

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Twenty-ninth Report

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, AND SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI RAGHU RAMAIAH) : I beg to present the Twenty-ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—*Contd.*

SHRI BISWANARAYAN SHASTRI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak a few words in support of the motion moved by Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi on the address delivered by the President to the joint session of the Houses. The President has rightly pin-pointed our attention to the variegated problems of the nation of which agriculture and industry are the main ones. Many things have been done in the field of agriculture and our agricultural production has reached an all-time record figure, but many more things have yet to be done.

Flood and drought created havoc in the past years. The worse type of floods visited last year Assam, West Bengal and Gujarat and drought prevailed in Rajasthan. As a result, our agricultural production was hampered and our country's economy has been ruined.

Flood is a perennial feature in Assam. In this connection, I would like to suggest that government should set up immediately the proposed Brahmaputra Commission for thorough survey and proper investigation, which may on a later date be converted into a corporate body for taking measures to prevent floods in that State.

Even in the olden days the people of India used irrigation. In the fourth century A. D. Shavarasami, probably a person of the Godavari region, refers to extensive use of irrigation for paddy cultivation. It does not go to our credit that in the latter part of the 20th century we have no proper irrigation facilities. In the last session I put a question regarding irrigation facilities State-wise. After seeing that statement

I am sorry to state that there is not a single inch of irrigation canal in the State of Assam whereas some other States have irrigation canals of 2,000 to 13,000 miles.

Then, manure is one of the important factors for increased agricultural production and the President has referred to the commissioning of a few fertilizer plants in the current year. But the fact remains that we are yet to import fertilisers from foreign countries by utilising our hard-earned foreign exchange. Emphasis should be shifted from importing fertilisers from foreign countries to import machinery for the installation of fertiliser plants in the land itself.

In this regard I would refer to agrarian reform. Agrarian reform remains by and large on paper. This is a socio-economic problem. This should be solved by peaceful methods ; otherwise, Naxalbari method will take its place.

Along with agriculture, industry is the important factor for the country's economy. In this respect more and more attention should be paid to agriculture-based industry and agriculture oriented industry. This has vast potentiality in the Indian background. If these industries are developed, it will reduce the gap between the urban economy and the rural economy. What is the ill of the society today ? It is that there is a big gap between the haves and the have-nots ; cities are going up and up with wealth whereas the rural population is living in abject poverty. This gap should be removed.

Regarding the public sector and the private sector industries, there is a great dispute. There is something wrong somewhere in the public sector industries. This wrong should be amended. According to figures Rs. 30,000 crores are invested in them. If the profit is 10 per cent annually, we should get Rs. 300 crores profit ; but instead we are losing Rs. 50 crores annually.

Appointment of general managers and managing directors should be made with an eye on their capability to run an industry, not from the purely administrative