

14 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377—Contd.

(ii) REPORTED DAMAGE CAUSED BY
CYCLONE AND TIDAL WAVES IN MIDNA-
PORE

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contd.): I want to draw the attention of the Government through you, Mr. Speaker, to the worst cyclone that has devastated a large part of Midnapore area particularly the coastal area of the district. I have got reports that five lakhs of people have been rendered homeless and about 20,000 houses collapsed. Although the District Magistrate asked for 10,000 tarpaulins, even 100 tarpaulins could not be provided in that area. This area has experienced the worst kind of cyclone. The coastal belt area of Midnapore and other parts has been extremely affected by the cyclone and tidal bores.

14.01 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

As I was saying, five lakhs of people have been rendered homeless. More than 20,000 houses have collapsed. But the Government could not provide any kind of relief to the people affected by cyclone and tidal bores, particularly in the coastal region of Midnapore district. It has been reported in the Calcutta press that about half a million people have been rendered destitute by the cyclone and floods in Midnapore district and the prospects of giving them immediate relief appear bleak because of the inadequate resources position. The State Government the district authorities believe, will take up with the Centre question of improving resources in cyclone-prone areas in pursuance of the recommendation of the Centrally-sponsored Cyclone Distress Mitigation Committee." This is the most important point. This Cyclone Distress Mitigation Committee is Centrally-sponsored. I want to know from the Government whether the Central Government is going to help the State Government of West Bengal to render the

necessary help and assistance to organize relief measures to the people affected by cyclone and tidal bores

I do not want to say anything more. I would only repeat what I said earlier. This is one of the worst cyclones that has ever hit the State of West Bengal, as has been reported by the press, and that is also the assessment of the Meteorological Department. I would like to know whether the Government will come out with a statement in regard to their assessment of the extent of devastation that has been caused there by the cyclone and tidal bores and about the relief measures that they are going to undertake particularly what steps the Central Government propose to take to help those distressed people.

This matter has been permitted to be raised under Rule 377. Naturally we expect a statement on this from the hon. Minister concerned. Could I know, Sir, when the statement from the Government will be coming?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I would not be able to say that. You have made your points and these will be taken note of.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is also not here.

An HON. MEMBER: His Deputy is here.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Can I have an assurance from him, Sir, as to when I will get the reply from the hon. Minister?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: How can he give an assurance? He can only convey this to the Minister concerned.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The urgency of the problem has to be taken into account. The cyclone occurred on the 15th. Now over a week has passed. In the Calcutta newspapers this has appeared in three-column and four-column headlines. Five

lakh people have been rendered homeless, and the relief measures have been very meagre. The Government of West Bengal could not provide relief to them. The District Magistrate wanted 10,000 tarpaulins; they could not provide even 100. The Cyclone Distress Mitigation Committee has given the report that the Central Government has a responsibility in such case. I want this statement to be made tomorrow or day-after-tomorrow.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN): You have made your suggestion. Leave it at that

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I represent that constituency. 5 lakhs of people are rendered homeless. At least tomorrow or day after tomorrow you may ask the Government to make a statement.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): I represent that State. Kindly allow me one minute.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will allow you even one hour, but it must be according to the rule. I cannot go beyond the rule.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: I am drawing your attention to this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You do it under the rules.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: I gave a Calling Attention Motion. That was not admitted, why, I don't know. I don't know for what reasons it was not admitted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Here is matter under Rule 377. Only the name of Shri Samar Guha is there.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: I gave Calling Attention Motion. It was not admitted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That is something else.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: On the same thing.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Panigrahi has said that you are having opportunity to discuss all those things on 24th.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Flood is different. That debate will deal the problem of flood and drought. This is cyclone and tidal bore.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can bring that under floods: Cyclone and tidal bore. This can be brought in there.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): The hon. Minister of Finance is here. People have been asking us about this. The Central Government employees have been asking us about the second instalment of dearness allowance from the 1st of June, 1974. Since the Finance Minister is here in connection with the Finance Bill, let him make an announcement here.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We are going out rather too much. We have had enough excitement today. Let us reserve something for tomorrow.

SHRI MADHURYYA HALDER (Mathurapur): Do you advise me to submit a Motion to raise it under Rule 377 for the next day?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not advise you anything. Next item.