

and their report has now been received. According to that report—"as part of annual festival in Jamtia hills called BEHDENTNKHLAM, a bull fight was organised on 11th July, 1974 at a place eight miles from Jowai-Badarpur road now looked after by BRTF. About 3000 people witnessed bull fight which ended at about 14 30 hours peacefully and crowd dispersed. Suddenly about 100/150 persons of the crowd decided to hold football matches in the same field situated adjacent to a small BRTF camp. While second match was on, some BRTF personnel wanted to join the game but refused by local people and clash ensued. BRTF personnel chased to the camp and crowd pelted stones on the camp retaliated by BRTF. Meanwhile, on intimation sent to the next camp, about a furlong away, reinforcement of BRTF personnel rushed to the site. Clashes occurred at different places between personnel of the camp reinforcement and members of dispersing crowd. Many sustained injuries on both sides. Incident occurred at about 1700/1730 hours. Next morning two dead bodies of local villagers recovered in the area with marks of assault with sharp and blunt weapons. On receipt of information Superintendent of Police, Jowai rushed to the spot about 2200 hours 11/12th night. Cases registered from both sides and under investigation. No complaint of any misbehaviour by any one towards any girl/women in this incident.

Resolution adopted in a public meeting in the area on 24th July in this regard also

refers to unspecified past incidents of molestation of modesty of local women by BRTF personnel and general trespass into fields etc. but this has no direct link with incident reported above."

I regret there was a clash between the Border Roads personnel and the local civilians resulting in casualties on both sides. The matter is now under investigation by the Police. The law enforcement machinery will no doubt take necessary action to bring the culprits to book. I may assure the House that the Border Road's Organisation will fully cooperate with the State Authorities in this regard.

12 27 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(1) SERIOUS DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN ORISSA

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswar): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and of the Government to the serious drought conditions in Orissa. Recently there was a PTI report which has been published in the *Patriot* dated 5th August and in other papers also. I quote

"Drought conditions have developed in varying degrees in all the 13 districts of Orissa on account of scanty, irregular, untimely and patchy rains during the last two months. The drought has brought in its train suspension of agricultural operations, unemployment and distress conditions in different parts of all the 13 districts. The prices of paddy and rice has also sharply risen during the past few weeks. The agricultural labourers in the rural areas have been worst hit by the drought conditions for want of employment."

The drought in Orissa is most severe. Famine conditions are prevailing. Recently I went to many parts of my

constituency and into the interior areas and saw the condition myself. The Prime Minister also went to Orissa recently to see how agricultural production can be stepped up there. At this stage, because of the lack of rainfall, there are serious drought conditions. I am happy the minister concerned is present here. Reports of starvation deaths are appearing. I hope the minister will give due attention to the serious drought condition there. The Government of India should sympathetically consider what further assistance can be given to Orissa at this stage so that the present crisis could be overcome and the agricultural production in Orissa could be increased.

(i) LARGE SCALE LANDSLIDES IN IDIKKI DISTRICT OF KERALA

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Muvattupuzha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise with a heart full of anguish and a voice choked with pain, so to say, to report to you a case of complete disaster which has overtaken certain parts of Kerala, especially the district from where I have been elected to the House, namely, Idikki District. What has happened there is neither flood nor drought. What has happened there is landslide on a vast area. Hills after hills just exploded and huge mass of boulders, sand and dust came rushing in. Thousands of homes have been razed to the ground and thousands of people have been rendered homeless.

The Idikki District happens to be an area where we have got our hydro-electric project. Some of these areas also have been affected. Thousands of people have been affected. This district has come out of a forest area during the last twenty years. What has happened is a complete destruction of the whole district.

This is a challenge before the State Government and the Central Government. The challenge is not of extending relief to the people but of

reconstructing the whole district. This is a superhuman task, a stupendous task facing the Government. After visiting that area, our Pradesh Congress Committee President, Shri A. K. Antony, has sent a petition to the Prime Minister, a copy of which I have with me here. I would like to read one or two sentences from that. He says:

"Tens of thousands of acres have been laid waste by landslides and floods.... Never before has such a devastation occurred there. For miles on miles crops have been completely destroyed and sand and rocks cover the once very fertile lands. Thousands of homes have been razed to the ground or carried away by floods. 34 people are reported to have died in this district alone. Thousands of cattle also have succumbed to the landslides and floods... Roads have been disrupted and many parts of the district have become inaccessible... The farmlands that have been covered by rocks and sand cannot be made cultivable again very easily. In this district where agriculture is virtually the sole source of employment this will leave tens of thousands of able-bodied men and women unemployed for a long time to come.... The total damage in Idikki District alone is estimated to be in the region of Rs. 6 crores. This has got to be tackled on a war footing. Food, clothing and other materials have got to be rushed, setting aside all other priorities.... The State Government is doing all within their power and resources to rush help and provide relief to the people affected. But the immensity of the problem is far beyond their power to tackle. Without larger scale and immediate help from the Centre they cannot tackle it. Words are not enough for me to convey the whole picture."

The Finance Commission has allotted only a meagre amount. It so happens that Kerala is given only Rs. 30 lakhs