a very huge department consisting of agriculture, forest, animal husbandary, fisheries, cooperation and what not. I will not talk on fisheries or piggeries or poultry but I will talk on agriculture.

Yesterday, one hon. Member from the Opposition talked of the greenness on the floor of the House. I regret to say that he forgot to see the greenness all over the country. Tremendous progress has been made in the field of agriculture during the last 30 years of Congress rule. I am not talking of the last three years

First of all, I touch agrarian reforms. After a couple of years of independence, land enactments were passed.

But complete implementation of these land enactments in letter and spirit is not there. Why? Because of obvious reasons. There are three, four reasons for that. 1. Bureaucratic lethargy; (2) Personal, political and local influence and (3) legal hurdles.

I will talk of legal hurdles. I am referring particularly to the writs that are filed in the various High Courts and the Supreme Court. When you go in for a writ in the High Court, the matter will linger on for years together because of rush of work in the High Courts and for various other reasons. In spite of the fact that Land Reforms Acts were included in the Ninth Schedule it did not have the desired effect. I am happy that the hon. Minister himself is an agriculturist. He has finger on the pulse. Fortunately for him, since the time he has assumed office, we find a wonderful change. The agriculturists are happy. The first thing that he did for agriculturists was to increase the price of sugarcane which had been reduced to nility during Janata rule. But what I am submitting is that the hon. Minister should discuss the matter with the Chief Justice of India. That would not amount to any political interference in judiciary. The Chief Justice of India on the other hand, will talk over the matter to the Chief Justices of the various High Courts in the country that they should give top priority for speedy and quick disposal of agrarian cases pending in their High Courts. Then and then alone, we will have the desired effect.

Another aspect I am touching in this connection is consolidation of holdings. Consolidation of holdings has a salutary effect on increase in production. We had this consolidation in Punjab, Haryana and U.P. If my information is not wrong, hardly one-fourth of the consolidable land area has been covered all over the country upto now. When consolidation has been possible in Haryana, Punjab and UP I do not understand why it is not possible in

[Shri Chiranji Lal Sharma]

other States of the country. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to take up the matter with all the State Governments because that will have a salutary effect on increase in production. By consolidation, there is re-saping and re-planning of the land which helps in increasing production. Consolidation of holdings in these three States is a positive proof of the fact that there has been increase in production in these States. If my information is not wrong, Punjab, Haryana and UP feed the whole country. And this is one of the reasons...

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): U.P. is not feeding the country. U.P. is very backward and consolidation is a dead issue.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: For agricultural production three things are necessary—water, electricity and fertiliser. When I talk of water, I will be failing in my duty as a representative of Haryana if I do not talk about the positive injustice that has been done to us. It is probably in 1976 that an award was given by the then Government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi that 35 lakh acre feet of water from the Ravi-Beas project would be given to Haryana. For the purpose of carrying that water to Haryana, a canal, 214 kilometre in length would be built and that the Haryana Government should deposit Rs. one crore with the Punjab Government as compensation for land. This happened probably 4 or 5 years back. But I regret to say that there has been absolutely no progress. We do not know what has happened to that award. We can imagine that during the Janata regime there was Akali Government in Punjab, there was Akali representative in the Janata Government here. We did have the apprehension that after the 1977 elections, the award given by the Government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi will not be implemented. Our apprehensions

proved to be true. We raised a hue and cry and we could not succeed in our efforts and our rights are being ruthlessly trampled in this matter. Haryana is suffering, we are not getting our share of water for the last 14 years, since 1966. Therefore, I would very humbly and with all the vehemence at my command, request the hon. Minister for Agriculture to take up the matter with the Prime Minister and see that the award that was given is implemented without any further loss of time.

Regarding water, what is actually happening is that the officers do not pay attention to small projects. They are interested in glamorous schemes. When I say small projects, Sir, I mean that water can be collected particularly during the rainy season in low-lying areas in tanks, reservoirs and ponds. In Maharashtra and in Andhra irrigation is done through such tanks. Similarly in hill areas also water can be collected in tanks and ponds for irrigation purposes. Therefore, I would suggest that the Government of India should give instructions to the State Governments that their officers should pay special attention to these small projects.

In this connection, again I would respectfully submit that we suffer from floods, we suffer from natural calamities and that too because of negligence on the part of irrigation authorities. They do not pay attention to the strengthening of bunds at the proper time. Only the other day there was a breach of about 60 feet or yards in length in Jamuna damaging so many villages in Sonapat district. There have been so many breaches like that. What they actually do is that they start strengthening this bund just when the rainy season starts and we have reasons to smell the grain of salt in their bona fides. They just waste money and say that they have spent this much.

I have to say a few words on the food for work programme. Food for work programme, as was already mentioned in this House, was the programme of the Congress Government initiated in 1975. But the programme was actually started in April, 1977 by the then Janata Government. What was the main idea behind it? I am quoting 3-4 lines from the report for the year 1979-80:

"The food for work programme has been in operation since April, 1977. Its main objective is to utilise the country's available food stocks for insulating the economically handicapped sections of the rural community from hunger. At the same time, the programme aims at strengthening the rural infrastructure in order to speed up the conversion of our natural endowments into durable assets meaningful to the people."

It is further stated:

"The foodgrains are to be utilised for the payment or part or whole of the wages to the labour engaged in the execution of specified works..."

In this connection I want to state on the floor of the House that there is mis-utilisation of the foodgrains at very many places. The BDOs, Sarpanches, Panchayat Secretaries, Members of the Panchayat and local influential persons bring the foodgrains from the BDO's office and the work is not entrusted to the poor and the downtrodden. The poorer section of the society living in the villages are completely ignored, they have to suffer. That means the very purpose of this programme is impaired. The idea is laudable, but is it being implemented in the way it was desired? My submission is that the Government of India should kindly ask the State Governments to look into these allegations which I am making with a sense of responsibility and with confidence on the basis of personal information.

Some of the friends opposite spoke ironically of the 20-point programme. It was a revolutionary programme introduced during the emergency days, and it was going to change the face of the poor people living in the villages. One of the points was to give residential plots to the landless. I was Revenue Minister in Haryana. Within a span of one and a half years we allotted 214,000 plots to Harijans and people of the backward classes in the villages. Not only was allotment made. We made them owners by transferring the rights through registered deeds. Stamp charges were exempted. Not only that. They were made owners, in the land revenue records the land was entered in their names, and the banks were asked to give them loans. They started construction. But what happened thereafter? This programme had not been completed, it was going on, when the Janata rule came. So tremendous was their onslaught, so terrific was their blow, so bloody was their machine of coercion that the landlords in the villages were encouraged to encroach even on the plots which had been already allotted to the poor by the Congress regime. This is what they did.

I would say something about incentives.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: I will give some suggestions in brief.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Why don't you pass it on to him?

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: I have not typed it out. These are points which I have jotted down.

There is irregular and inadequate supply of diesel to farmers. I know for certain that the Government of India had issued instructions to the State Governments to allot 70 to 80 per cent of the diesel to the farmers, but actually what happened? I took

[Shri Chiranji Lal Sharma]

up the matter in the District Grievances Committee, that most of the diesel was being given to the industrialists by the DICs with ulterior motives. I drew the attention of the Chief Minister to it. This should be deprecated and discouraged.

Farmers should be given fertilisers at cheaper rates particularly the small and marginal ones. Remunerative prices of sugarcane, wheat and paddy should be given to them. In the matter of sugarcane, the Agricultural Minister was kind enough to take action immediately after he took over.

The farmers are not being paid regularly the price of sugarcane which they take to the sugar mills. Even now they are hankering after the officers. Instructions be issued to the State Government to see that payments are expedited. Delay in procurement be avoided by the FCI.

Soil improvement schemes should be there. Of course, they are there for the last 15 to 20 years. But it should be got verified as to how much cultivable waste land is lying.

Agricultural graduates, not one, not hundred, but hundreds, are serving in various States. Those agricultural graduates who are working as agricultural inspectors and sub-inspectors are not doing the job they are meant for. There should be coordination between such agricultural advisers and agricultural universities. They should be asked to adopt villages, may be one, or even to adopt some families in villages and they should be held responsible for the increase in the production of agricultural produce.

Lastly, I want to say about incentive price. The Agricultural Prices Commission which is a statutory body of the Government of India recommends procurement prices annually in the cases of commodities such as wheat and paddy; minimum support price of commercial crops like jute and

cotton and minimum support price of commodities like potatoes and onions, as and when necessary. The APC probably takes into account a number of factors such as cost of production incurred by the cultivators in the country, a certain element of profit margin to the farmers and the demand and supply within and outside the country in arriving at the recommended prices. These are the procurement prices. There is conceptually another price known as an incentive price. These two sets of prices have different objectives. While the core objective of support prices is to provide support to farmers in the even of prices falling below the floor level, that is, below the cost of production and leading to distress sale, the role of an incentive price should be to provide necessary inducement in the form of higher profit margin to farmers so that they may bring more area under the desired crop or go in for more input intensive cultivation. I hope, the hon. Minister will take note of this aspect of an incentive price which I have submitted.

With these words, I support the demands.

श्री सत्य नारायण जटिया (उज्जैन) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने मुझे जो समय दिया है उसके लिए मैं आप को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ। मुझे प्रवक्ता प्रदान कर वास्तव में आपने मेरा उत्साह वर्धन किया है।

कृषि का यह बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण विभाग है। हमारे देश की अर्थ व्यवस्था कृषि पर आधारित है। हमारे देश की अर्थव्यवस्था जनसंख्या कृषि पर निर्भर करती है। हमारे यहाँ यह मान्यता है कि अन्न ब्रह्म का स्वरूप है। अन्नम ब्रह्मम्। इस वास्ते अन्न उत्पादन के बारे में पर्याप्त समय न मिले, यह अच्छी बात नहीं होगी। खैर, जो भी समय आपने मुझे दिया है, उस में मैं कुछ बुनियादी मुद्दों को आपकी सेवा में रखना चाहूँगा। वास्तव में किसान जो पैदा करता है, उसका सही मूल्य उसे मिलना चाहिए। किस मणिकल में रह कर वह अपने बच्चे को पालता है, उसके तन पर कपड़ा नहीं होता और खाने के लिए दो समय का भोजन नहीं मिलता, जब कि अन्नदाता कहलाता है। लेकिन

मजदूरी में वह कहता है। मैं कृषि मंत्री जी से आग्रह करूंगा कि किसानों को खाद, बीज उर्वरक और कीटनाशक औषधियाँ सस्ते मूल्य पर उपलब्ध कराई जायें। प्लो इरिगेशन और लिफ्ट इरिगेशन तालाब और उदबहन सिंचाई दरों में समानता लायी जाये। डीजल और विद्युत प्रदाय में कृषकों को प्राथमिकता दी जाये। पावर सप्लाई न करने की स्थिति में किसानों को क्षतिपूर्ति दी जाये। पावर कन्जम्पशन पर मिनिमम चार्ज मामिक नहीं, वार्षिक निर्धारित किया जाये।

14 hrs.

पावर कैपेसिटर लगाने की व्यवस्था विद्युत मंडल करे और उसका खर्च विद्युत मंडल वहन करे, न कि किसान से लिया जाये। 5 एकड़ के छोटे कृषकों को सिंचाई और उर्जा की दरों में रियायत दी जाये।

नर्वदा टिब्यूनल बना है, उसका जो फैसला हुआ है उसके शिथिलान्वयन के लिए कार्यवाही की जाये जिसमें मध्य प्रदेश, गुजरात और मझारान्त को सिंचाई और विद्युत सुविधा उपलब्ध हो सके और वह लाभान्वित हो सके।

कृषि अनुसंधान के क्षेत्र में व्याप्त अनियमितताओं को समाप्त कर वैज्ञानिकों को शोध-कार्य करने के अधिक अवसर उपलब्ध कराये जाये। अभी-अभी एनसाइक्लोपीडिया आफ इंडिया में 1978 की ईयर बुक में एक लेख प्रकाशित हुआ है और प्रोब के जुलाई 1980 के अंक में भी इस बारे में छपा है कि एक वैज्ञानिक डॉ० एम० एम० स्वामी नाथन ने अपने गहन अन्वेषण के आधार पर पुरस्कार प्राप्त किया है। दस से हमारी वैज्ञानिक छवि धूमन हुई है। मेरा कहना यह है कि पुरस्कार वैज्ञानिकों को सही काम के लिए दिए जाने चाहिए। अच्छे वैज्ञानिकों को प्रोत्साहन दिया जाये और वैज्ञानिकों की प्रतिभाओं का यथोचित सम्मान किया जाये।

तटवन्ध और भूमि के समनलीकरण को व्यवस्था के लिए सरकार यांत्रिकी और आर्थिक सुविधा उपलब्ध करावे। खेतीहर मजदूरों को पर्याप्त संरक्षण देकर उनकी मेहनत का सही मुआवजा देने की व्यवस्था की जाये।

बिहार के छोटा नागपुर और मध्य प्रदेश में उज्जैन में भूगर्भ जल-अन्वेषण के रीजनल कार्यालय खोले जाये।

मैं यह भी आग्रह करूंगा कि महिदपुर रोड और जावरा के शक्कर कारखानों के मालिकों ने कृषकों के गन्ने का कई लाख का भुगतान नहीं किया है, साथ ही कर्मचारियों का कई माह का वेतन जो लाखों रुपये में है, भुगतान नहीं किया है। इन मिलों का शासन को अधिग्रहण करना चाहिए और कृषकों और कर्मचारियों का बकाया भुगतान

करवाना चाहिए। माननीय कृषि मंत्री जी ने 10 अप्रैल के पत्र में मुझे आश्वासन दिया था कि अधिग्रहण की कार्यवाही में इन मिलों को सम्मिलित किया जायेगा। मार्टिन बैकरीज इंडिया के कर्मचारियों को निकाल दिया गया है। मैं आग्रह करूंगा कि उनको नौकरी में वापिस लेकर सेवा करने का ठीक से मौका दिया जाये

इन शब्दों के साथ मैं कृषि मंत्री की सफलता की शुभ-कामना करता हूँ। माननीय कृषि मंत्री काफी योग्य हैं, उनके नेतृत्व में और अधिक विकास की संभावनाएँ प्रतीत होती हैं। कृषकों को समृद्ध बनाने के लिए जो अनुसंधान होते हैं, उनको केवल कागजों और प्रयोगशालाओं तक सीमित न रखकर उन तक पहुंचने की व्यवस्था की जाये तभी इन अन्वेषणों का लाभ मिल सकेगा। मैं चाहता हूँ कि कृषि विभाग सफल हों। उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने जो थोड़ा समय मुझे बोलने के लिये दिया है, उसके लिए मैं आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ।

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the debate on the Demands of the Ministry of Agriculture is coming to a close with a very auspicious omen: while we have been discussing the Demands, it has been raining outside.

I am thankful to my friends who have spoken on the Demands of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Rural Reconstruction. They have given very valuable suggestions. The very fact that such a large number of hon. Members have spoken and many more desired to speak but could not get time, shows their intense interest in the welfare of the farmer and their belief that the ultimate development of this country can only come through the fullest development of our agriculture. My colleague, Mr. Swaminathan has replied to the points raised in relation to the departments that he is looking after in the Ministry, i.e. Rural Reconstruction, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Land Reforms and certain other matters.

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

I shall try to meet the various points the hon. Members have mentioned. Sir, this is a very vast subject and the time allotted to me also, I think, is not sufficient. I would request the indulgence of the hon. Members if I fail to reply to every point raised by every individual member. I will, however, try to send written replies to most of the Members who have raised very valid and useful points.

We started with a very bad year during the last Kharif season. We experienced the severest drought in our memory last year. About 220 million people were affected. 38 million acres of land were affected by this drought. The damage naturally was colossal, but it was due to the bravery of the farmer of India and the infrastructure that India has built in its agricultural management that we could tide over this difficult period. I would not be wrong if I say that operations to manage such a large national calamity perhaps have never been undertaken by any government in any country in the world on this big scale.

The government was very much concerned and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi extensively toured the interior areas of the country in the drought-affected States. Most of my colleagues undertook tours to the most interior places and saw to the arrangements that were being made for the supply of food and drinking water and other relief measures.

Some of my friends opposite thought that the measures that we have taken were not sufficient. I would like to mention that only Rs. 157 crores for relief was sanctioned during the year 1979-80 by the previous government. Perhaps they thought that that was an adequate amount. But immediately after this government took over, we realised

that this was absolutely insufficient. Relief was not reaching all the places. People were still suffering and you would be glad to know that in addition to what was sanctioned during the previous year, i.e. Rs. 157 crores, we sanctioned another Rs 193 crores for relief measures in the drought-affected areas. That was done after our central teams had visited the drought-affected States for the second time to see for themselves what were the relief measures required. In addition to the foodgrains under the Food for Work Programme, 20 lakhs tonnes more were provided for undertaking Food for Work programme specially in the drought-affected States.

The rigs were supplied on a massive scale. Under personal instructions of the Prime Minister, to save the people, all the available rigs were deployed to the needy areas. Over 160 fast rigs and about a thousand slow rigs are now in operation in the drought-affected States. They are digging upto 4,000 wells per month for providing drinking water. An operation like this can only be taken with the strong will and feeling of the Prime Minister and her Government for the suffering people. There has been a setback no doubt in our food production on account of this serious drought. But, Sir, we tried our level best to save the robi crops.

Instructions were issued for the first time that 70 per cent of the diesel available in the drought-affected States should be supplied to the farmers to save their crops. States were also requested to earmark upto 60 per cent of the available power for agricultural operations. Other measures were taken. You would be glad to know that, we can rightly take credit for this, in spite of such a large area being affected by drought of such a serious nature, not a single starvation death has been reported so far on account of the drought.

को राणावतार शास्त्री (पटना) : नहीं, यह
कह नहीं है ।

श्री बिरेंद्रसिंह राव : आप को तो मालूम नहीं
होगा ।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : यह सरकार का
दावा है, वास्तविकता नहीं है ।

एक माननीय सदस्य : वास्तविकता यही है ।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : बिहार असेम्बली में
कम्युनिस्ट ग्रुप का फार्मर लीडर ने गवर्नर को
चिट्ठी लिखी है इन्स्टांसेज देते हुए कि ये लोग
करे हैं, नाम भी दिया है (अवधान)
यह आपका दावा है, आप यह दावा कीजिए
.... (अवधान)

एक माननीय सदस्य . यह दावा सही है ।

श्री धनिक लाल मंडल (झज्जारपुर) : जरा
स्टाटमेंट उभय की परिभाषा कर दें ।

श्री बिरेंद्रसिंह लाल शर्मा : जब मिनिस्टर
साहब बोल रहे हैं तो जरा मेहरबानी कर
वें ।

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
The measures taken by the Govern-
ment have proved to be so effective
that these have been acknowledged
and praised all over the world. Even
the World Bank has said that this is
a tribute to the strength of Indian
agriculture built up with the con-
certed effort in the last decade or so,
not the last three years.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think
on this also Shri Shastri does not
agree.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: He
said that there was not a single case
of starvation death. That was not a
fact. Many people have died.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
So far as food production is concerned,
as I said, we are trying to make up
during the current year. The food-
grains produced in the year 1978-79
were of the order of 131.37 million
tonnes. We have set a target for
ourselves to produce during the

coming year 135 million tonnes of
foodgrains.

Sugarcane production also went
down. In 1978-79, the production of
sugarcane was 156.45 million tonnes;
in 1979-80, it was reduced to 128.42
million tonnes. Certainly that was
not because of this Government. It
was the Government supported by
my friends opposite that was responsi-
ble for this.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: We
did not support the Janata Govern-
ment. What you are talking of is
wrong. Again and again these people
are talking like this. You do not
know the facts. At least verify the
facts.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I
know the facts very well particularly
in respect of you.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI:
Please speak about your subject.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
The difference between that govern-
ment and this government can be
easily seen. It is raining when we
are discussing Agriculture Ministry's
Demands today and last year when
you were discussing these Demands
people were suffering from drought.
They had no drinking water even.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
You say so but do not implicate us.
(Interruptions)

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
Sir, I certainly appreciate his dissocia-
tion completely and his denial.

In oilseeds we had a set-back.
From a production of 102 lakh tonnes
in 1978-79 we went down to 88 lakh
tonnes but we have set a target for
ourselves of 110 lakh tonnes this year.
In cotton also we suffered a set-back.
In 1978-79 the production was 79 lakh
bales and it came down to 77 lakh
bales in 1979-80 but we are sure that
we shall be able to make up for the
past period and for the current year.

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

we have set ourselves a target of 82 lakh bales. In Jute there has not been much change. We hope to do much better this year.

Sir, while framing the programmes and budget for 1980-81 our objective has been to ensure that we not only recover from the set-back of the last year but improve upon the production levels. Sir, a number of Members of Parliament from Opposition both in Lok Sabha and earlier also in the Rajya Sabha have been contending in the course of the budget debate that the new Government has neglected agriculture in the formulation of the Central Plan. I would like to quote some figures. In the budget of the last year, that is, 1979-80 the Central budget for Plans in all sectors provided Rs. 4,808 crores. Out of this in terms of the decisions of NDC funds of the order of Rs. 400 crores were transferred to the States. Therefore, in effect the modified Central Plan budget was only Rs. 4,411 crores. Against this the Central Plan budget for 1980-81 is Rs. 5,322 crores. In other words the Central Plan budget has gone from Rs. 4,411 crores to Rs. 5,322 crores. That is an increase of 21 per cent for all sectors of our economy. As regards the Central budget for agriculture and allied sectors it is provided under five departments. For the 5 departments, that is, the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, the Department of Food, the Department of Agricultural Research and Education, the Department of Rural Re-construction and the Department of Economic Affairs, that is, the Banking Division, all these five departments taken together, the original Central plan budget for 1979-80 stood at Rs. 974 crores. As a result of transfer of schemes from the Central Plan to State Plan by the National Development Council and changes in the financial pattern, the

modified budget provision came to the reduced figure of Rs. 728 crores. Against this the Central Plan budget for 1980-81 for agriculture and allied sectors included in the budget of 1980-81 provides for Rs. 1026 crores. This involves an increase of about 41 per cent over the modified budget of the previous year. I may point out that while the Central budget for all the sectors of plan has gone up by 21 per cent, the Central plan budget for agriculture and allied sectors has gone up by about 41 per cent. This clearly shows that in the making of the budget for 1980-81, more pronounced emphasis has been given to agriculture and allied sector. If you permit, I may give the break-up for the departments which have received much more than last year. But I think there is not enough time at my disposal and I would like to talk about certain other matters in which the hon. Members felt interested.

Sir, agricultural production can only be increased by adopting a strategy which has to be strictly followed. We have taken certain steps in this direction. We want to increase our irrigated areas, we want to increase the fertiliser consumption, we want to expand availability of certified seeds and we want to expand our area in high-yielding varieties, strengthening of extension arrangements for transfer of technology has also to be done. As far as extension of irrigated area is concerned, by the end of 1979-80, the total area benefiting from irrigation in this country was estimated to be around 52.9 million hectares. This included 30 million hectares under minor irrigation. During 1980-81, we propose to increase the irrigated area by 2.7 million hectares. That is not an insignificant figure. This result has been achieved in very few cases in the world so far. If we proceed at this rate, I am sure that some time India will become a grain-power. Out of this 2.7 million hectares, 1.3 million

hectares will be from our ground-water resources and the rest will be from surface irrigation. As I have said, one of the components of our strategy in increasing the agricultural production relates to high-yielding varieties. By 1978-79, the area under high-yielding varieties had reached 41 million hectares. In 1979-80, on account of drought the area fell down to 35 million hectares. We propose not only to cover this lost ground but we want to expand our area under high-yielding varieties during the current year to 48 million hectares. Out of this, about 20 million hectares will be under paddy, 18 million hectares under wheat and the balance will be under jowar, bajra and maize. We necessarily have to rely a great deal on increase in fertiliser consumption. May I say a few words about seeds? So far one of our major bottlenecks for increasing production was non-availability or insufficient supply of breeder seed and foundation seed which in turn led to non-availability of adequate quantity of certified seeds to the farmers. We are planning to streamline the arrangement and give a direct responsibility to the National Seeds Corporation to deal directly with the Agricultural Universities and Research Stations. The National Seeds Corporation is also being asked to gear itself to meet more substantially the requirements of foundation seeds.

Another aspect of our strategy relates to strengthening of extension arrangements. In the technology that is already available with us there is considerable room for increasing production in farmers' fields. This requires a more effective arrangement for transfer of technology from the Research Stations to the farmers' fields. Several States in India have taken action to reorganise and strengthen the extension system and introduce the approach known as training and visit system which involves more frequent training of extension work-

ers and more frequent contacts with individual farmers.

Some of my hon. friends have mentioned about the rising price of fertilisers as also pesticides. Fertiliser is one of our most important inputs and the need for controlling and stabilising the fertilizer prices at a reasonable level was stressed by our Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi at the time of 15th FAO Regional Conference for Asia in March last. In her address at that time, she said:

"The desire to profit out of poverty seems to be strong among the affluent nations. How else can we explain the enormous rise in the price of essential inputs like fertilisers during the last one year? Can the small farmer who is too poor to buy input and too weak to take risks afford these costs? I urge FAO to ensure and move for an international agreement on the limitation of price of strategic agricultural inputs so that they are not beyond the reach of the average farmers."

This shows the concern of the Government of Shrimati Indira Gandhi for agriculture and the poor farmer. We have pursued the matter further with the International Fertilizer Commission. In Rome a few days ago, the Commission has agreed to set up a Consultative Working Group to examine the entire gamut of problems relating to the supply of fertilizers to developing countries at reasonable prices.

We have been able to arrange fertilizers, including imported fertilisers, to the best of our capability. Not only has the fertilizer consumption increased at a very rapid rate during the past some years, but even during the current year we expect that there will be no fall in consumption of fertilisers on account of this rise in prices.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: Enormous rise.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I would give you the reasons for this rise. The prices of petroleum products that is, the main feedstock for nitrogenous fertilizers have gone up. The prices of imported fertilizers, raw materials like sulphur, phosphoric acid and rock phosphate have shot up. The prices of the finished fertilizers that we always buy in the international market have also risen steeply in the last one year or more. In general, the price increase has been between 50 per cent and 100 per cent in the last couple of years. The ocean freights have also more than doubled in the last 2 years; and the prices are continuously rising. As a result, the fertilizer subsidy which was a little over Rs. 100 crores a few years ago, and less than Rs. 600 crores in the year 1979-80, was tending to rise to a staggering figure of Rs. 1200 crores during this year. This was an unimaginable burden, and I am sure hon. Members would appreciate that the Government could not bear it. But it is wrong to say that fertilizer subsidy has stopped. In the year 1977-78, fertilizer subsidy was an amount of Rs. 266 crores. In 1978-79, it was Rs. 341 crores; in 1979-80 i.e. last year it was Rs. 562 crores. But if we had not raised the price, the subsidy amount would have come to Rs. 1250 crores. But the rise in price has only resulted in a saving of Rs. 665 crores, which means that there is still a subsidy available to the extent of Rs. 585 crores on fertilizers alone.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Owing to multi-nationals and others...

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: In spite of Mr. Bosu, the multi-nationals are bothering us. About the way the prices of fertilizer have gone up, I can give some idea: the price of DAP in January 1978 was \$129 per tonne. In January 1979, i.e. within one year, it shot up to \$160; and in December 1979 it rose to \$260. It is almost double of what it was 2 years back. The same about potash. In January

1979, the price was \$63; and in January 1980, i.e. within one year, it came to, between \$115 and \$120. It may be more; it might have gone up within the last few weeks, or few days.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Kindly compare it with the prices prevailing in other countries, and you will see that it is one of the highest.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The hon. Member would appreciate that under these circumstances, there was no other alternative but to raise the prices of fertilizers to some extent.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Agriculture in this country is in the hands of Americans. ICAR is the richest pasture for them.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I can only assure the House that we shall try to neutralize the effect of the higher prices of fertilizers by giving better prices to the farmers. We shall try to compensate them fully, as has been decided by the Cabinet. Some of the steps that we are already taking are: the Agricultural Prices Commission has been directed to re-work the prices of major agricultural produce like paddy, wheat, jowar etc., beginning from kharif 1980 so as to fully compensate from the farmer for this extra investment that he will have to incur on account of higher prices of fertilizer. The subsidy to small farmers, on fertilizer used would continue in the year 1980-81 in all the drought affected years of the country. So, this rise in fertilizer prices would not affect the small farmers and marginal farmers, the SC & ST people.

The availability of the short term credit given by the Government of India has been doubled for the current kharif season. That is another step we have taken to help the farmer. There is another very important decision that the government has taken.

The farmers' representatives here yesterday stated that the poor farmers in the interior areas could not get their supply from the distribution centres which so far have been the rail heads. Mr. Nagina Rai and Mr. Lakshman mallick made these points specifically. I quite agree that there were difficulties; it did not reach the farmers; they had to walk long distances or have to come by other means of transport. The dealers took advantage of it; they established their distribution points near about rail heads. But now a decision has been taken that all block headquarters in the country will be taken to be rail-heads for the purpose of fertiliser; and this will be for indigenous fertiliser as well as for imported fertiliser. Some States were experiencing particular difficulties. Out of 5000 blocks in the country, as many as 2900 blocks are not covered by any rail head at all. For example, in Orissa, 245 blocks out of 314 have no rail heads. In Madhya Pradesh, 319 blocks out of the total of 417 have no rail heads. In U.P. out of 540 blocks, 375 have no rail heads. Similarly in certain other States, in Andhra Pradesh, out of 324 blocks, 227 blocks are situated away from the rail heads. Maharashtra is not experiencing such difficulties to a great extent, but the decision has been taken for all the States. (Interruptions) You will also benefit from this.

The government has decided that all the extra cost borne by the fertilizer dealers, distributors will be paid by the government for this extra lead which they have to make to take the fertiliser to the farmers. The hon. members should be particularly thankful to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, Shri Venkataraman who gave an immediate consideration to the demand raised by the hon. members and took this decision within no time.

In the matter of consumption of fertiliser, as I have stated, we expect that there will be no fall; we expect

that actually 6-8 lakh tonnes more of fertiliser will be consumed during the current year. Oilseed is an important crop about which a large number of members spoke. In 1979-80 we produced 83.6 lakh tonnes and for 1980-81 we have set a target of 102 lakh tonnes. That is for edible oil crops. For non-edible oil crops also, we have set a higher target for the current year at 7.5 lakh tonnes. Some hon. Members have spoken about plant protection and availability of seeds and so on. On-going centrally sponsored schemes of oil seeds development will be extended to 100 districts spread over all the major oil seed growing states with a view to introduce the best available technology on the basis of research work done in the area and specific to irrigated and non-irrigated conditions.

Soya bean is another important crop. Research work on development of high yielding varieties of soya bean and certain pulses and oil seeds is in full swing. . . (Interruptions) oil seed research base has also been strengthened and several centres of research have been established in different parts of the country under the aegis of All India coordinated Research Project. Similarly the production of pulses in the country which has remained stagnant during the past few years has been a matter of concern to this government. Pulses are an important source of protein, particularly for the weaker sections and vast majority of our population; they will also get proper attention. We have also some new varieties of pulses like short term moong, urad, pusa baisakh, pusa selection, etc. These are doing very well and we hope that production of pulses will also increase according to our plans.

Another matter of special interest to the hon. Members was agricultural marketing. I agree that the biggest incentive to the farmer is remunerative price for his produce. As hon. Members know immediately after taking

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

over by this government the terms of reference of the APC were revised. Formerly the APC recommended a price after taking into account reports from various organisations and review of their studies by collecting information. Now they have been allowed to organise their own research studies. This is one important field in which the APC has been given more powers.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): It should be reorganised; there should be representative for agricultural worker and peasant in APC.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There is a representative of farmers on the APC. One important change in the terms of reference which this government made soon after coming into power was to direct the APC to take into account the terms of trade between the agricultural and non agricultural sectors. A large number of hon. Members have said that the prices of non-Agricultural commodities have risen very high whereas the prices of Agricultural produce have more or less remained the same. But as I stated, the Agricultural Prices Commission has been directed to review its past recommendations. Fresh reports have been received and Government will soon take a decision to try and fix higher prices for the agricultural produce...

AN HON. MEMBER: How soon?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It will not take long; it will be long before the next crop comes in.

I agree that most of the agricultural produce should get remunerative prices and we are trying to revise the prices, of course, keeping in view the overall situation. My friends, Shri Kumbh Ram Arya, Shri Digamber Singh, Shri Sinha, Shri Randhir Singh, Shri Musheer Ahmed

and Shri Mirdha very forcefully advocated the cause of the farmers for giving them better prices. As I said, we shall certainly see that as far as possible, the minimum support prices are revised upwards.

One demand I was surprised at was from Shrimati Nirmala Kumari and Shri Chaturbhuj who wanted remunerative prices for poppy, so that large areas could be cultivated with poppy. I do not think we want to make our nation a nation of lotus-eaters and I don't think there is a good case for providing support for poppy. The less it is produced, the better we shall be and the harder we shall work. Apart from that, it is not in conformity with our party's programme of *nasha bandhi*—prohibition.

Cooperatives play a very important role in the development of our agricultural economy and providing not only agricultural credit but also other facilities to the farmers. Marketing of perishable agricultural commodities like vegetables, fruits, potatoes and onions is very important. This has suffered from very serious fluctuations from year to year. But it is through NAFED, which is a cooperative organisation, that we have been able to give support to onion growers this year. Hon. members would be glad to know that NAFED was asked to start purchasing onions in Maharashtra and Gujarat immediately as the prices had crashed. On onion operations alone, Government has spent over 6 crores this year...

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI: What about Bihar?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We will look after Bihar also, whether you like it or not! We have already paid to the NAFED Rs. 6.21 crores as price stabilisation reserve fund.

The cooperatives have done very well in the field of sugar industry, as some hon. members pointed out,

particularly in Maharashtra. The co-operatives have expanded very fast and they certainly know that the emancipation of the farmers and the rural people can only come through cooperatives. Before our planning started, only 3 to 4 per cent of agricultural credit was provided by co-operatives. 97 per cent came from money-lenders or some local banks. Now, we have come to a stage when 60 per cent of agricultural credit is provided through cooperatives in our country. That shows the development of our cooperatives. There are crores of people in cooperatives and they are expanding fast.

I will say a few words about forestry. Mr. Murugian, Mr. Das, Mr. Manoranjan Bhakta and some other friends have spoken on the need for protecting our forests. I agree that this is a very important field which requires Government attention. Hon. Members would be glad to know that we have decided during 1980-81 to provide in the Central Budget an amount of Rs. 4.5 crores for taking up the programme of fuel wood plantation. This is a new scheme. This will cover 31,500 hectares of land. The fuel wood plantation programme is a very beneficial programme for rural areas. This will cover the gap between annual fuel wood requirement and what is effectively available from other sources. We are trying to amend the law on forestry. At the instance of the Prime Minister this matter has been taken up. The Prime Minister is very seriously concerned about the depletion of our forest resources. We have come across instances where proper attention by States is not paid to environment and ecology. Hills are being denuded. We will soon come before this hon. House with our amending Bill. We want to see that indiscriminate felling of trees in hill areas, even on private lands, alongside the roads and railway lines and canals, does not take place.

The hon. Members might be interested to know some other schemes that we want to take up. There is a tree known as 'Ipil-Ipil' grown in the Philippines: It provides fodder as well as fuel wood. 2.5 tonnes of seed of this tree has been imported. We want to propagate planting of this tree in 50,000 acres this year. If this is successful, I believe, it will be a revolution in our forestry programme.

Some hon. Members have said that a large part of the Budget allocation on developmental programmes like forestry, animal husbandry, etc. was allowed to lapse. But that was last year. Some hon. Members from the opposite side also talked about it. Certainly, this Government cannot be blamed for it. We are trying to see that even those lapsed amounts are utilised this year along with what has been allocated to us. The allocations for developmental programmes have certainly gone up.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER (Durgapur): It is stated that the employees of the Central Fisheries Corporation are not getting salaries for two months. They are on the streets and they are starving. Do you say something on this?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: This Government is as much concerned about the welfare of the employees as any other hon. Member in this House. We shall take care of them. No decision has so far been taken. Till today that Corporation exists. Orders have been issued to pay the employees because I was sorry to hear last time that they have not been paid for 4 or 5 months. Pending the decision to wind up the Corporation, they should have been paid in time.

AN HON. MEMBER: You revive it.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We shall try to revive it if the West Bengal Government cooperates with us.

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

If the West Bengal Government wants to take it over, we can even consider that, as we are feeling so much for these employees and the Corporation. I would like to inform you that the West Bengal Government flatly refused to take over the Corporation when the Government of India requested them to take it over. (Interruptions). But this Government will see whether we can revive the Corporation and look after the workers. Perhaps its functions would have to be enlarged...

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDAR: The problem is that the State Government of West Bengal has limited resources. Naturally they cannot take it over. For that reason, they are hesitating to take it over.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The West Bengal Government has set up its own Fisheries Corporation, the State Fisheries Corporation, and it should have been merged with that. Nothing would have been difficult if there had been a will to make this Corporation work and to take the workers on their establishment to provide jobs for them.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: You are blaming the West Bengal Government.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I am only informing you. I am not blaming. Wild life is another important subject. Most of the hon. Members expressed their concern in this regard. Along with forests, wild life also is receiving our maximum attention and I am glad to say that the Prime Minister herself has agreed to my request to be the Chairman of the Indian Wild Life Board. She will also be the Chairman of the Tiger Project. That shows our concern and our intentions to conserve the natural resources....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What about CIA in the Wild Life Board?

Ask this gentleman, Dr. Karan Singh he will tell you.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We can also extend the wild life programme to Mr. Bosu if he likes. (Interruptions). We can always think of new species.

Sir, some hon. Members expressed their anxiety about the management and the existing practice in the co-operative department I am glad to say that this Government wants to bring an amending Bill soon before this House for creating more Multi-State cooperative societies, and also to see that some lacuna in the existing Acts which hamper the development of co-operatives are removed, and that the procedures and the provisions in the various Acts are also looked into, so that between State and State there is no obstruction in the free working of the co-operative societies.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: A Multi State Co-operative Bill was last time referred to a Joint Committee.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: We want to take it more seriously than the last Government.

Before I go to another subject, I would like to mention that in the co-operative sector just as IFFCO has achieved very good results, we want to set up another fertiliser factory under KRIBHCO. That is another organisation we are going to set up in the co-operative sector for the production of fertilisers.

DR. KARAN SINGH (Udhampur): Where will it be?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It will be in Gujarat at Hajira. The constitution has been framed, officers are being appointed, and we hope the plant would soon come up.

There has been a lot of criticism of the FCI. Mr. Mushir Ahmed is looking hard at me. I was also perhaps of the same view as some of the hon. Members before I took over as Minister in charge of food and looked closely into the working of the FCI. There is lack of proper appreciation of the amount of work that this organisation handles. This is perhaps the biggest public undertaking in the country. Its sales and purchases are now worth about Rs. 4200 crores. Its cash credit limit, only for foodgrains, is of the order of Rs. 2350 crores; another Rs. 300 crores for fertilisers, and then there is sugar also that it has to handle. In view of the large operations, massive work, that it has to do there are bound to be some wrong practices somewhere on the part of certain members of the staff, but we cannot condemn the whole organisation on that account. This has done commendable work during the difficult period of drought. Foodgrain has reached the farthest corners of India. Supplies of sugar have been maintained in spite of many difficulties. Hon. Members know the pressures on the railways. Sometimes it was need for more coal, sometimes it was diesel that had to be moved; at other times it was foodgrain, then it was sugar, and even drinking water had to be transported by railways in some areas of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and even U.P. The massive operations that the FCI undertakes have forced me to believe that this organisation has done very good work. Some of the fears and suspicions of the hon. members are unfounded. But certainly, there is always scope for improvement. We have taken note of the suggestions of the hon. members. There is some misunderstanding of the overhead costs on the work of distribution of foodgrains which the FCI undertakes. I would like to give some figures, which I have collected. On wheat, there is a subsidy of Rs. 33. That looks to be very high. But out of the economic cost of wheat, which comes to about Rs. 162, after procuring at Rs. 117, the carrying cost alone in the buffer

stock comes to about Rs. 26, which includes transit and storage shortages, freight, handling godown expenses, storage expenses. The distribution cost actually comprises of Rs. 23.41. Out of this, Rs. 2.46 is transit and storage shortages, freight—Rs. 10.24, handling godown expenses—Rs. 1.46, storage expenses—Rs. 2 and interest Rs. 5.54. That leaves only Rs 1.71 which is the administrative overheads.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: You can bring down the interest charges.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: They have to pay interest to the banks.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: It can be negotiated.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the total?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Rs. 23.41. Similarly for rice, the procurement cost is Rs. 156 on the average. The incidentals are Rs. 11.1 and distribution cost is Rs. 23.04. Out of the economic cost of Rs 181 per quintal, the average realisation over the three varieties is Rs. 154.05 and for distribution, a subsidy of Rs. 26.06 has been provided. When you look into the figures, you will come to know that the administrative overhead costs are not very high. It is mostly mandi charges, interest, freight, godown charges. After all, we have to consider the very huge quantity of 15 to 20 million tonnes of foodgrains that has to be kept in godowns. That is our buffer stock. Over such a huge quantity, costing several hundreds of crores of rupees, you can certainly imagine that there will be some losses. But we are trying our best to reduce the losses on account of pilferage and damage. For that a massive programme of storage construction also has to be undertaken. We have not been able to find sufficient finances for providing full cover storage for the huge quantity of foodgrains, fertiliser and

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

other things. But we have a programme which we are speeding up. The storage capacity is also intended to be increased from 45 lakh tonnes to 90 lakh tonnes in the cooperative sector. The Central Warehousing Corporation will increase its capacity. The FCI also has its godowns. They are constructing more godowns. But most of the foodgrains, wheat, paddy and other things are still in the open on crates under cover. That is certainly not a very satisfactory arrangement. But on account of financial constraints that this country has so far experience, it will take time to provide full covered storage for all that the FCI holds.

I would now briefly say something about the ICAR. The ICAR is another big organisation. I am glad to say that it has received commendation from all over the world, not from common people but from renowned scientists. It is running 36 institutes with about 800 centres. It is looking after 21 agricultural universities. It has developed very good high yielding varieties of wheat, rice, sorghum, moong, urad, maize, bajra, etc.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about oilseeds?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Oilseeds also. They are still experimenting. But it has to be admitted that there is no breakthrough in oilseeds so far. But they are doing their best.

It is only on account of the high-yielding varieties evolved by the ICAR that our foodgrains production has gone up so high that within the last 15 years or so India has not only become self-reliant but has surplus stocks of rice also.

I do not agree with Mr. P. V. G. Raju when he said that the yield in rice in India was very low. We have

made very good progress. He quoted figures from Philippines, Japan and other countries that upto 8 tonnes of rice was obtained from a hectare of land. In India also, we have not done very badly. In our Jaya variety of rice which was developed by the ICAR, 50 to 60 quintals of paddy per hectare has been obtained. It is a very good yield. In good conditions, we have also been able to produce upto 5 tonnes of rice per hectare in the fields. Our average also in some States is very good. But the all-India average certainly is not much, as in wheat. We have been able to produce about 35 varieties of new seeds. Some of these seeds produce a yield of upto 50 quintals per hectare. But still the all-India average of wheat remains at 14 quintals per hectare only. Similarly, in the case of rice, though we have been able to produce with our new varieties two to three times more, the average yield still remains at 13 quintals. We have set a target of production of rice at 55 million tonnes during the current year. We are taking our lab-to-land programme to each farmer's field. The budgetary provisions also, the hon. Members may like to know, are sufficient for our research work. In our coordinated research programme, we have provided Rs. 14.93 crores as against the revised estimates of the last year which were only Rs. 10.28 crores. There is a substantial increase in the present Budget. Similarly, for most of our other programmes, we have provided sufficient amounts of money. It is wrong to say that sufficient money has not been provided. But I am glad about one thing. No hon. Member has suggested that the Demands of Agriculture Ministry should be curtailed; they have all suggested that more money should be provided. That shows the interest of the hon. Members in our agriculture and the farmers' welfare.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Please say something about old age pension for the poor tillers and cultivators.

& Min. of Rural Reconstruction

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: You try to implement it. We will see what happens. (*Interruptions*)

I wanted to cover many things, but there is no time. Some Members have spoken on land reforms and have said that this Government was not serious about land reforms. May I ask who started the land reforms, which Party, in India? Our Party, our Government, is very keen on speedy implementation of land reforms. Immediately as India became free, about two crores of cultivators were made owners. Then 30 lakh more who were occupancy tenants were made owners under the laws framed by this Government, by this Party which was earlier headed by late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and which is now headed by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. The West Bengal Members have made a lot of....

AN HON. MEMBER: Noise.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:criticism that land reforms are not being implemented. I would like to request them to look after their own State first before bothering about the rest of the country. (*Interruptions*) There were 1.3 lakh acres of land declared surplus in West Bengal, out of which only 40,000 acres have been distributed. (*Interruptions*) Not only that, they are refusing to acknowledge the rights of the tenants in the land; they are not recognising the rights of tenants for distribution of land which is under their cultivation, they are keeping the land with the Government. As against this, you are not recognising the rights of tenants in West Bengal....

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): No.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Who says?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Maldistribution of surplus land.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: That is the information given to you

by the landlords of West Bengal. They are your friends.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: That is my information. You can certainly give me the correct information, if you want.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: We can always give you the correct information.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Halder, you require some notice. Don't reply to him immediately. Consult the government of West Bengal and then supply the information. How can you reply in this way?

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: The Minister is supposed to give correct information. He is supplying the information which is supplied by the landlords of West Bengal.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: This is the information supplied by my Department.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: They have misled you.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: But you might like to know what we have done in this regard. 38 lakhs of acres of land have already been declared surplus. 24 lakh acres are in possession of the government and 16 lakh acres have been distributed. And before the present legislation, 19 lakh acres of surplus land had already been distributed earlier. There are difficulties....

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat): Distributed or pattas only given?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: In spite of our best intentions, difficulties might arise because implementation depends on State governments. Recently, in Gujarat in spite of the land ceiling law being in force, the last Gujarat government had passed an executive order that no land will be taken possession of and no surplus

[Shri Birendra Singh Rao]

land will be distributed. Now, since our Party's government has come to power, the work has been started again....

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Very good. Do it.... (Interruptions)

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There are difficulties at times—unforeseen difficulties. It is not the human beings alone but sometimes Gods also interfere. I will give you an example. There was a case in Madhya Pradesh where the prescribed authority of the Revenue Department for distributing surplus land allowed 4 units to the deity which happened to be Lord Rama. It was a religious endowment and he passed orders—Lord Rama—1 unit,—deity is a person for that matter under the law—and Lava and Kusa—2 more units....

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: What about Laxman?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: They could not be minors so long. To-day they have to be treated as adults and separate units should be created and the fourth unit was also allowed for Mata Sita. She also could have one unit because she got separated.

So, what can you do about these unforeseen independents....

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Hanuman?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There was another order. In another religious endowment case, Lord Siva was allowed three units—one for Lord Siva, another for Kartikeya and another unit for Lord Ganesh and you will be surprised to know that the case went upto the Revenue Board, the highest revenue authority under the land ceiling laws and it was upheld. What can you do about these things? You simply can find more ways and means to see that people do not try and get wrong advantage of certain provisions of the Act. These are some

of the instances. Any way we shall do what we can to see that land laws are honestly implemented and speedily also.

Sir, I have taken a long time... (Interruptions).

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Shri Bhola Paswan Shastri, the Chairman of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission has himself said that West Bengal is the only State which has executed progressive land reforms.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Why are you brooding over that? If you are criticised, you must welcome it. Why don't you tolerate criticism at all? If he criticises you, you learn from it and from the experience you go forward. Why do you get completely perturbed when you are being criticised? Do you expect that when you criticise them, they must be tolerant? Why are you brooding over that when he said something about West Bengal? Please carry on. When you are being criticised, as a nationalist, as a politician, you must welcome it.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Sir, some of my friends talked about the rural roads. I am glad to inform the hon. Members that though responsibility for construction of rural roads is with the State Governments, this Government frames policy for the next Plan. We have decided to allot sufficient finances for construction of rural roads. According to our policy, within the next five years, for all villages with a population of 1500 and over in India, we should try to provide roads and connect the villages with the main roads. Within the next five years, that is, five years after the current Plan, all the villages between 1,000 and 1,500 population, we shall try to connect with the roads. So, this is our policy. I quite agree that the farmers feel sore and their leaders have voiced their feeling in this House; they do not get adequate compensation against land acquisition. We are trying to amend the Central Law. I shall soon come before this House with an amending Bill in this respect.

We shall see that the farmers get a fair amount of compensation for their agricultural lands which are taken over by the State. Sir, I am one with most of my hon. friends—many of them are old friends of mine and I know they are the champions of farmers though I do not claim to be one and yet I am a simple farmer. I would only appeal to them that if they want to put the Indian farmers on the pedestal, in a proper place in society and revive their faith in the country's leaders, they should see that the farmers are organised like other organised sectors. You should not try to disorganise them on the basis of caste. That is one thing. But most of the leaders—not our party—who spoke here (*Interruptions*) talked about farmers but outside the House, they talk in terms of one particular caste. Yet, they claim to be the leaders and champions of the farmers. Every other sector has its union—the labourers have their own union. Their trade union movement is strong. Even the rickshawallas and tongawallas and others have their bargaining power. But, the farmers do not have it. Why? Because of the so-called leaders of the farmers (*Interruptions*). The fault is theirs. If they fulfil for the farmers, they should try to see that they take lesson from this... (*Interruptions*) They should think of farmers as a class—an important class—of Indian nation which has a very large population. (*व्यवधान*)

जब लोग गुमराह किए जा रहे हों तो किसान किसी तरह तो उन्हें समझाया जायेगा। (*व्यवधान*) अगर कोई बहुत बरिष्ठ और बड़ा नेता, पालिटिक्स में तो पता नहीं क्या करता होगा हम बहुसंख्यकों को देखते रहे हैं अपनी बात बदलता रहे, लेकिन बात बदलते बदलते जात बदलने पर भी आ गए। (*व्यवधान*) बिहार में जाकर एक नेता ने कहा शास्त्री जी आप भी मौजूद होंगे शायद आपने भी सुना होगा कि मैं हिन्दुस्तान का सबसे बड़ा यादव आ गया हूँ, इस बार मेरे कहने से वोट दे दो। वोट मागे इस बात पर, हाई कोर्ट में रिट पेटिशन में यह बात आई है। फूलपरास में कहा (*व्यवधान*) तो आपको तो सारा मालूम होगा। (*व्यवधान*) आप ने इस पर एतराज नहीं किया लोग उन पंजों से निकल रहे हैं।

How the farmers have exercised their better judgement, this election has

shown This time in the nine States and further they will come to know that the farmers cannot be misled for all time.

Sir, with these words I think I should wind up. I have already taken a very long time of the House. I would request all the hon'ble Members to vote these Demands with which we want to serve the farm sector in the country to the best of our ability.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I shall now put all the cut motions moved to the Demands for Grants under the Control of the Ministry of Agriculture to vote together unless any hon'ble Member desires that any of his cut motions may be put to vote separately—

Cut Motions Nos. 17, 93 to 95, 98 to 102, 133, 159 to 186, 188 to 192 and 280 to 289 were put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I shall now put the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Agriculture to vote. The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1981, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands Nos. 1 to 9 relating to the Ministry of Agriculture."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I shall now put all the cut motion moved to the Demand, for Grant under the control of the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction to vote together unless any hon'ble Member desires that any of his cut motions may be put to vote separately—

Cut Motions Nos. 3, 4, 43 to 46, 49 to 58, 70 to 73 and 106 to 142 were put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I shall now put the Demand for Grant relating to the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction to vote. The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of

India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1981, in respect of the head of demand entered in the second column thereof against Demand No. 74 relating to the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction."

The motion was adopted.

Demands for Grants, 1980-81 in respect of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction voted by Lok Sabha.

| No. of Demand | Name of Demand | Amount of Demand for Grant on account voted by the House on 14-3-1980 | | Amount of Demand for Grant voted by the House | |
|---|---|---|----------------|---|----------------|
| | | Revenue Rs. | Capital Rs. | Revenue Rs. | Capital Rs. |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | | 4 |
| MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE | | | | | |
| 1. | Department of Agriculture and Co-operation | 1,17,53,000 | .. | 1,67,34,000 | .. |
| 2. | Agriculture | 24,82,92,000 | 297,80,23,000 | 66,29,95,000 | 703,78,60,000 |
| 3. | Fisheries | 6,55,35,000 | 6,16,65,000 | 12,75,24,000 | 14,44,35,000 |
| 4. | Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development | 40,05,15,000 | 6,18,97,000 | 92,49,80,000 | 17,80,96,000 |
| 5. | Forest | 4,58,18,000 | 24,50,000 | 16,41,35,000 | 49,00,000 |
| 6. | Cooperation | 8,72,16,000 | 17,25,69,000 | 17,50,84,000 | 35,09,56,000 |
| 7. | Department of Food | 205,36,60,000 | 15,67,63,000 | 410,77,45,000 | 31,35,39,000 |
| 8. | Department of Agricultural Research and Education | 6,60,000 | .. | 13,22,000 | .. |
| 9. | Payments to Indian Council of Agricultural Research | 30,20,30,000 | .. | 65,59,60,000 | .. |
| MINISTRY OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION | | | | | |
| | Ministry of Rural Reconstruction | 140,00,00,000 | 28,32,23,000 | 413,34,45,000 | 56,64,47,000 |