

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at three minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

DISCUSSION RE : FLOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will discuss the flood situation. Shri Panda to initiate the discussion.

SHRI D. K. PANDA (Bhaujanagar) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, the hon. Minister has already made a statement relating to the situation arising out of the devastating floods. After a careful study of the statement I find that it is a very usual report which declares some sort of complacency about the situation. There is nothing absolutely to rely in the figures given so far because they are far from the reality. Just now I have received a telegram from Assam wherein it is mentioned :

"Kamrup District, Assam State, 10 lakhs people under grip severe flood sixteen people died cattle one thousand swept away two breaches in Brahmaputra embankment State Government measures failed to give relief.

"Brahmaputra Control Commission failing miserably. Pray Centre's all round help."

This is from Shri Dhireswar Kalita, ex-M. P., Secretary, Kamrup District, C. P. I.

The picture which has been described about Assam in the statement does not take us to reality. Similarly, with regard to West Bengal and Orissa, as has been stated in the statement, it does not satisfy anyone. I am just returning from Orissa. I have seen how floods have caused devastating effect on more than 60 lakhs people in Orissa. With regard to the total loss that has been estimated, that is, only Rs 11 crores throughout India, it does not convey the real picture.

As far as Orissa is concerned, it is well known that first there was flood, then Orissa was whipped by the devastating cyclone and, after that, there was again a drought and, now, it was again hit by flood, simultaneously the southern portion of it being hit by drought.

The relief measures which began a year ago are still continuing. Five districts are not yet declared as a famine area though some measures to give famine relief are continuing. The help that is being given is also meagre.

Now, the first thing that is necessary in such cases is that the machinery must be quick to act so as to give a correct picture and necessary help must rush in. As far as the assessment of real damages is concerned, still we are not able to arrive at a correct picture. That is because of the bureaucratic functioning of the officers.

Moreover, in the States, because a complacent picture had been presented and everybody thought, even at the ministerial level that there was absolutely no danger, no precautionary measures could be taken earlier. We know now the tragic irony of drought and flood. They go together. Specially, in Orissa, it has affected the people most. In Bihar also, it is so. We are passing through the agony of drought and flood.

This year, we find that in West Bengal, Assam, Orissa and Bihar, specially in eastern zone, the floods have brought about severe damages affecting hundreds and thousands of people. A rough and conservative estimate will show that more than 60 lakhs of people in Orissa are affected. As regards Bihar, we know, in 1971, out of the total loss of Rs 650 crores due to floods in the whole country, Bihar alone accounted for Rs 247 crores which is 40 per cent of the total loss. In West Bengal we found that six persons died—it came out in papers that 11 persons died. We found that for one particular area, i.e., North Bengal, only Rs. 2.61 crores were the budget provision for relief measures but Rs.8 crores had already been spent. From this we can understand the vastness of the problem and to what extent damage has been caused. There is still erosion of Mansai river—it is still continuing. In North Bengal the damage is most acute; the danger is still continuing. The national highway on Diana river is also severely damaged. One thousand people in that particular area have been rendered completely homeless. It has also been brought to our notice that immediate relief measures are not rushing in and rescuing of persons who are going to be drowned is not done; specially in new areas where the people are already under the grip of floods, they are not being properly rescued. Those who are rendered homeless are not being provided

shelter. These are the pathetic conditions through which the people of West Bengal, specially of North Bengal, are passing.

Under such circumstances when quick decisions to implement relief measures with expedition are necessary, Government machinery is not functioning according to the requirements of the time—though such work should be the primary task of the Government. Now in Malda and Dinajpur areas of West Bengal relief measures which ought to be organized on a gigantic scale—because more people are affected there—have not been taken up. Only some attempt is being made in that direction. We also find—and reports are also pouring in—that the relief materials are disappearing into the black market and sharks are trading in human misery.

So far as Assam is concerned, one million people are in danger. Emergency evacuation of the area on the 27th was to be done on a warning from the Central Flood Forecasting Organisation. Actually the army people could go to that place only on the 30th, i.e., after the floods had crossed the danger mark. That itself shows how the Central Flood Forecasting Organisation is functioning; that cannot be really termed as a forecast.

We know that these things—floods and drought—are recurring every year. The total loss has been estimated to be Rs.24,000 crores from 1953 to 1971. When this is the position, what is the Government going to do about the permanent measures to be taken up? At the same time immediate relief measures have also to be taken. In this connection I may just bring to the notice of the hon. Minister—he has taken some interest but it is far from the requirements of the country—that the annual loss is calculated to be Rs. 126 crores and the annual damage from 1953 to 1961 was Rs. 55 crores. There is another estimate which shows that from 1962 to 1971 it was only Rs. 106 crores. So, the annual average crop damage has increased from Rs. 43 crores to Rs. 120 crores from 1953 to 1961 and from 1962 to 1971 it has gone up to Rs. 123 crores.

All these show what action the Government is taking. The Government is actually not taking any effective measures. There is no integrated scheme to control the floods and to harness the nature. That has not been done. I give here only one example. As far as Orissa is

concerned, there is one Hirakud dam which could control to some extent the delta areas of Hirakud and the effect of the floods is mitigated to some extent. Now we find that on Brahmani river actually there was a plan to have one Rangali dam and this also has come out in this statement, but, in spite of several discussions and several times the matter was discussed in the Minister's Committee, that thing could not be implemented and last time, some Central Working Group and the Planning Commission met together in the year 1971. But now, perhaps, on some technical grounds the entire proposal has been postponed and that is actually how we come to the real cause. If that scheme has been implemented, then this year we could have saved Orissa from the severe floods of Vaitarani and Brahmani, but the schemes are not being implemented. We also do not know when exactly they are going to be implemented.

Similarly, the flood warning system was proposed to be planned out and implemented, but nothing in that direction has been done so far. A committee has suggested construction of high towers with yellow, white and red flags and that also remains unimplemented. Now, there was a Dutch Expert Committee. They have given a plan to protect the Orissa's coastal area, but nothing has been done in that direction. Similarly, it was suggested that the saline belt may be favourable for growing some trees which would also prevent to some extent the floods, but nothing has been done. Some walls were to be built and there was some such proposal, but all these proposals were thrown to the winds and nothing has been done so far.

In this atomic age when we have the command over the technological discoveries, why should we not take up permanent measures to control the floods and also harness the nature to the benefit of lakhs and lakhs of people in each State? Therefore I put it to the hon. Minister: what happened to all those proposals which have been made not only by different committees but also by Meghnad Saha who submitted a report in 1924 about Orissa, Bihar and Bengal. There was a combined proposal to take protective measures against floods and the tidal bore. Perhaps, nobody knows now whether there is any such report in existence. So many correct proposals were given by our late beloved Meghnad Saha. The way how the Government is implementing its plan and how there is total failure can be very

[Shri D. K. Panda]

clear from certain facts which I would like to place before the House.

It was decided that storage dam should be constructed at Rengali on Brahmani river and Bhimkund on Vaitharani river. There was a meeting on 6-10-71 of the Irrigation Minister of the States. The Union Minister was also present. The Chief Ministers from West Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa. They also met on 13-10-71 and discussed over this flood problem. Then on 1-12-71, the Central Working Group and the Planning Commission held their discussions in New Delhi and they did consider this proposal for want of project report and technical clearance. What happens is, when the project report comes to the Centre, it again goes to the States, they make some amendment and then it comes back again to the Centre and this process goes on without end for years together. Some important projects which ought to be taken up immediately as protective measures to protect the lives of the people against floods have not been implemented and they are kept in cold storage. This is one of the examples that I have cited. I will show how the Government machinery is functioning. Till now it is not known whether the report was ready. We heard that from 6-10-71 to 31-7-72 only one report was received. The State Government says that the Bhimkund project report is to be shortly finalised and no project report is received in respect of the Rengali project.

It has been declared that certain problems will have to be dealt with on 'war footing'. When we declare that there is some national emergency or national crisis, then, there must be also some action on their part to show that they really do things with such appreciation. But what happens is, their action actually betrays their declarations.

Therefore, what I demand from this Ministry is that immediate steps should be taken not only to rush food and give relief but also take up permanent measures. These integrated schemes have also to be taken up immediately and worked out.

We also know that there are hill areas like Bolangir and Mayurbhanj. During rain, the spring water causes flood in the other districts and if some dam is constructed there, not only will that create potentialities for agricultural

development and power in that area, but also, it can prevent the flood in other districts.

The Soviet Team has already made certain surveys. They have submitted a report. That is for the coastal area, for the underground water. For those hill areas also some such survey is necessary and that can be also done by the Government. Certain immediate steps should be taken which will not only protect against floods but also give protection against drought.

The hon. Minister is also aware of projects like Jorouharabhangi, Daha, Baghua and Marudi. If these projects are taken up immediately the flood can be controlled in the river Rushikulya and Badanadhi. There cannot be such big floods because these waters can be reserved, stored and preserved in the reservoir.

Now, the time has finally come to take measures against the blackmarketeers and hoarders who are exploiting the situation because of the famine which is stalking the whole country not only in Orissa, West Bengal and Bihar or in the eastern zone, but in almost all areas which have been affected by flood and drought. So far as Orissa is concerned, the famine conditions are already there; the previous coalition Government in Orissa suppressed the truth that there was famine and they were ever prepared to declare that there was famine, but now we see that those very famine conditions are still continuing and in fact, the condition has aggravated, and, therefore, specific measures have to be taken immediately to save the lives of hundreds of people who are dying like flies in Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Assam. Further, the prices are increasing and the hoarders and blackmarketeers are now extracting more by increasing the prices of commodities. Therefore, strict measures have to be taken against them as well.

So, a coordinated plan between the different Ministries has to be taken up and implemented.

SHRI LILADHAR KOTOKI (Nowgong) : I rise to participate in this discussion with a sense of deep agony. I have been a Member of the Lok Sabha since 1957, and I have raised this issue of floods in Assam and we have discussed the flood situation in other States also.

On the 5th December, 1969, the Prime Minister herself made a statement in this House wherein she had stated that a Commission would be constituted to tackle the colossal problem of floods in the Brahmaputra river in my State.

Before I relate the misery of my State caused by the floods and erosions of the Brahmaputra, may I assure my colleagues in the House that I feel equally strongly and feel agony in my heart equally when I hear of distress whether due to floods or due to drought or any other natural calamity in any other part of the country? Therefore, if within the limited time at my disposal. I do not refer to other States and the flood and drought situation therein, they should not think that we are oblivious of the miseries of the people in those States.

A statement was laid on the Table of the House giving the flood situation up to the 30th July. My first comment on this is that the figures given therein do not tally with the magnitude of the losses of the human lives and heads of cattle, leave alone crops and other property, as it has appeared from day to day in the various papers all over the country. I would request the hon. Minister to reconcile to those figures.

Sir, we are in the midst of the monsoon. In Assam, we have already had two waves. In the first wave, as many as 30 human lives have been lost. My district happened to be the worst victim in the first wave. In the second wave of floods that took place just after one week, the whole Brahmaputra valley was engulfed and the toll of human lives taken in these two waves of floods, according to the figures given by the Government of Assam is 85, it is 92 according to the figures given in some papers, and it may run well over hundred. I want the hon. Minister to give the latest and correct figures.

Apart from the loss of human lives, thousands of heads of cattle have been washed away, thousands of houses have been damaged or destroyed, two lakh hectares of autumn crop have been destroyed, 9 lakh hectares of winter crops have been washed off and 70,000 hectares of jute have been destroyed by these two floods. These are the figures of the Government of Assam. That is why I started by saying that the figures that the Centre give in Parliament and the figures we get from the State Government have to be reconciled.

Why did I say I start with agony while speaking in this debate? Ever since the great earthquake of 1950, the ravages of the Brahmaputra have been known to the country, the Government and the House. Since 1957, it has been my duty to raise it here successively along with my colleagues. As recently as 13th August 1970 we had a discussion of the flood situation in Assam. Then next year on the 12th August there was another discussion of the flood situation in Assam and other States. Now on 8th August we are discussing this again. How long are we going to discuss this matter?

I would quote from what the Prime Minister said in her statement to this House (this is from the Lok Sabha debates Vol. 34, No. 15-Dec. 5, 1969):

"The Government of India have always been giving their attention to another problem, namely, the periodical ravages caused by floods in the Brahmaputra and its tributaries which cause considerable concern to the Central as well as State Governments. Government accord high priority to the evolution and implementation of a comprehensive plan of flood control through the agency of a Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission and have now decided that such a Commission should be set up and provided with adequate resources for the discharge of its responsibility. The State Government will be enabled to make adequate provision for this purpose in the State plan".

Accordingly, the Commission was formed. A Flood Control Board was constituted. Also a Consultant Committee was set up. The Minister of Irrigation and Power of the Government of India is the Chairman of that Board. Its headquarters is at Gauhati now. It drew up several schemes. But it is really very sad to say that the Commission is at standstill. It cannot undertake implementation of any schemes whatsoever. Why? It is due to paucity of funds.

How do we reconcile these two positions. Here is a statement by no less an authority than the Prime Minister. The Commission has been set accordingly. But it cannot undertake work. Now what is worse, the piecemeal things that have been done, the embankments, because they are not strong enough and high enough, have caused greater havoc than the floods. The

[Shri Liladhar Kotoki]

Bhagavati Commission, before whom I had the honour to appear and give evidence, had in 1958 or 1959, pointed out that for lack of adequate number of sluice gates, the embankments are breached and they cause more havoc to the people affected by the breaches because they are taken unawares.

Sir, this is exactly what has happened in my district; take, for instance, the Kapili river where as many as 37 breaches have taken place and 23 human lives were lost. Will the Minister tell the House how this could be possible?

You know, Sir, that for the last nine months I have not been well, and I do not want to strain any more. If I carry further strain, I may not be able to stand it. I leave it at that. But the story is not over.

Here is a memorandum submitted by the Government of Assam to the Prime Minister of India on the 5th April, 1971. The then Chief Minister, Shri Mahendra Mohan Chaudhri, who is now a Member of the other House, specially requested the Central Government to take over the entire responsibility of tackling the colossal problem of floods of the Brahmaputra. There, a reference has been made to the Commission's work: how it was expected work without funds. I need not repeat it. I would simply request the Minister to tell the House whether anything has been done about this.

It is not merely floods. It is also erosion to which we have drawn the attention of the Minister over and over again. The damages by floods are heavy no doubt, but they can be recouped and repaired by successfully tackling them, but when there are erosions, the loss becomes irreparable. Villages and towns are washed away, apart from other damages. So, that loss is irreparable. Very prosperous towns like Palasbari and others have vanished for ever. The Minister himself knows it. I feel very sorry for our Minister. We have been together long in this House.

AN HON. MEMBER : Why sorry ?

SHRI LILADHAR KOTOKI : What also can I do ? I am saying it in my own way; the hon. Member there can use his own words.

The Minister has been good enough to concede to my request, in coming and seeing the floods along with me in 1963 in a countryboat. He cannot do anything more except to tell the House that he knows everything about the floods. He is very kind. He knows the subject the Prime Minister is herself very kind. She knows the problem of Assam not merely the floods but the other problems of Assam. (Interruptions) You will bear with me, because I am not keeping well. I shall finish my speech in a few minutes. In that statement to which I referred, she not only referred to the problems of flood but to other aspects of backwardness of Assam; reference has been made to the need for a refinery, paper mills and so forth. I referred to the last para which is germane to this discussion. So, as I said, the Prime Minister knows the problem. She has assured the House as early as 5th December, 1969, that this problem will be tackled and that the Central Government as also the State Government are equally concerned about this problem. The Minister himself knows the problem of the floods being there every year. He is an expert. He is an internationally renowned expert. He knows the means and the methods of tackling these problems. But somehow we are destined to suffer. I can only pray to God that despite all this, let our people have the courage and also the fortitude to suffer from the ravages of floods and erosions.

As I said, we have to pass two months more. Already such a huge loss has taken place. You know that the floods also took place once on the 6th or 8th of October in one year, when the Teesta and the Jaldhaka were in floods.

When I refer to the floods in the Brahmaputra and in our region, to which you also, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, belong, I should point out that our people are very much affected by floods in North Bengal and North Bihar. Our heart-line is there and apart from the misery caused to the people of North Bengal and North Bihar by the floods of these rivers, we are totally cut off. The price of essential commodities in our regions soar high and you know there are elements in society who take advantage of such miseries of the people and thrive on them. Therefore, we are equally concerned with floods in North Bengal and North Bihar.

I shall end by imploring the Minister, the Government of India and the Planning Commission, not to give us mere words but to

do something concrete so that our people might get concrete and visible relief so and be saved from further miserie in future.

*SHRI S. P. BHATTACHARYYA (Ulu-beria) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a few days earlier we had discussed in this House the severe damage caused by drought in various States and today we are discussing the devastation caused by floods in the country. It is not possible to estimate at present the loss caused by floods in Assam, Orisa, Bihar and North Bengal. There have been loss of human lives. About 100 people have lost their lives. The maximum number of deaths due to floods have occurred in Assam. Sir, we are victims of the curse of nature. If there are not timely rains, we suffer from drought and if there is excess rainfall, we are washed away by floods. Do we have nothing to do except being helpless spectators ? All that the Government does is to give some relief, some meagre relief which hardly meets 4% or 5% of the requirements. This sort of approach and attitude to the problems is very dangerous. In the book 'ancient irrigation system in India', Wilcox has stated that the irrigation system in ancient India was very efficient. At that time the primary responsibility of the Government was to maintain and improve the irrigation system in the country. I am sure hon. Minister has also read that account. Therein it has been stated that the irrigation system in ancient India was better than that obtaining in present day India. 'Overflow irrigation system' was existing in India during those days. According to that system of irrigation when there was overflow in any river, steps were taken to see that the excess water was spread evenly over the plains. As a result thereof, the low lying plains could be profitable cultivated and there was no danger of devastation from the flooded rivers. It has been mentioned in the 'Puranas, that the renowned Bhagirath brought the river Ganges on this earth from heaven. But I feel that the river Bhagirathi was actually dug out to provide water and improve the irrigation system in West Bengal. During the British days old irrigation system was destroyed, neglected and now we are to lament so much over drought and floods. If there was excess rainfall in North Bengal, that water was spread over in the lower regions. As a result the damage caused by flooded rivers was minimised and there was not much suffering due to drought in

the lower regions. I am not saying that we will go back to those days. But in the present Scientific age, should we be entirely dependent on nature and keep suffering from floods and drought ? Should we not take any measures to free ourselves from this total dependence on nature ?

In China, the Yellow river which caused widespread devastation and washed away millions of people have now been tamed. We are also a free country. Can we not follow their example to tame our turbulent rivers ? We cannot certainly deny this responsibility. We cannot deny that this helpless situation is only due to our incapability, poor planning and lack of foresight. We are shouting that we are fighting for Indian national integration. But what have we done ? Have we developed an all India attitude for solving these problems ? Orissa is rich in natural resources but there is widespread damage every year due to floods. The Brahmaputra river is causing devastation in Assam year after year. If we consider sincerely we will find that we do not have the right attitude and approach. If we had that, then we would not feel satisfied by doling out some relief to the victims of floods and drought. We would have taken some preventive measures. Now we have got friendly relations with Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Government has asked the Government of India to take over the responsibility of the Bangladesh rivers. If we could divert some waters of the Brahmaputra to the Ganges then Assam could be relieved from the floods to some extent and the plains of North Bangladesh could be saved from drought. The scarcity of water in the 'Bhagirathi' can also be mitigated. My previous speakers have suggested some steps for Orissa, if they are implemented then the flood devastation in Orissa can be minimised to a great extent. It is not proper to feel satisfied by dishing out some relief after the damage has been caused by floods. If a little more amount is spent on irrigation schemes and other flood control measures it would be much more helpful in the long run. Arrangements should be made to store the excess water during the floods and to release the same in a planned way at the time of drought. We have now developed improved varieties of rice seeds which can produce another crop after the 'Aman' crop. These seeds can be fruitfully utilised for raising crops

*The original speech was delivered in Bengali.

[Shri S. P. Bhattacharyya]

all the year round only if enough water can be made available. It is indeed a matter of regret that we are unable to derive the benefits from these seeds for want of water. I will therefore request that the Government should change its outlook and give this problem a serious and responsible thought. Otherwise the people of this country will never forgive them.

I will also request the Government to develop a comprehensive all India attitude to study the problem and to formulate suitable plans accordingly to utilise the water resources of India. You have formed the Damodar Valley Corporation. This has only killed the river Bhagirathi of West Bengal. The river has become heavily silted and the port of Calcutta is in danger of extinction. The people living along the Lower Damodar are facing miseries due to floods for several years. This sort of planning with an extremely narrow outlook is not going to help anybody. Proper planning with a broad base and broad outlook is needed. Let the people realise that the Government is trying sincerely to mitigate their sufferings. Let relief be given to the maximum possible extent. But the Government's duty and responsibility should not end there. I reiterate, Sir, that steps must be taken through proper planning to utilise the waters of Brahmaputra and the rivers of Bihar and Bengal so that they do not cause damage and destruction through floods. The excess water must be properly stored to provide relief during drought. I hope the Minister of Irrigation will give a well considered clear and effective reply to my suggestions only then this debate will serve some useful purpose. Thank you Sir.

श्री चन्द्रिका प्रसाद (बलिया) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, स्वतंत्रता के 25 वें साल में भी हम सूखे और बाढ़ की समस्याओं पर नियंत्रण नहीं कर पाये, यह हमारे लिए खेद का विषय है। आये साल हम बाढ़ और सूखे से बर्बाद होते हैं। माननीय मन्त्री जी की 31 जुलाई की सदन के पटल पर रखी गई रिपोर्ट हमारे सामने है उसमें लिखा है कि बाढ़ द्वारा हुई क्षति का मूल्यांकन अभी राज्य सरकारों द्वारा किया जाना है। अभी तक प्राप्त रिपोर्ट से पता चलता है कि कुल हानि 11 करोड़ ४० की हुई है—7 करोड़ ४० की क्षति असम में और 3.5 करोड़ की केरल

में। इस प्रकार 11 करोड़ ४० की क्षति हुई बताते हैं। इस क्षति में पश्चिमी बंगाल, दिल्ली, हरियाणा, उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार को सम्मिलित नहीं किया गया है। अगर इन प्रदेशों में हुई क्षति को भी जोड़ लिया जाय तो देश की काफी क्षति हुई है। और अभी तक उसका पूरा मूल्यांकन नहीं हुआ है। ये जो आंकड़े दिये गए हैं बहुत कम हैं। प्रतिवर्ष बाढ़ से काफी क्षति देश में होती है इसलिए इस बाढ़ की समस्या को युद्ध स्तर पर हल करना होगा। जब ऐसा करेंगे तभी देश आत्म-निर्भर होगा, अन्यथा नहीं। सूखे और बाढ़ की भयंकर समस्याएँ हैं अगर इन पर काबू कर लिया तो देश बहुत कुछ आगे बढ़ सकेगा। इसलिए मेरा निवेदन है कि बाढ़ की समस्या को जैसे भी हो हल किया जाय जिससे देश को आत्म-निर्भर बना सकें।

मैं उत्तर प्रदेश से आता हूँ। गत वर्ष भयंकर बाढ़ में उत्तर प्रदेश बिल्कुल बर्बाद हो गया। ब्रह्मपुत्र को छोड़ कर शेष सभी बड़ी-बड़ी नदियाँ हमारे सूबे से बहती हैं। और गत वर्ष ऊपर से नीचे तक, बिहार की सीमा तक जो बर्बादी हुई उसको आप ने देखा होगा। पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश में कोई जिला ऐसा नहीं है जहाँ पर एक, दो नदियाँ न हों। हर साल लखनऊ से लेकर बलिया तक बर्बादी आती है। मन्त्री जी को इसीलिए विवश होकर गंगा बेसिन का निर्माण करना पड़ा जिसमें बंगाल, बिहार, उड़ीसा की बात है। उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने गंगा का सर्वे, ऊपर से नीचे तक, करने के लिए सारे इंजीनियर्स तथा ओवरसीयर लगा दिए हैं। घाघरा की कटाव से आजमगढ़ जिला बर्बाद हो रहा है। बलिया, देवरिया बर्बाद हो रहे हैं, और गंगा के कटाव से गाजीपुर, बलिया बर्बाद हो रहे हैं, बलिया के चाकचू गांव सम्पूर्ण बुरी तरह कट रहा है, और बलिया वैरिया बांध टूट रहा है। गाय घाट के पास गंगा ने उस बांध को काटा था। उस बारे में बनी गोला कमेटी ने जो रिपोर्ट दी थी उसके मुताबिक आज तक कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई है। हम लोग यहाँ समस्याओं को रखते हैं, भारत

सरकार मदद भी करती हैं, लेकिन जो हमारे प्रदेश के इंजीनियर हैं वे पता नहीं क्या करते हैं। गोला कोटी रिपोर्ट लिखा है कि गंगा में 100 फीट नीचे तलहटी में पत्थर बिछाना चाहिए, लेकिन 20 फीट नीचे तक ही पत्थर बिछाया जाता है। इसी प्रकार घाघरा में भी काम तब लगता है जब कि बाढ़ आ जाती है जिसका परिणाम यह होता है कि जो पत्थर डाला जाता है वह बाढ़ में बह जाता है और उसका कोई लाभ बाढ़ रोकने में नहीं होता। कठोड़ा तथा दूहा बेहरा बांध में भी काम समय से नहीं लगा। इसलिए हम निवेदन करेंगे कि केन्द्रीय सरकार इस बात को देखे कि जो रूपया यहां से दिया जाता है उसका किस तरह से इस्तेमाल होता है। उस रूपए की बर्बादी न होने पाये।

लखनऊ असेम्बली में कहा गया था इन्द्रपुर, अजोरकोट, धमनपुर के पास गंगा टोंस नदी से मिलकर अपना रास्ता बदल रही है। अगर रास्ता बदल गया, जैसा मन्त्री जी ने स्वीकार किया है, तो उससे बड़ा भारी खतरा बलिया शहर को ही नहीं, बल्कि पूरे जिले को उपस्थित हो जायगा और बलिया जिला बर्बाद हो जायगा। लेकिन हम समझते हैं कि यह समस्या उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के मान की नहीं है। भारत सरकार को इस मसले को स्वयं देखना चाहिए। गंगा और घाघरा के बीच में रेल लाइन जाती है उसको भी खतरा उपस्थित है। वहां पर रेलवे से पत्थर ढोने के लिए वैनग मांगे गए, हमने भी लिखा, 50 पी० सरकार ने लिखा। लेकिन रेलवे ने वैनग सप्लाई नहीं किया। इस प्रकार की ढिलाई को दूर किया जाना चाहिये।

बिहार सरकार बक्सर से कोइलबर तक बांध बना रही है जिससे 200 गांव डूब जायेंगे। हम बांध बनाने के विरुद्ध नहीं हैं, लेकिन प्रभावित गांवों के लोगों के लिए सरकार ने आज तक कुछ नहीं किया। एक बात में रिटायर्ड बांध के बारे में कहना चाहता हूं। हमारी समझ में रिटायर्ड बांध बनाना इस समस्या का कोई हल नहीं है। सरकार को चाहिए कि प्रत्येक नदी के बारे में इस प्रकार की योजनायें बनानी चाहियें

जिनसे उन नदियों को टेम किया जा सके जो आये साल बर्बादी लाती हैं। डूजर लगाने चाहिए, चैनल बनानी चाहियें ताकि नदियां अपनी सीमा में ही बहें। हर साल नदी अपनी धारा बदलती है उसके लिये रिटायर्ड बांध बनाने का दुष्परिणाम यह होता है कि उपजाऊ जमीन जिस पर बांध बनाया जाता है बराबर सिकुड़ती सिकुड़ती कम हो रही है जिसके कारण 50 फीसदी से ऊपर लोग भूमिहीन हो गए हैं। इसलिए रिटायर्ड बांध से पूरा जिला बर्बाद हो जायगा।

गंगा और घाघरा नदियों पर ऊपर की तरफ डैम बनाना चाहिए। गंगा के ऊपर टेहरी डैम बनाना चाहिए। घाघरा पर जलकुन्डी डैम की बात चल रही है। शारदा सहायक कॅनल नयी निकल रही है जो कि काफी पानी खींच लेगी। इन योजनाओं के पूरा हो जाने से बाढ़ की सम्भावना कम होगी। रिटायर्ड बांध जो बनाते हैं, उससे काम नहीं बनता। उसकी जगह डैम बनाने चाहियें ताकि रिजावियर में पानी को इकट्ठा किया जा सके। उससे दो लाभ होंगे, एक तो बाढ़ को कंट्रोल किया जा सकेगा और दूसरे यह कि ज़रूरत पड़ने पर सिंचाई के लिए वह पानी काम में लाया जा सकेगा।

अब मैं अपनी कांस्टीट्यूएँसी के बारे में दो, एक बातें कहना चाहता हूं। मेरा क्षेत्र गंगा, घाघरा और बीच में आजमगढ़ से टोंस नदी आती है, इनसे विरा हुआ है। अभी वहां सूखे से बर्बादी हुई। सितम्बर तक हमारे यहां बाढ़ आने की सम्भावना रहती है। सुरहा झील, जो 22 हजार वर्ग एकड़ के अन्दर फैली हुई है, इन नदियों में बाढ़ आने के कारण गत वर्ष भर गई जिसके कारण 30-40 गांव डूब गये। कटहर नाला एक मात्र बाढ़ के पानी की निकासी का साधन है जो गंगा में गिरता है। लेकिन उसकी सफाई न होने के कारण यह पानी साल भर तक नहीं निकल सका जिससे 44 हजार एकड़ जमीन में खेती नहीं हो पायी और साल भर में जो तीन, चार फसलें होती हैं वे नहीं हो पायीं।

[श्री चक्रिका प्रसाद सिंह]

हाहा नाला की सफाई नहीं होने से इस क्षेत्र में काफी नुकसान हुआ है। हाहा नाला घाघरा में बिरता है। यह एक राष्ट्रीय अति हुई है। इस समस्या का उचित हल निकालने की तरफ मंत्री जी ध्यान दें और युद्ध स्तर पर इस समस्या को हल किया जाय ताकि आगे हमको बाढ़ के प्रकोप का सामना न करना पड़े। धन्यवाद।

*SHRI J. M. GOWDER (Nilgiris) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, only two days ago we in this House had a discussion about the dreadful drought situation prevailing in the country and today we are in the hapless situation of discussing the devastating floods in the country. What is the reason for this kind of alternating drought and floods in the country—it is time that the Central Government give some serious thought to this question. On the one side there is acute drought situation and on the other there is destruction and desolation caused by devastating floods. The question of either drought or floods is not a stray phenomenon in our country. Both are a recurring montony of cyclical frequency. If you ask yourself the question as to what concrete steps have been taken by the Government in controlling the recurring floods, you will find that the answer is in the negative. There is the high-powered Planning Commission and there are so many other Departments in the Government of India and yet no constructive approach has been adopted in tackling this problem.

I am sure, Sir, that if this problem still continues in our country, it is mainly due to the bad and defective planning of the Central Government and the hon. Members belonging to the ruling party cannot in their conscience deny this. Unless the Government of India realise this, there cannot be any improvement in the situation and no amount of planning will yield any beneficial results to the people of the country.

15 hrs.

On account of heavy rains the floods come and in consequence the food production decreases. If the food production shows a declining trend, then the prices of essential commodities go up. When drought occurs, the same thing

happens. Immediately, the Government unashamedly show the sky to the people of the country. If the people of the country in their misrey are to look at the sky, why should the Ministers sit here in this House and why should there be a Government at all in the Centre? The Government are charged with the responsibility of protecting and meeting the needs of the people and not just for showing the sky. I am often repeating this because it is on account of defective planning the Government are in the unenviable position of showing the sky to the people in distress. If the plans have been properly formulated, they would not take recourse to this.

In the mid-term appraisal of the Fourth Five Year Plan, it has been stated that the flood control methods are not to commensurate with the magnitude of the problem and the needs of the people. I am happy that at least the Planning Commission has realised the consequence of defective planning.

From 1953 to 1968, each year 60 lakh hectares of land are inundated by floods. Out of this, 20 lakh hectares are cultivable land and that means, the crops grown on 20 lakh hectares are damaged every year by floods. Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are chronically flood-affected States. If 20 lakh hectares of cultivable land is affected by floods, how can you increase the food production? Naturally the famine will stalk the land. Barring the States I mentioned just now, in other areas there is drought. I would like to know whether any comprehensive flood-control plan has been formulated for the four eastern States of our country? As the people in other areas are made to face the dreaded drought, the people in these four eastern States are left to the mercies of the ravaging floods, without any protection from the Government.

In the Fourth Five Year Plan the outlay for flood-control is just a paltry sum of Rs. 133 crores. The Central Government have been saying that a scientific flood forecasting system is being set up. Has it been established? When will this come into being? Under Demand No. 59—Irrigation and Flood Control Schemes—of 1971-72, a sum of Rs. 3.39 crores had been provided in the Budget Estimate, but in the revised estimate, this sum had been reduced to Rs. 2.97 crores? How do the

*The original speech was delivered in Tamil.

Government account for the saying of 42 lakhs of rupees under this Demand? Was this saying at the cost of flood control schemes? Or, having completed all the schemes, did the Government save this money? Did the hon. Minister ask the Department as to how this saving of Rs. 42 lakhs occurred? On the other hand, it has been stated that for 1971-72 a sum of Rs. 26 crores had been provided for flood-control schemes. How much money had been spent during 1971-72? I would like the hon. Minister to reply to these points in his reply.

In 1963 a Technical Committee was set up and it recommended that 6 flood forecasting centres and 16 sub-centres had to be established. Six years after, in 1969, the Government set up 6 flood forecasting centres in Surat, Lucknow, Patna, Gaubati, Jalpaiguri and Bhubaneswar; I don't think that the 16 sub-centres as recommended by the Technical Team have yet been set up. The Government appoint a Committee, but the recommendations of such a Team are thrown to the winds. If the 16 sub-centres have not yet been set up, does it not show the inefficient working of the Department? I make bold to say that for the misery of the people, major portion of the blame rests on the inefficiency of the administration.

From 1953 to 1970, the annual average loss on account of floods has been worked out at Rs. 98 crores. In 1971-72, the loss on account of floods was Rs. 627 crores—Rs. 627 crores. I am astounded at the way in which the Government at the Centre have tried to solve this problem. The investment of flood control methods in all the Four Five Year Plans totals only Rs. 276 crores. In 20 years, the investment in flood control methods is just one-third of the loss of floods in one particular year. Will this Government ever be able to tackle this problem in this century? The Tamil Nadu Government has therefore been emphasising the urgent need for implementing the Ganges-Cauvery link-up scheme. By implementing this Ganges-Cauvery link-up scheme, the Government will be able to reduce the impact of floods in the northern and eastern States and will also simultaneously solve the recurring drought in other parts of the country. It may be that the Centre has so far been showing little interest in this scheme because the D. M. K. Government of Tamil Nadu has been repeatedly urging upon them to take up this scheme. Now that the Members from the ruling party have been narrating the woeful

tales of the ravages of flood in their areas, the Central Government may initiate immediate steps for implementing the Ganges-Cauvery link-up scheme.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, your area might also have been affected by the floods. But Tamil Nadu has been saved of the holocaust of floods and drought. The Tamil Nadu Government has been making gigantic strides in increasing the food production. In that process, the Tamil Nadu Government has been requesting for the past two years for additional allotment of fertilisers, but that plea has so far fallen on deaf ears. I think that even Dr. K. L. Rao must have received a copy of this representation from the Tamil Nadu Government. If the Central Government could not accede to the genuine request of the Tamil Nadu Government for additional allotment of fertilisers, which is required for increasing the food-grains production, I do not know how they are going to solve the gigantic problem of floods on account of which every year crores and crores worth of food crops are damaged.

Before I conclude, I would urge upon the hon. Minister the need for formulating a comprehensive and constructive flood-control plan so that the country can be saved from the scourge of famine. I would also point out that if the Central Government continue to move in snail's pace so far as the link-up scheme of Ganges-Cauvery is concerned, they would not be able to implement this scheme for another century. I therefore request the hon. Minister that energetic steps must be taken to take up this worthwhile scheme of linking up Ganges-Cauvery and implement it as early as possible.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadra): At the outset, I express my limitation that I will deal with the problems of my State and my Constituency within the short time at my disposal. It is an irony of fate that I represent a Constituency and a State which has not only been affected by flood once or twice but affected for successive times by cyclone and saline inundation as well. So, the gravity of the problem of flood in the State of Orissa is an acute one. Some parts of Western Orissa have also been affected by drought. The problem of Orissa needs special attention from the Centre and help should be given on priority basis, to tackle this problem, and thereby feeding the millions of people in these affected areas.

[Shri Arjun Sethi]

If we go back to the year 1971 and recapitulate the effects of the worst-ever cyclone of Orissa in living memory, it is needless to repeat here about the miserable plight of those people. In the devastating cyclone about six million people were affected. 10,000 people lost their lives. The area affected in this great calamity is 7,621 sq. miles. The loss to crops in monetary terms was not less than Rs. 100 crores.

As in the affected areas, in the whole State of Orissa, about 85 to 90 per cent of the population depend upon agriculture and agriculture is the only source of income for the living of the people. Their condition became precarious and deplorable as they did not get any yield from their land during the current year. When the people were in great difficulty to maintain their living, then, suddenly this flood of July 14th and 15th of this year came and completely broke the backbone and the last hope of the people.

During these days the rain fell incessantly for 34 to 48 hrs. and, as a result, large chunks of agricultural land in the district of Balasore, Cuttack and Khenjhor districts were inundated, affecting thereby roughly 250,000 people in this region.

That is to say, whatever the people had, after the great tragedy of October, 1971, they were deprived of, due to the recent flood of 1972. Now the people are in their utter dismay and wilderness, thinking of their dark future days and their present condition because 65 to 75 per cent of the population of this region have now neither the money to spend, nor the food to eat, and in some parts of the State, they have no house to live in till the next crop gets harvested, which again depends upon good monsoon.

Now, the bulk of the population depends upon the State Government, that is upon gratuitous relief, State's relief programme and the Crash Schemes. The State Government, with its limited resources, finds it difficult to maintain the alarming number of people throughout the year especially in the acute months which are coming. So, the Centre should come to the rescue of the State Government, by allocating more funds, both in cash and in kind, so that the starving millions may be saved in time. Without this generous help from the Centre, it is very difficult on the part of the State Government to save the present situation.

The problem of these areas is so acute and alarming that unless one sees the situation with his own eyes, it is difficult to describe the horrible and miserable condition of the people there. Their purchasing power has gone down totally. That means, they are now depending solely on the State Government for their living. The present situation so much precarious due to these floods and also the last cyclone, that the crash programme and the State's relief programmes got affected, at these floods inundated large areas.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You are repeating yourself again and again. Please conclude.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI : To solve the perennial plight of the people of Orissa the Centre must immediately take up the irrigation projects to control the floods which are responsible for their miseries. Without that, the Government cannot solve this problem at all.

I am told that the State Government have submitted to the Centre two major irrigation schemes namely the Bhimkund project and also the Rengali project for their consideration. I request the hon. Minister and the Central Government that if they want to save the flood situation and solve the flood problems of the State of Orissa, they should immediately accord their approval to these two projects and see that these projects materialise immediately so that the perennial problems of the State of Orissa could be solved and the people of Orissa may be saved without any further damage.

श्री ज्ञानेश्वर प्रसाद यादव (कटियार) :
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हम लोग स्वतंत्रता की रजत जयन्ती मनाने जा रहे हैं। हमें आजाद हुए पच्चीस साल होने को आए हैं। लेकिन प्रकृति के प्रकोप से जो परिस्थितियाँ उत्पन्न होती रहती हैं उनको रोकने के लिए हम और हमारी सरकार ने आज तक जो कारगर कदम उठाने चाहिये थे, उनको उठाने में हम सक्षम नहीं हो सके। प्रतिवर्ष आसाम, उत्तर बंगाल, बिहार, उड़ीसा, और पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश के अनेक भाग बाढ़ों के कारण जलमग्न होते हैं। उस पर हर वर्ष हम लोग इस सदन में चर्चा भी करते हैं। लेकिन हमको यह सुन कर और जानकर आश्चर्य होता है कि यह जो प्लड

कंट्रोल बोर्ड है, वह कोई काम नहीं कर रहा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि आखिर वह कौन सा कार्य कर रहा है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से आग्रह करूँगा कि बोर्ड को काफी सक्षम बनाया जाए ताकि पूर्वांचल भारत में करोड़ों रुपये की जो बाढ़ के कारण क्षति होती है उस क्षति से यहाँ के लोग बच सकें।

फ्लड फोरकास्टिंग अरेंजमेंट्स जो हैं उनको और ज्यादा चूस्त किया जाए, उसको दुस्त किया जाए ताकि लोगों को समय पर उसकी सूचना मिल सके और उस सूचना के अनुसार वे कुछ कारगर कदम स्वयं भी उठा सकें।

जिस क्षेत्र से मैं आता हूँ वह उत्तर बिहार का कटिहार क्षेत्र है। वह पूर्णिया जिले में गंगा के किनारे पर स्थिति है और हर वर्ष गंगा की भीषण बाढ़ के कारण उस क्षेत्र के निवासियों को अपार कष्ट उठाने पड़ते हैं। उत्तर बिहार में कमला बालान, कोसी, गंडक आदि सब की सब नदियों का पानी गंगा में आ जाने के कारण सर्वाधिक हानि हर साल उस क्षेत्र को क्षति उठानी पड़ती है। उसकी ओर मैंने पिछले साल और साथ ही साथ पिछले सेशन में भी मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान आकर्षित किया था और उन से निवेदन किया था कि आप गंगा के दक्षिणी तट पर बक्सर से कोइलवार तक बांध बना रहे हैं लेकिन गंगा के उत्तरी तट पर जहाँ दियारे में लोग निवास करते हैं, जो दियारे के निवासी हैं, उनके लिए आपने कौन सी योजना बनाई है? उनको बाढ़ से बचाने के लिए हमारी सरकार ने आज तक कौन से कदम उठाए हैं, यह मैंने उनसे जानना भी चाहा था। मंत्री महोदय का मुझे जवाब मिला कि हम उत्तर बिहार के मानसी स्टेशन को बचाने के लिए करोड़ों की राशि खर्च कर रहे हैं और पहले भी खर्च कर चुके हैं। एक स्टेशन को बचाने के लिए, उसको गंगा की बाढ़ और कटाव से बचाने के लिए केन्द्रीय सरकार करोड़ों की राशि खर्च करती है लेकिन दियारे में, बलिया से लेकर पूर्णिया जिले और वैंस्ट बंगाल के मालदा जिले के जो भाग हैं, इनमें रहने वाले निवासियों के लिए, इनको कटाव से बचाने के

लिए अब तक सरकार ने कोई भी योजना स्वीकार नहीं की है। मैंने आग्रह किया था कि जिस प्रकार बक्सर से कोइलवार तक आप बांध बना रहे हैं उसी तरह गंगा के उत्तरी छोर पर दियारे के निवासियों को भी आप बाढ़ों से प्रोटेक्शन दें, बाढ़ों से उनका बचाव करें और यदि सम्भव हो तो कटाव से भी उन इलाकों को बचाने की आप चेष्टा करें। दियारे के निवासी कृषि में निपुण हैं, कृषि उन लोगों का मुख्य धंधा है। हर साल उनकी फसलें नष्ट होती हैं, उनके घर कट जाते हैं। पिछले साल सरकार ने योजना बनाई थी कि कटे हुए भागों या कटी हुई आबादी के लिए हम आदर्श ग्राम बसाएंगे और आदर्श ग्रामों में उनको बसाने की कोशिश करेंगे। लेकिन आज तक आदर्श ग्रामों की योजना कहीं पड़ी हुई है, इसका कुछ पता नहीं है। हम गंगा के किनारे रहने वाले दियारे के निवासी आज तक नहीं जान सके कि आदर्श ग्राम की योजना कहां खटाई में पड़ी हुई है। मैंने सोचा था कि स्वतंत्रता की रजत जयन्ती के अवसर पर आदर्श ग्राम बनाने की योजना पूर्ण रूप से सफल हो सकेगी। लेकिन ऐसा न हो सका। हम चाहते हैं कि गोगरी-नारायणपुर बांध, जो सिचाई विभाग का बांध है। और आजमगढ़-शंकर बांध की तरह गंगा के किनारे-किनारे एक बांध बना दिया जाये, ताकि वहाँ के निवासियों में सुरक्षा का भाव जाग्रत हो सके।

गत साल हमको भीषण बाढ़ के कारण अपार क्षति हुई थी। इस वर्ष भी सम्पूर्ण उत्तर बिहार और दक्षिणी बिहार के कुछ क्षेत्रों की लगभग तीन, साढ़े तीन करोड़ आबादी सूखे से ग्रस्त है। गत साल बाढ़-पीड़ितों के लिए केन्द्र से जो कुछ अनाज भेजा गया था, उस में भी बहुत कुछ गड़बड़ हुई थी। तिरपाल कांड और भूसा कांड का प्रश्न बहुधा बिहार विधान सभा में उठा करता है। सूखे और बाढ़ का मुकाबला करने के लिए केन्द्रीय सरकार हमें अनुदान देने के लिए बचनबद्ध है, लेकिन सरकार को यह देखना पड़ेगा कि उस अनुदान का सदुपयोग हो सके और वह बाढ़-पीड़ितों के पास पहुँच सके। पिछली बाढ़

[श्री ज्ञानेश्वर प्रसाद यादव]

के समय में खासकर उत्तर बिहार, पूर्णिया, सहरसा और उत्तर भागलपुर के क्षेत्र में सूखे का एक बैगन भी नहीं पहुँच सका था। आज भी वहाँ वैसी ही स्थिति है कि सूखे के कारण कहीं भी हरी घास दिखाई नहीं देती है। कुछ बारिश हो गई है, लेकिन जब वह सारा क्षेत्र बाढ़ से जल-प्लावित हो जायेगा। इसलिए मैं चाहूँगा कि केन्द्रीय सरकार जल्द से जल्द उस क्षेत्र की ओर ध्यान दें।

गंगा और कावेरी को मिलाने की जो योजना है, उस को कार्यान्वित करने के लिए सरकार यथाशीघ्र कारगर कदम उठाये, ताकि गंगा के विनाश से लोगों को बचाया जा सके।

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH (Pupri) :

It is a tragic situation that when many parts of our country are facing drought, some other parts are suffering from floods. I shall confine myself to my own State of Bihar where faulty execution of projects by the River Valley Projects Department and the Irrigation Department is causing a lot of suffering to the people and wastage of funds.

The first project to which I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister is the Gandak project. Twenty years ago this project was envisaged to be executed at a cost of Rs. 100 crores. Last year in this House, Dr. Rao in the course of a reply said that the project is now going to cost Rs. 200 crores—a rise of 100 per cent. This clearly shows that the engineers of the Bihar Government are not competent to execute any major irrigation project. This is one example.

Another example is that the Kosi project. There is an admission by the State Minister of Irrigation, Bihar—I am quoting from the *Indian Nation of Patna* dated Aug. 6, 1972.

SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE : Is it an admission or confession ?

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH : Which-ever he likes, may be both. This is what he said :

"It has been pointed out by the Poona Institute that unless construction of check

dams and conservation of soil measures were taken in hand early, the western."

"Kosi canal which is going to be executed would have the same fate as the eastern canal which is rapidly getting silted up".

When the project was thought out, was it not the duty of the engineers of the Bihar Government and also the Water and Power Commission are to think about this problem of silting up of canals and the damage that might be caused ?

Secondly, the Minister has himself confessed this.

It says :

"The Minister felt that it was beyond the capacity of the Bihar Government to control the river and meet the growing expenses on the project to tame the river. In his view, the Kosi project would have to be taken over by the Indian Government, as a national project and its affairs should be the responsibility of a permanent National Board and not of the Bihar Government".

Sir, there is another project which is in my own constituency Pupri which also covers Sitamarhi Parliamentary constituency, and that is the Bagmati river project. The river has changed its course three times in the last five years. I wrote a letter to Dr. Rao last year, requesting him that the old bed of the river should be channelised and guide-banks should be constructed along the old river. Dr. Rao replied in the affirmative. But this year, which I put a question, the reply was that the Bihar Government is going to construct guide-banks along the present active channel of the river. But there are active channels and the river is changing its course this year also, and there is flood in the river though it is a blessing so far as this year goes. But the river is changing its course, and in the old bed there is more discharge than has been the case in the past few years. Still the Bihar Government is sitting idle and it is not willing to change its mind about the construction of guide-banks along old bed of the river which crosses Sitamarhi—Muzaffarpur Road at the tenth mile from Muzaffarpur.

I would like to refer to another project to which I would draw the attention of the hon. Minister, and that is, the Adhwara group of

rivers in the Muzaffarpur district. Dr. Rao is familiar with the problem, and with a very small amount, perhaps Rs. 5 crores to Rs. 6 crores, that scheme will bring benefit to a lot of people there.

Another point towards which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister is this. And it is very important. The River-Valley and Irrigation Departments in Bihar are seething with corruption. Not only that; the engineers take Commission on every project and every bill, but transfers and postings are done not on merit but on some other considerations. Dr. Rao's fear may be that it is not proper for the Central Government to intervene, but then he must see that the tremendous amount of aid which is being given by the Centre is not wasted and it does not go into the pockets of the contractors and engineers. So, I request the Government that they should be courageous and bold enough to take over all the major irrigation projects which are being executed in Bihar, especially Kosi, Gandak and Bagmati, and execute them as Central projects. It is important because the Central Government is footing bill, therefore it should have direct supervision over the projects as well. Unless that is done, these projects are not going to yield any benefit to the people.

I shall give one more example. It was envisaged that the present eastern Kosi canal will irrigate 14 lakh acres of land, but at the moment, it is irrigating only four lakh acres. So, you can see from this that the faulty execution, badly thought out plan by the Bihar Government and incompetent and inincere engineers, have brought a lot of misery to the people of Bihar. Unless the Centre intervenes decisively and takes over all these projects, Bihar is not going to get any substantial relief and all the money will go down the drains. Therefore, my humble submission is that the Central Government should take over all the projects, namely, Kosi, Gandak and Bagmati.

Lastly, there is the problem of rehabilitation of those unfortunate people who have been the sufferers from the floods of these rivers since centuries. They are still suffering. Guide-banks along the Kosi river, from one end to the other, at places cover a distance of four, seven or 11 miles from one another. Now, there are a lot of villages in this area. Since the beginning of the projects, the people have been repeatedly assured by the Bihar Government and also by

the Centre that they will get relief and also get places to live. But they have not got them so far.

Also they have not been paid any compensation though their land had been taken over by the Kosi project authorities. I request the Government to look into this great humanitarian problem of rehabilitation of the people and pay them compensation because their lands had been taken and utilised but no relief has come to them. Therefore, my submission is that the Government should come forward boldly and courageously and taken over these schemes in order to give relief to the people of Bihar by executing these three major irrigation projects expeditiously.

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi) : In the short time at my disposal it is not possible for me to do full justice to this important debate and I shall therefore confine myself to the problems of my State.

In, Orissa the coastal area has been chronically affected by floods and the calamities are aggravated by the tidal bores and cyclones. On the other hand the western districts are chronically affected by drought. The only answer to these two big problems is that small tributaries of the big rivers should be dammed to irrigate the upper reaches and at the same time to control floods which have devastated the delta area.

When there was a proposal for Rengali project from my friend Shri D. K. Panda and Arjun Sethi, I strongly opposed it, and for obvious reasons. I shall convince this House. The responsibility of this Ministry is on the able shoulders of a technical expert like Dr. K. L. Rao. In this House he has said categorically that he was going to re-examine it. Rengali project is going to submerge 120 square miles of the most fertile land in the upper reaches of Brahmani, on both sides of that river. It will uproot a large number of people—all this to benefit only 100 square miles. In other words to save 100 square miles, they want to submerge 120 square miles in the upper reaches.

It is a pity that the Orissa Government whose outlook is so narrow and whose horizon is limited to the coastal districts of Cuttack, and Puri can never think of the general benefit to the entire State. That is why they sent an absurd proposal and I am glad that while replying to

[Shri P. K. Deo]

hits debate on 11th April, 1972 Dr. Rao said :

"I do agree with Shri Deo that it is going to submerge large number of villager's lands and peasant's land. Therefore, what should we do? If there are other alternative sites, we shall consider them. There is nothing to say that we should stick to this particular site. In fact our whole ideas to incur the least amount of damage but at the same time achieve results...."

SHRI P. K. DEO : Thank you.

DR. K. L. RAO : I shall pass on the suggestion to the Orissa engineers and ask them to investigate immediately. Even half this storage load is enough for me."

I should like to know if this advice has gone from the Ministry of Irrigation and Power to the Government of Orissa and if they had gone into this aspect and submitted their report. As early as 1937 Dr. Viswaseyaya gave an expert advice and the anicut at Janapur was demolished to relieve drainage congestion of the Brahmani river. The way to solve the problem of the coastal district is to dredge Damra mouth where the Brahmani and the Baitarani join together, where there was the Chandabali port which was a flourishing port and was having trade with Calcutta and Burma.

So, the Damra mouth has to be dredged and flood protection embankments have to be strengthened. At the same time, the recommendations of the Irrigation Commission headed by Shri A. P. Jain should be implemented. That Commission has gone into the entire aspect of the Brahmini and Baitarani basin and submitted various schemes to build small dams on the tributaries of Brahmini and Baitarani. For Rengali, they never suggested a dam but a diversion weir. They have suggested dams on the Aunli, Singdajor, Dadragaati, Ramial, Mandira and Manikda and in Bihar also some dams are being taken up. If Mr. A. P. Jain's report is fully implemented, it will adequately solve the problems of floods in Orissa. There is absolutely no justification for the Rengali Project. In this regard, I have written a pamphlet *Rangali Rediscovered* and I pass it on to the Minister to give it thoughtful consideration to it.

SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE (Basirhat) : Sir, I share the concern expressed by the hon. Members who have participated in this discussion. Floods have become a routine affair in our country. I am not a technical expert nor an engineer. But in this age when man has landed on the moon, when man is harnessing the sea waters for benefit of humanity, I ask the minister a simple question : Is this problem incapable of solution in our country? Every year human lives are lost and millions of acres of land are inundated. The loss runs into crores of rupees. The Irrigation Department has published a report which says that the average loss annually to crops alone runs to Rs. 57 crores. The total damage every year runs to Rs. 98 crores. Last year in Orissa several thousands lives were lost, 12,659 cattle were lost, 3.30 crore acres of land under cultivation was inundated.

You will be surprised to find that the Government has so far spent only Rs 256 crores on flood control measures. This is shockingly low. If we utilise for beneficial purposes this water which is now being wasted causing damages not only to property but also to human lives and cattle, much of the problems of the country could have been solved.

There is so much of unemployment in our country.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Nobody differs from you in that. But what are your concrete suggestions?

SHRI H. K. M. ISHAQUE : At the beginning I said that I am not an expert or an engineer.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Then give your time to other Members.

SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE : It is for the hon. Minister to find out remedies.

In this age when man has landed on the moon, when engineering and technology have developed so much, our engineers are capable of delivering the goods.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let the Minister utilize those engineers.

SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE : Therefore, I am suggesting that ways and means must be

found out to control floods. This is necessary because our economy is based on agriculture. If we can control the floods, we can utilise that water for agricultural purposes. That will solve many problems, including unemployment which is a threat to the peace in the country.

I will make two suggestions. Up till now very little amount has been spent on controlling the floods, and that too without a scientific plan. Only in 1954 a National Floods Control Programme was prepared. But till today no enquiry commission has been set up to find out ways and means as to how we can control floods in this country. That commission should be appointed. Secondly, flood control must be treated on war footing. Then all problems connected with floods can be solved to some extent.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, our Irrigation Minister has presented a very good statement on meteorological statistics about the vagaries of the monsoon. It has become almost a ritual to express grief over the floods in different areas annually and also give some money in the form of relief, gratuitous relief and other relief, and also some grants for doing some temporary work. If we make an assessment of the amount spent on gratuitous relief over the last 25 years, apart from the inflation which this unproductive work has created, it has done much worse.

As I have said, this has become a ritual and this time he has given a good statement, I should say, giving an analysis of the position in different parts of the country. He has also reluctantly mentioned about damages caused in West Bengal, but he has not mentioned about either loss of life or cattle. I do not know whether to believe the Chief Minister of Bengal or the Central Irrigation Minister, but that is not much material. I do not know why he is reluctant to mention about the damages in West Bengal.

If we make a study of the areas suffered by floods during the last 25 years, they can be easily identified. In almost the same areas in Assam, North Bengal, Bihar and Kerala there is repetition of floods every year.

SHRI R. D. BHANDARE (Bombay Central) : The areas cannot be identified.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : I said that they can be almost identified. If we take the statistical figures about the vagaries of the monsoon, the maximum, the average rainfall is almost the same. Therefore, the moot question is the big statement about what you have done about relief but what have you done during the last 20 years to control floods, particularly in those identified areas. That is the moot question. You have not given any indication about that. Whether it is Orissa or West Bengal or Kerala or Assam, only some piece-meal measures in regard to control of floods are being taken. Is it impossible that you cannot make a national effort in its totality with a proper perspective so that, within in five or ten years, within this span of time, at least those identified areas should not suffer from flood any more? Have you done that? That is the moot question.

Some of the measures that you have taken are only half-hearted measures. Let me give you two examples. One is about Subarnarekha project. That is a river of sorrow not only for Orissa but also for West Bengal. You have undertaken the project at a cost of Rs. 10 crores. You started the work on Orissa side and also on West Bengal side. A large part of Orissa and a large part of southern West Bengal, almost every year, not every alternate year, suffer on account of floods. The work was started. But it was stopped. Some Members of Parliament from this side and that side made a representation that at a lower area of Subarnarekha some 5,000 or so families will suffer and will have to be evacuated. It was represented that if you have an embankment these people may have to be evacuated.

I want to ask a question. You are an Engineer. When you prepared the project, did you not take into consideration that this may affect about 5,000 families and that they may have to be evacuated? Why did you agree to change it? If you do some constructive work, certain people may suffer. I may tell you that in my area, in Dubda basin, at least a few thousand people revolted against me and the result was that my party candidates lost the Assembly elections. I did not care whether our candidate would lose or not if it was a constructive work, a national work. I will not take partisan attitude. Some people may suffer. I will only see whether they will get compensation in time.

[Sbri R. D. Bhandare]

I want to know why you take only half-hearted measures? Why have you stopped the work on this project? You stopped it after some years of work. You apportioned Rs. 10 crores for that project. How long will you take? I want to know. This is one instance of half-hearted measures that you have taken. What will be the effect? You must know. I can cite many examples. But I will not do so. I will give you one more example. In Midnapur area, there is one small water drainage scheme in Bara Chouka basin. You have approved the scheme costing Rs. 32 lakhs. I have been pressing and pressing for it. Can you account for it? In the last five years, you have spent Rs. 57 lakhs on gratuitous relief work and for temporary bund-making work. What is the logic? The scheme costs Rs. 32 lakhs, but you have already spent Rs. 57 lakhs. What kind of planning is this?

You should have an integrated planning for controlling the floods at least in those identified areas which suffer from chronic floods. I would make a request to you in that regard. We have been told this time that our next Five Year Plan will be job-oriented. If it is to be job-oriented, these flood control measures and works on a national scale will indirectly be productive works. You can avoid spending every year Rs. 15-20 crores on gratuitous relief which is nothing but increasing inflation. You can also avoid the loss of crops and other things by undertaking flood control measures.

So, I would request you to have a sitting with the Planning Commission, with the Planning Minister, and draw out a plan so that in the next five years the flood can be controlled at least in those identified areas. It has been said that the next Plan will be job-oriented. Here is a sector where you can provide jobs and you can avoid pumping in of extra money, avoid inflation and also avoid loss of human life, cattle and properties. You can also increase indirectly our productivity in the field of agriculture. My suggestion is that you should sit together with the Planning Commission, with the Planning Minister, to evolve a national flood control scheme for the next five years.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI
(Cauhati): We are discussing today a problem

which leaves behind a tale of tremendous woe and misery, and I come from that unfortunate region where the tales of woe and misery arising out of this problem have reached unprecedented magnitude and have become an annual feature. Unfortunately the problem has not been tackled, and in any event it has not been tackled in the eastern region in the way it deserves to be tackled. No serious and all-comprehensive effort has been made to fight this annual ritual of deaths of hundreds of people, washing away of thousands of cattle, loss of crops worth crores of rupees, and untold misery to the millions of people. Each year a substantial amount is spent on relief works on flood. These relief works are essential but we should not lose sight of the fact that the relief works on whatever footing one may undertake cannot give solace to the relatives and friends of those who perish in the floods, cannot bring back the thousands of cattle that are washed away, cannot replace the loss of crores of rupees of crops, cannot compensate the misery and suffering of the millions who lose their homesteads and valuables and pass their days under a shadow of grim tragedy. The need of the country today is measures on war footing to stop this perennial problem.

If we look back to the measures taken to combat this natural foe, we find that nature has won a complete victory over our Irrigation Ministry and the statistical data will bear this out. The statistical data supplied by the Ministry itself indicate that the total annual average damage during 1953 to 1961 was to the tune of Rs. 55 crores and it rose three-fold during 1962-71 and amounted to Rs. 176 crores. The total crop damage during 1953-61 was Rs. 43 crores which rose to Rs. 122 crores during 1962-71, and has reached a staggering figure of Rs. 2,400 crores; the estimated total loss of last year alone amounts to Rs. 620 crores. The fact that in the last decade the loss has been threefold that of the previous decade indicates that we have failed miserably in this war against nature.

Sir, I now come to the problems of my State, the worst, regular victim of flood not only once in a year but twice or thrice every year. In fact, when virtually the entire country is suffering from [drought], the people of Assam have become victims of heavy floods which occurred in June and also made its

reappearance in the last part of July. In June last, according to the official estimate itself, the authenticity of which is open to doubt, 13.9 lakhs of people were hit by floods, 26 people were washed off, 10,000 houses were washed away, and from only one district, i. e., the district of Nowgong, 25,000 people had to be evacuated. Crops worth Rs. 7 crores were destroyed. In the current floods, 30 lakhs of people have been affected, 85 people died—a figure which is disputed by non-official sources, and according to official estimate itself, the total loss of crops has been to the tune of 17.9 crores. The magnitude of this problem can be gauged from the fact that an embankment in a village in a district known as Kamrup was breached by a tributary of Brahmaputra and it widened it to 500 ft, within four hours and 50,000 people were affected by this breach alone. Erosion has threatened the Dibrugarh town and communications of Assam with the rest of the country, both road and rail, have been cut off. I myself was one of the victims; I was stranded for 36 hours in a way-side station when I was coming to Delhi for the Session. Even if we look to the figures annexed to the statement made by the hon. Minister, it makes a staggering reading.

15.55 hrs.

[SHRI K. N. TIWARY in the Chair]

We find that during the June floods the damage to crops in Assam has been valued at Rs. 705.9 lakhs compared to the All India figure of Rs. 844.9 lakhs and the total damage is estimated at Rs. 715.7 lakhs compared to the All India figure of Rs. 1120.5 lakhs and the area affected has been 4 lakh hectares in Assam compared to the all India figure of 4.52 lakh hectares. We have come to know that an interim relief of Rs. 1 crore has been granted and a sum of Rs. 50 lakhs has been sanctioned from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. We are grateful to the Prime Minister and the Central Government for this relief. But I am sure that Dr. Rao himself will appreciate that this amount is too insignificant compared to the immensity of the loss. I would again urge that more relief will not solve the problem. The problem of floods in Brahmaputra should be tackled in a gigantic scale and on a war footing.

We were happy that the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission was instituted, a reference

to which was made by Mr. Kotoki, the first speaker. We thought that a break-through will be made by the Commission, but the subsequent events completely frustrated us. The Central Government and every one in this House will appreciate that it is not possible for a tiny State like Assam with its limited resources to fight the mighty Brahmaputra. Further, the entire burden of Brahmaputra falls on Assam only whereas the burden of rivers like Ganga falls on various States. Therefore, I urge, on behalf of the people of Assam and also on behalf of the Eastern Region that the Centre should immediately take up the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission. The Commission, to-day, for want of funds, has halted its work and even the ritual of calling for tenders has not been done by the executive wing.

Before concluding, I will request Dr. Rao to impress upon his colleagues the necessity of controlling the Brahmaputra. One more request. I will ask Dr. Rao and the Irrigation Ministry one question a question which I have asked myself and on which I have not found any satisfactory answer. I hope he will give a satisfactory answer. I ask our hon. Minister, Dr. Rao, "Have we done enough even within our limited resources at our disposal to check this annual ritual of public ordeal by water or our efforts have been confined only to paper planning and inter-departmental and inter-ministerial communications and marked by bureaucratic indifferences?" I hope this House will receive an honest answer to this question.

SHRI KUMAR MAJHI (Keonjhar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, floods and drought are the twin evils of weather and they eternally affect the people of this country. This year when there is a serious drought situation, floods have also not spared some areas.

I come from Keonjhar District in Orissa. On the 14th of last month, there were 14" of rain on a single day which caused very serious damage in the district. I am reading to you a report from the District Collector of Keonjhar where he has mentioned the damage caused by the rain. The number of villages affected—410, the number of population affected—2,00,411 and human casualties—5 and cattle—1,144. The houses damaged were 8,176; sand-castings were to the extent of 6,17,306 acres. The lands submerged were to the tune of 7,49,006 acres. Seventy-five per cent of the crops were damaged in 4,84,455 acres. . .

16 hrs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are only quoting figures.

SHRI KUMAR MAJHI: I am quoting figures for my district...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not necessary. You may give your suggestions as to what should be done.

SHRI KUMAR MAJHI: My district is a tribal area. It has already been affected by cyclone, flood and drought. I requested the State Government, but the State Government does not have the funds to feed the starving people of my area. I therefore request the Central Government to step in and render adequate measures of gratuitous relief to the people affected in these areas. The Centre should give adequate financial assistance, and relief to the people of Orissa. The Bhimkund and the Rengali projects should be taken up on hand and implemented. Thank you.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY (Cooch-Bihar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister laid down the statement on the Flood Situation in the country on the 31st July, the opening day of this session. Unfortunately, Sir, if one goes through the entire report, one will find that some of the details that are necessary for the entire country to know what is happening in various parts of the country, are not there. An apology has been made that it does not include the damage that is caused due to flood in last July, in the case of West Bengal, as also in the case of some other States. Today is the 8th August. The last sequence of flood occurred in West Bengal in between 27th of May and 28th of July. Was it not possible on the part of the Minister concerned to get all the details from the State Government, not only in the case of West Bengal, but also in the case of other State Governments, wherever the details have not been cited in the hon. Minister's statement? In the absence of that, Sir, one will have very much to think that hon. Ministers are not so much serious as they deserve to be.

I would substantiate my remarks, though it may be somewhat unsavoury,—I wish it is not, from the fact that in any case the hon. Ministers had not gone and seen the flood-prone areas, to see to what extent the devastation had

been caused due to the rising floods. Would it not have been better on the part of the hon. Minister at least to have made certain visits either West Bengal or Assam or Orissa or some other parts of the country? But nothing has been done.

So also, Sir, the idea goes behind that the Minister has not taken up this recurring visitation of floods and the havoc caused by them to the country and millions and millions of people, as seriously as they deserve to be.

There is a simple statement laid down here. It is said, in the case of West Bengal, there is no death, no report has been received. I come from West Bengal area which has been visited thrice by this flood in between May and a large part of July. The dates are May 27, June 21, July 27 and 28. I would request the Minister through you, Mr. Chairman, to consider the huge devastation caused by flood in that part of the country. Mark the sequence of dates—May 27th, June 21, and July 27. The people of the flood-affected areas and the havoc-caused areas will think again that the floods will come to their part of the country again by the third week of August or the latest by the fourth week of August; that would give the sequence, namely May 27, June 21, July 27 again August 21 or August 28. Even then we find that the hon. Ministers are not concerned.

Before I go through the entire report and put forward my suggestions, I would like to give the hon. Minister some figures which he has not given. Of course, very recently, I visited my constituency and some parts of the districts in North Bengal and I have collected all these reports.

In North Bengal alone, leave alone the flood situation in Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa, in the three districts of Cooch-Bihar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling, 687 square miles were flood-affected, and the total crop-damaged area is 287 square miles, the break-up being 150 square miles in Cooch-Bihar and 122 in Jalpaiguri and 16 in Darjeeling. The damage caused to the crops because of floods, as I have collected it from the commissioner and deputy commissioners of the districts and divisions, comes to Rs. 205 lakhs.

The total number of villages affected is 635, the break up being 319 in Cooch-Bihar, 280

in Jalpaiguri and 36 in Darjeeling. The population affected according to official estimate is 6,29,000. The loss of human lives, as stated in the statement of the hon. Minister is nil. But according to official estimate which I have collected, the total is 21, the break-up being 10 in Cooch-Bihar, 11 in Jalpaiguri and of course, none in Darjeeling.

The number of cattle lost due to the flood ravages in these three districts of North Bengal totals to 4180, the break-up being 1572 in Cooch-Bihar, 2512 in Jalpaiguri and 100 in Darjeeling. The value of these damages comes to Rs. 12.55 lakhs.

The number of houses damaged is 47,475; the largest number of houses damaged is in Cooch-Bihar, the number being 20,475 in Cooch-Bihar, 19,000 in Jalpaiguri and 8,000 in Darjeeling. The extent of damage caused because of destruction of houses is about Rs. 28.8 lakhs.

Moreover, the extent of damages to embankments, engineering protective measures and other works on Government property comes to Rs. 75 lakhs, out of which, I have been told by some of the local engineers in charge of the Irrigation Department, Rs. 55 lakhs is the total loss only on the protective engineering measures and engineering works that have been taken up in several parts in these three districts of North Bengal.

If we add up all the losses, the total loss would come to more than Rs. 305 lakhs. But in the hon. Minister's statement, nothing has been mentioned in this regard.

This is not the only occasion when we have discussed the flood situation in this House. As has been pointed out by my other friends in this House, every year, we discuss the flood situation, once or twice or thrice. This recurring visitation of floods in our country has been causing enormous damages which it is impossible to depict for any Member like me or even for that matter for any expert. I am sure the experts brians will be baffled and puzzled very much, if they were to go on adding and calculating all the damages caused since the days of the Partition. We are going to celebrate the Silver Jubilee or the 25th anniversary of Indian Independence this year. During all these 25 years, what is the total extent of loss caused by these floods and the

recurring visitation of floods? Will the hon. Minister be pleased to place this information on the Table of the House? On a very humble estimate, this figure will run to something more than Rs. 4,000 crores. But the total amount spent by this Ministry or this Government on relief measures and other protective measures is hardly Rs. 600 or 700 crores. taking into account the relief measures by way of loans, grants and other things given by the respective State Governments, what is to be done now? The hon. Minister knows the extent of the huge loss suffered each and every year on account of floods. In view of this, what specific measures for controlling flood are under contemplation? Also what composite projects for flood control and irrigation are in view?

The hon. Minister sometimes tells us that they are taking up such and such projects. We also read in the report in one of the paragraphs a headline 'Acceleration of flood protection schemes'. He has said that for some States, beyond the plan allocations, another Rs. 20 crores have been arranged to give immediate relief.

For controlling the North Bengal floods, a Master Plan was prepared as far back as 1924 by Mr. Griffiths who was the Chief Engineer, Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation of the Government of India then. This talk has been going on year to year for the last 10-15 years, but nothing has been done.

Very recently, the North Bengal Flood Control Commission was constituted as was the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission. But unfortunately, whenever certain schemes are drawn up and presented to the Central Government for financial allocation, they say 'there are no funds'. But in the report of the hon. Minister, it is said Rs. 20 crores have been set apart beyond the plan allocation for Assam, West Bengal and Bihar. For West Bengal, only Rs. 1 crore has been set apart. There are 20 continuing schemes to control floods in North Bengal. Tentative schemes have been submitted to the Central Government for consideration involving an outlay of Rs. 455 lakhs, out of which Rs. 110 lakhs have been sanctioned.

I would make this request to the hon. Minister. If he is really very serious in controlling floods in West Bengal, Assam and in

[Shri B. K. Das Chowdhury]

other parts of the country, let there be certain integrated measures taken up and implemented. Let the Central Government take up the flood control schemes in Assam, the Ganga basin and in North Bengal under their auspices and let these schemes be financed by the Government of India so that the State Governments concerned may not be put under any pressure.

Mention has been made about linking the Ganga with the Cauvery. What about the flood havoc caused in the monsoon months in this part of the country? What will be the total quantum of water that would be flowing in these months? What will be the discharge of the Bhagirathi and Hooghly? While the hon. Minister is thinking of lining the Ganga Cauvery, he is completely neglecting the problems of West Bengal, the problem connected with the Farakka Barrage discharge, the discharge from the Bhagirathi and Hooghly. Instead of the Ganga-Cauvery link-up, let him think about these problems. I would request him to consider all these suggestions and, if necessary, have a sort of National Commission to go into the entire aspect.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswar) : I find that the Ministers Committee on Flood Control under the Deputy Minister, Shri Kureel, has really done a good job. It has really submitted some good suggestions and I hope they will be accepted and implemented. It will help to a great extent in mitigating this problem.

Recently I am happy to note that some efforts have been made to have a Ganga Commission which met in Bihar a few days ago. Perhaps it will help in mitigate the havoc in 6-8 states affected by floods in the Ganga. It shows a little awareness on the part of the Ministry as to the problems which are facing them. Dr. Rao was himself in Orissa for sometimes, and he has made a study of the Hirakud reservoir and of the river systems in Orissa as a whole. Therefore, I want to confine my observations, within the short time at my disposal, to the river systems of Orissa which need the immediate attention of the Government.

The Hirakud reservoir usually has a discharge of 15 lakh cusecs. After the dam was constructed, the highest flood since 1959, indicated about 9.5 lakh cusecs. The Minister

knows it, namely, from Hirakud and downwards, there is another area covering 20,000 sq. miles of estimate area. Taking a discharge of 5 lakh cusecs at the Hirakud point and adding another 9 lakh cusecs from the flood waters of 12,000 sq. miles beyond Hirakud, it becomes almost 16 lakh cusecs. If we study the flood damages in Orissa during 1971 and of this month 1972, you will find, and the Minister must be knowing, that even after the Hirakud reservoir has been constructed, we have not been able to control this 15 lakh cusecs which lie beyond the dam, and to this problem in the coastal area, the floods add more misery. The Brahmani, the Vaitarani and the Kharsuan and also the Subarnarekha are the main or major river systems in Orissa. During the last so many years, only one river system, and partly the Mahanadi system, which is the biggest one, have been tackled.

There have been various suggestions. I am unhappy to note that in spite of the best efforts of the Minister, Dr. Rao, and his Ministry, Mr. P. K. Deo comes here and tell us that the people were dying like anything there. We know what they have been doing since the past five to seven years. Only two months ago, the new government came in there. It is something wonderful when he says like that. I understand why he has been so anxious about it. This Rengali project and the dam on this project have been on the anvil since the past 10 years. Dr. Rao will correct me if I am wrong. It has been there since 1960 or so, and we said that the project should be taken up by the State Government. I understand now why the Swatantra party is not happy about it. Now the secret has come out. A political game and a political slogan were raised. Now another political slogan is raised against the Rengali river project and the dam because there are some areas, wherefrom the Swatantra party people have been elected, which are going to be submerged, and so a political slogan has come out. The Rengali project has been surveyed, studied and everything has been done and investigated. I hope this would be expedited. The hon. Minister, Dr. Rao, said in 1971 when he went there that this is a 'must'. Already much delay has been caused, and so let us see that this is completed, since the Brahmani and the Vaitarani are the two systems which are causing much damage in the State.

With regard to the other two systems, let us also know what the hon. Minister is trying to

do about controlling the Subarnarekha and the Gudabalan rivers. These are the two systems which also need to be controlled.

So far as another aspect of the flood problem is concerned, especially with regard to the coastal areas, you are very much aware of the Chilka lake. Today, out of the 15 lakh cusecs of floodwater which are going along the tributaries of the Mahanadi beyond Hirakud, at least about 1,50,000 cusecs or about two lakh cusecs of flood waters are being discharged into the Chilka lake. Therefore, the Government appointed a committee into this problem of discharge of the floodwaters into the Chilka lake area. May I ask the hon. Minister how long this committee will take to submit its report? It was known by the name of Sukrani Committee long before. I may be known by another name now. But its finding has never come in. I hope Dr. Rao will take up this question, since I have been following it up so many times. What happened to the Sukrani Committee? We are so anxious to appoint a committee like that to go into the problem of floodwaters which are being discharged into the Chilka lake and which submerge so much of area all round. What happened to that Committee Report since the last three or four years? The report has not come in.

The previous committee, even in 1928, recommended that if Chilka lake area is not to be submerged by excessive discharge of flood waters like 2 or 3 lakh cusecs, the mouth of the river should be dredged, so that floodwaters can pass easily. What is the programme for controlling floods in Gudabalan? It inundates the Mayurbani district. There were at least ten proposals such as construction of embankments, etc. Why have they not been implemented? This year about six lakhs of people in Orissa have been affected by floods in the districts of Balasore, Denkanal, Keonjhar and Cuttack. In Puri, Ganjam, Koraput and Sundargarh and other western districts, there is a severe drought problem. We have floods in some and drought in some others. This is a problem which needs immediate attention. West Bengal Bihar and Orissa are the States which bear the brunt of the floods. To implement the recommendations of these committees, you must have at least Rs. 150 crores or Rs. 100 crores in the Fourth Plan period itself. Where is this money? The hon. Minister knows the river systems of India so well and when he is in the Ministry to

see that at least fifty per cent of the problems are mitigated. He must pay special attention to these four States which are inundated by floods, year after year.

SHRI BIREN ENGTI (Diphu) : Mr. Chairman, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this debate and I shall confine my remarks to my State, especially to my constituency. Many hon. Members from Assam spoke about the flood situation in Assam. Every year Assam is affected by floods and this year, especially in my constituency of Mikir and North Cachar Hills 40,000 persons were affected by floods. 12,000 have been rendered homeless and till now no sufficient relief has been provided to them. In other parts of my constituency, due to shortage of rain, drought, and famine will appear soon. I would like to request the Government of India to help these people affected by floods and drought. As I said my constituency has been affected by both.

To control the floods in Assam caused by the Brahmaputra river, the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission was set up but to our regret, that scheme was not implemented till now. So, I urge upon the Government of India to take up this matter very urgently and come to the rescue of the helpless people of Assam who have been affected by the floods.

SHRI DHARNIDHAR DAS (Mangaldai) : Sir, that day we discussed the serious drought situation in the country. Today we are discussing the flood situation in other parts. I think both the problems go together. Our planning has been such that we have been living for so many years with these twin problems causing huge loss to human lives and property. These problems can be solved together only by a national plan, which is a matter for the Planning Commission to take up and give relief to the people and save the economy of the country under a scientific and integrated plan.

Assam is the worst sufferer from floods. Unfortunately, I happened to be an eye witness to a very tragic scene on the 29th July caused by the devastating floods there. 10 days before that, I had a discussion with the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission's Chairman and he sought to convince me that the three tributaries of Brahmaputra, viz., Baralia, Nona and Pagladiya are controllable by strengthening the

[Shri Dharnidhar Das]

embankments, having some sluice gates here and there and removing some silt in some portions. For this, he said the estimated expenditure would be Rs. 6 crores. Again, for the Paghadiya basin at some place called Tamulpur, he said there should be a retention dam, which would cost Rs. 13 crores. He said he needs Rs. 6 crores for strengthening the embankments and Rs. 13 crores for the retention dam and if this is made available, floods could be controlled. In other words, there will be no floods due to river water, but the rain water that might accumulate could not be stopped. So the question of flood control in that particular area boils down to this amount which the Central Government has to provide immediately.

On the 28th at about 2 A.M. in the night a breach occurred to an embankment of the Puthimari river a little away from the national highway. Through that breach, the swirling river took a new course and submerged a large number of thickly populated villages. It led to the death of 18 persons and it was a very tragic scene indeed to see a husband trying to save the wife by catching hold of her hair but he could not save her. One person lost three children. In this way, it was a very tragic scene. I was there at that time to discuss the arrangements for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Independence Day. We have to think very seriously, because at a time when we have to give a catalogue of our achievements we find to our utter distress that we have to mourn the loss of lives in floods and droughts due to inadequacy in Planning. As stated by the Chief Minister of Assam, the loss of property during this year's flood is estimated to be Rs. 18 crores. Another flood is yet to come; it is coming, certainly. It is a tragedy that when our government have come up with such gigantic programmes to remove *gartbi* and give prosperity to the people, we have not been able to control the rivers which are the cheapest sources of power. When we took up this matter with the Minister, Dr. Rao, we came to know that it was the Planning Commission which was not giving enough money for flood control work. It is regrettable. If the Brahmaputra river is controlled, apart from the prevention of floods, there will be so much of generation of electricity that there will be a flood of electricity.

Why can we not have plans for generation of electricity as Russia and before their five Year Plans? Lenin's Goelro plan for electrifica-

tion of all Russia was the predecessor of the Five Year Plans that made Russia what it is today. We can also remove droughts and control floods besides massive electrification if we have such comprehensive plans in our country. Electricity is the gateway to planned development in modern times, and thus alone we can bring prosperity to the people.

Regarding the Brahmaputra river, Dr. Rao has given an indication that flood can be controlled and electricity can be generated by a single plan costing about Rs. 500 crores. The loss annually caused by floods in Assam comes to about Rs. 13 crores to 15 crores on an average. If we calculate this loss for the last 25 years since independence it comes to more than Rs. 300 crores. If only government make an investment of Rs. 500 crores these floods can be controlled. Apart from controlling the floods, we can also have electric power for modernising our agriculture, developing our economy and removing the backwardness of that eastern-most State. We should also have a national power grid and water grid.

If we have such a comprehensive national plan, there will be no drought anywhere. Water will be diverted to the drought-affected areas. Similarly, in the flood-prone areas, water will be lessened and there will be no damage to crops, property, and there will be no loss of life.

So, I suggest, in this year of 25th Anniversary celebrations of our Independence, the Government should be determined to have such a comprehensive plan which will end floods for ever, which will remove drought for ever and which will open up a new vista of modern development for the prosperity of the people of our country.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL (Lucknow) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, while discussing the flood situation in different parts of the country, it is a pertinent question to ask as to why do the floods occur and what is the reason that repeatedly in one area we keep on having floods.

When we think of it, we find that a lot of deforestation has taken place. When the trees are felled, what happens is that the rainfall, instead of trickling through the branches, through the leaves, and coming slowly through under-growth, it just rushes through the hills, through the streams, and joins the rivers, thus

swelling the rivers for a short time, temporarily. Then, the slack comes, it stays there for four or five days creating havoc. And then it disappears.

So, the main thing is to have afforestation on the hill side near the river banks which can stop the flow of the river in a swift manner.

In Lucknow, we have been having floods repeatedly. We had it many years ago in 1923 and then, afterwards, we had it in 1960. I know, the source of the rising river, the fury of the waters because I have been through the floods. My house was 12 ft. under water in 1960. After that, the Government tried to do its best. They appointed a committee with the Commissioner at its head. I was also invited to give my views as to why we have floods in Lucknow repeatedly and how we can avoid it. Like an ordinary house-wife, I said Gomati river is like a kitchen *nali* of the city of Lucknow. As we keep cleaning the kitchen *nali* regularly, in the same manner, Gomati river which is like the kitchen *nali* of the city of Lucknow must be cleaned. When I spoke of dredging the river, the Engineers there said, "No, Madam; we are going to have more water waves in the river". I cannot imagine how it is possible. All the big rivers—Gomati is not a big river; it is a small and an ancient river—like, the Hooghly, the Nile of Egypt, the Thames of U.K., are being dredged to have the water cleaned so that the river-bed may not rise.

What we are doing in Lucknow, on the Gomati side, is that we are building up the bunds. The bunds are going up. The subsoil water is rising all the time. I speak of all this because I am going through it. Last year, again we had floods and the bunds gave way or I do not know what happened. I was in France attending some Conference. My house was again under water for 12 to 13 days. I know what suffering it brings. I know how we suffer and how the people suffer. So, I have to make a request to the Minister that the rivers have to be tamed. Lucknow is the first big city on the banks of Gomati. This Gomati river, as you know, has its source in Pilibhit and if flows a number of miles and winds through Sitapur. Of course, Sitapur is not a big place as Lucknow. I have a suggestion this river should be tamed. The river must be made to spread out; when it is in fury or swollen, it can spread out. A good number of canals should be made. Where the water reaches, you can put plants. By putting plants we will have more trees and

that will arrest the flow of water for some time—it will arrest the flow of water coming in a great fury and velocity. We can tame the river and we can also have a few canals dug upstream. Of course, we have got bunds. Government have spent crores of rupees in the last ten years on bridges and bunds. But what has happened? Time and again Lucknow is under the shadow of floods. Even now the people of Lucknow keep on asking me what is going to happen. I am not an engineer; I do not hold a portfolio for giving them an answer. But the people of Lucknow do want a reply to the question, 'What is going to happen about Lucknow?'. I do want a reply, Sir, what is going to happen to Lucknow, how we are going to control the river Gomati.

SHRI N. TOMBI SINGH (Inner Manipuri): Ours is a vast country and geographical conditions vary from place to place. And it is very natural that in some parts people are suffering from drought and in some other part floods are playing havoc in the lives of the people. I do not like, even for a moment, to underrate the labour and the pains taken by the Government of India and specially by the Ministry of Irrigation and Power which is headed by an expert like Dr. K. L. Rao. The Ministry is taking all care to see that the floods are controlled and the abundance of water which creates flood is utilised for constructive purposes during scarcity period. Even then there are differences of opinion in different fields.

16-43 hrs.

[SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL in the Chair.]

I would like to draw the attention of the House, specially the Minister in charge of Irrigation and Power, to an area in which both floods and drought go hand in hand. The other day I discussed about drought situation in the State of Manipur. And as I stand today to participate in the discussion on floods, some of my friends must be surprised that this man, representing the same State, said the same thing about drought. As I had mentioned the other day also, in Manipur because of the unique geographical condition—and Dr. Rao is well aware of it; I mentioned to have followed him a number of times—there are floods and in a few months' time drought follows the floods; floods and drought are twin brothers and both are simultaneously relevant. Therefore, I have a few suggestion

[Shri N. Tombi Singh]

to make. I am not an expert. Even then, having lived in that part of the country and having experienced the difficulties and havoc that have been created from year to year to the people, to the agricultural areas and to a large number of sectors by floods, I would like to say a few words. There are two parts of the Valley which are mainly affected by floods: one part is north of the Imphal town and the other part is south of the Imphal town which is near the Loktak lake near which a multi-purpose hydro-electric project has been taken up. It is a very big scheme and we are very grateful to the Government of India. I understand that there is some good progress made about it.

Now, the problem faced by the northern part of Imphal town is that the rivers just flowing through the valley and touching Imphal town have their source very near Imphal town and there is very little notice or warning about floods in them. The only remedy to this is to control these rivers, namely, Nambul, Imphal and Iril, etc. These are some of the rivers creating flood problems in the valley. They rise north of Imphal and if they are dammed at the source, it will solve not only the flood problem but they will regulate the flow of water in the rivers and will make them navigable throughout the season. It will create a tremendous change in the economic life of the people. So also, when there is scarcity of drinking water in the valley immediately after the rainy season, if we control these rivers at their source, there are three possibilities which will be the outcome of this control—(1) cheap electric power, (2) drinking water and (3) constant navigable conditions in all the rivers in the valley. So, the only remedy for these floods, especially in the Imphal valley mainly the Imphal town will be the damming of the main rivers at their source.

Now, as far as the other side, namely, the southern side of Manipur valley is concerned, there is a multipurpose project in the Loktak valley. The water is to some extent controlled by this project. This will solve the problem of the part of the area but the conception, rather the misconception of even some experts that the Loktak hydro-electric project which is being taken up will solve the entire flood problem of the State, is a wrong conception and this has to be re-examined with all the seriousness with which usually we find Dr. Rao

examines these problems. I hope I will get concrete and pointed replies to these issues from Dr. Rao.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Ram Bhagat Paswan—absent. Shri B. V. Naik.

SHRI B. V. NAIK (Kanara) : The hon. Member who spoke before me touched upon the flood problem in general which is of an immediate nature. I would not like to dwell upon the various conditions that are existing in our country regarding floods.

I believe that in this country we have got floods since almost the beginning of time, since the dawn of civilisation almost. The one change that the present conditions have made with regard to floods is that we have got an appropriate forum like the Parliament or the State legislatures where we can voice our concern and the distress of the people. To that extent, I would say that there are things which are very immediate which need to be looked into and also things which are ultimate and it is in that context that I have to make a suggestion in the case of a permanent solution which Mr. Daschowdhury was trying to find out in regard to floods in our country, like the Ganga-Kaveri canal. I think it is rather paradoxical when in the south, particularly the river system and the lack of water in it can cause a serious dispute between the two States of Mysore and Tamil Nadu, we have got so much of surplus water and this water unimpounded goes waste and also causes in its flow considerable amount of havoc and distress to the people in our country, particularly in the northern areas. I would, therefore, request our Minister Dr. K. L. Rao to tell us the stage at which this Ganga-Kaveri link stands at present. The previous information which we have received in this House was that the matter has been referred to the experts coming from the United Nations.

Once, the Minister of State for Planning had stated that at least by the end of this century we would have something of this Ganga-Cauvery canal.

I would suggest this, to see that there is a permanent solution. The surplus waters should be diverted to the South, where there is very much need. We know, the long-term is usually the enemy of the short-term; the ultimate is usually the enemy of the immediate. But still

I would say, since it is only for about the last 50 years or so that we are talking about floods in this country, it would not be improper or inexact, if I may say so, if we are able to decide now as soon as possible regarding this canal in this year of 1972 itself. (An hon. Member: Your grand-son will raise the same in this House itself.) My grand-son is still too far off still 50 year.' I would still say that my son is good enough to raise this because it is going to be an immediate one. Already the matter is being surveyed by the United Nations team. Certain experts of the United Nations are working on it. The hon. Minister of State for Planning had stated on the floor of the House that we are going to take it up. Now is the appropriate time and I would urge that this Ganga-Cauvery Canal project gets the due amount of attention that it deserves.

There is only one point more and I will finish.

We know, there are rivers, particularly in the western side, which were never prone to floods. We have got the Kali, Gangavali, Sharavati, Agnashini etc. Because of deforestation on a very large scale, the cutting up of the soil had been causing a great amount of distress in these coastal areas particularly the West Coast areas of our country. Something must be done in respect of the major river systems and the minor river systems which have been causing considerable amount of distress to the people inhabiting the banks of these rivers. With these remarks I thank you.

श्री मूलबन्ध बागा (पाली): राजस्थान में हम बाढ़ का स्वागत करते हैं लेकिन दो तीन बातें मैं बताना चाहता हूँ। बाढ़ रोकने के लिए आप जो पैसा खर्च करते हैं उसका ठीक उपयोग नहीं होता है। मैंने एक बार कहा था। पाली एक बहुत बड़ा शहर है राजस्थान का। वहाँ पर बाँड़ी नदी बहती है। बाँड़ी से प्रोटैक्शन के लिए आपने प्रोटैक्शन वाल खड़ी करने के लिए पैसा दिया। बाढ़ नियन्त्रण के लिए पैसा दिया यह आज से तीन साल पहले की बात है। वह धनराशि जो थी वह फ्लड प्रोटैक्शन वाल में न लग कर किसी दूसरी जगह लगा दी गई। जब आप फ्लड प्रोटैक्शन के लिए छोटी छोटी जगहों के लिए पैसा देते हैं तो उनका सही उपयोग होता है या नहीं होता है, इसको भी आप को देखना चाहिए।

मैंने यह भी कहा था कि जहाँ भी आप तट बन्धन करें वहाँ आप स्लुइस ऐसा लगाएँ ताकि कुओं और जमीन पर पानी मिल सके। आपने जहाँ जहाँ तटबन्धन किया। वहाँ पर एक बड़ी समस्या पैदा हो गयी है तटबन्धन करके जगह जगह जो पानी नदी का आता है, वह जमीन पर जा नहीं पाता है। और उसकी वजह से वहाँ पर खेती नहीं हो पाती। इसका कारण यह है कि राजस्थान में कई जगह खारी जमीन है। वहाँ पर हजारों बीघा जमीन इसी कारण से अनउप-जाऊ रह गयी है। कई बार मैंने कहा कि जहाँ आप तटबन्धन करें, जहाँ पर आप नदी को बांधे वहाँ पर मेहरबानी करके स्लुइस आप ऐसा लगाएँ कि थोड़ा सा पानी उन जमीनों पर बह जाय, वहाँ पानी निकल जाय लेकिन आपका इस ओर ध्यान नहीं गया है। नतीजा यह है कि जगह-जगह पर जमीन में कुछ अनाज पैदा नहीं होता है। चूँकि वहाँ जमीन खारी है इस वास्ते अगर वहाँ पर पानी फल जाय तभी वहाँ अनाज पैदा हो सकता है।

तटबन्धन करने के बाद नदियों का पानी खेती की जमीनों में नहीं फल पाता है इस सम्बन्ध में मैंने कई गांवों की लिस्ट दी थी। राजस्थान में फ्लड प्रोटैक्शन के लिए जो पैसा पाली के लिए दिया था। वह पैसा भीलवाड़ा जिले में लगा पाली में नहीं लगा, जिसके कारण आज भी पाली शहर के गरीब मुहल्लों, मजदूर बस्ती, को बाँड़ी नदी से खतरा है। अमीर लोगों के घर तो शहर के अन्दर हैं, जब कि गरीब लोगों के घर नदी के तट पर स्थित हैं। जब भी बाँड़ी नदी में बाढ़ आती है तो गरीब लोगों के घर बर्बाद हो जाते हैं।

क्या सरकार ने कभी यह पता लगाने की कोशिश की है कि उस ने फ्लड प्रोटैक्शन के लिए कितना पैसा दिया और वास्तव में कितना पैसा खर्च किया गया? इस बात की भी जांच करनी चाहिए कि बांध बनने के बाद कब टूट जाते हैं। मैंने राजस्थान में देखा है कि एक साल बांध बनते हैं। और अगले साल टूट जाते हैं। क्या

[श्री मूलचन्द्र झाग]

इस कारण किसी इंजीनियर का एक्सप्लेनेशन काल किया गया है। या किसी इंजीनियर को ससपेंड किया गया है? हमने देखा कि बनिया-वास बांध बनाने के एक साल बाद ही टूट गया गांव वालों के कहने के बावजूद यह बांध सही ढंग से नहीं बनाया गया। फलट प्रोटेक्शन के लिए जो पैसा दिया जाता है उसका सही उपयोग न होने के कारण नुकसान होता है। मैंने बताया कि बांडी नदी में बाढ़ आने के कारण मेरे डिस्ट्रिक्ट में पाली, डूंगरपुर और गूड़ाएंदला आदि को नुकसान पहुंचा है।

अन्त में मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि नेहरा बांध बनाया जाना चाहिए। उसके न होने के कारण बहुत से गांवों को नुकसान होता है।

SHRI SHYAM SUNDER MOHAPATRA (Balasore): This is probably the fourth time that we are discussing the flood situation in the country, and it might be that Dr. K. L. Rao, an eminent engineer as he is, must have talked at least 30 times in this House about flood control measures. The question that is posed is this. For how many years more or decades more, shall we be under panic of such flood and drought in this country?

I would only draw the attention of the eminent Minister to the Subarnarekha project in Orissa which he has promised and about which he has also been thinking for the last few years. Particularly North Balasore has been under the grip of floods since 1967, and from 1967 till now, during the last five years, at least 10 lakhs of people have suffered from the ravages of floods. I have come to know that the eminent Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power is visiting the area next week. I hope that his going there will bring consolation to the people and after he has visited the area, something concrete will emerge.

I have to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the rivers Mahanadi, Baitarani, Brahmani, Rasikula, Subarnarekha and Budapalanga during the last 50 years have brought devastation to at least one-fourth of the population of Orissa, and during the last flood and cyclone, at least 30 lakhs of people of Orissa

have suffered. God alone knows what has been the personal loss to the people and the money involved of the State Government and the Government of India.

17 hrs.

The question before us is whether we will spend such crores of rupees in relief measures or we will do something permanent for the people so that they will no more be scaped of such floods or droughts. The Government of India have taken up a plan of deep tubewell sinking. If there is a double crop system, if there is a triple crop system and if there is flood and a crop is gone, the people will not mind it much. But the people of Orissa have been hearing that the Government of India will come forward with this scheme and that scheme. The State Government has an elaborate scheme for sinking of tube-wells, but nothing tangible has come out. Even those tubewells that have been sunk are not properly looked after and they are lying idle.

That is why I say that something concrete should emerge. The hon. Minister must tell the people that we are now taking up such and such gigantic projects, dynamic projects and something will be done within a specified time. That will be some assurance to the people. Otherwise, every year flood comes, we come here in Parliament and voice our concern and talk about floods and their havoc and complacent assurances are given by Government that the people will be no more under panic and so on. This will take us nowhere. So I would request the hon. Minister, himself an eminent engineer, to give us an assurance that he is going to do something concrete.

We know that floods occur even in developed countries like the USA, USSR and Germany. Only a few months ago, about 300 people were washed away in a flood in the USA; 600 people were washed away due to a flood in the river Yalu in China. What is required is that the Minister must take some measures in a very concrete manner and say that he is going to have them implemented within a span of time. The target should be fixed and people should be assured that it will be done.

We are very grateful to the hon. Minister that he has kept in abeyance the scheme on Subarnarekha which would have devastated 80,000 acres, washed away 40,000 houses and

affected so many school etc. He has in his mind a multi-purpose project on the river Subarnarekha and also on the river Phadalinga. I would request him to go ahead with this multi-purpose project, which will be on the pattern of the DVC. I hope that after Shri Kureel visits the site, he will come back and take up the plan and assure the people that it will come up in the next Five Year Plan so that at least the people of North Balasore and in the district of Mayurbhanj will no more be subjected to the threat of famine, starvation and impending economic disaster.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद यादव (सीतामढ़ी) : सभापती महोदया, मैं आप के माध्यम से डा० के एल राव का ध्यान उत्तरी बिहार के अधवारा स्कीम की ओर ले जाना चाहता हूँ। कुछ दिन पहले डा० राव सीतामढ़ी जाकर अधवारा नदी का निरीक्षण किए थे और निरीक्षण करने के बाद भारत सरकार के पांच बड़े इंजीनियरों की उन्होंने एक कमेटी बनाई। कमेटी बनने के बाद एक रिपोर्ट भी उन्होंने तैयार कराई है। उस स्कीम के बनने से अधवारा नदी से प्रति वर्ष जो फ़्लड से बरबादी होती है वह बरबादी भी रूकेगी और उस स्कीम में सिंचाई की भी व्यवस्था की गई है। उस स्कीम में करीब 3 करोड़ रुपये लगेंगे। मैं आप के माध्यम से पुनः डा० राव का ध्यान उस बागमती स्कीम की ओर ले जाना चाहता हूँ और मैं उनसे अनुरोध करता हूँ कि शीघ्रातिशीघ्र उस अधवारा स्कीम के बनने की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। उस के लिए रुपये मिलने चाहिए जिससे अधवारा नदी से प्रति वर्ष जो बरबादी होती है वह बरबादी भी रूकेगी और उस इलाके की करीब 50 हजार एकड़ जमीन की सिंचाई भी होगी। इसलिए मैं पुनः डा० राव का ध्यान अधवारा की ओर ले जाना चाहता हूँ और मैं अनुरोध करता हूँ कि उस स्कीम के बनने की व्यवस्था शीघ्रातिशीघ्र होनी चाहिए।

श्री मुरुकी राज सैनी (देहरादून) : चेयरमैन महोदया, मैं उत्तर प्रदेश के उस जिले से आता हूँ जिसके उत्तर में शिवालिक पहाड़िया-हिमालय पर्वत लगा हुआ है। जब पर्वतों से पानी ज्यादा बहता है और नदियों के किनारों में नहीं समा पाता, उसी को बाढ़ कहते हैं। अगर उस पानी को

कंट्रोल कर लिया जाये तो वही पानी सिंचाई का साधन बन जाता है और हमारे यहां जो ड्राउट होते हैं, सूखा होता है, उसमें काम आ जाता करता है। उसी जिले के बराबर हरियाणा लगा हुआ है, जो पहले पंजाब का एक भाग था। उसमें भाखड़ा-नांगल प्राजक्ट है, उसके बनने से पहले हरियाणा में भी इसी तरह की समस्या थी, बाढ़ आती रहती थी, लेकिन आज वहां पर उस प्राजक्ट के पूरा हो जाने से, उन बाढ़ों को कंट्रोल कर लिया गया है।

यह समस्या तीन तरह की नदियों से है। बड़ी-बड़ी नदियां, जैसे गंगा, जमुना, महानदी-कावेरी, ब्रह्मपुत्र, जिसका आज काफी जिक्र हुआ है, इसी तरह से कुछ छोटी नदियां होती हैं, इनके बाद नदी-नाले होते हैं। ये नदी-नाले भी आबादी की जमीन का बहुत नुकसान करते हैं, फसलों को खराब करते हैं, पशुओं को भी मार देते हैं, आदमियों को भी मार देते हैं। इनको कंट्रोल करने की समस्या है—मेरे एक दोस्त थे, जो ओवरसीयर थे, उन्होंने यह सुझाव दिया था कि गंगा से जमुना तक बांध बनाया जाय, जैसे भाखड़ा-नांगल प्राजक्ट है। उन्होंने अमरीका में एक किताब पढ़ी थी, हमारी दामोदर घाटी योजना उसी के आधार पर बनाई गई थी। जब पहाड़ों से पानी बहुत तेजी से निकलता है तो छोटे नदी-नालों की सहायता से उस पानी को कंट्रोल में लाकर महरें निकाली जा सकती हैं, जिससे बिजली भी बन सकती है। इस तरह से इस पानी को जो हमारे देश में फालतू बरसता है, कंट्रोल कर लिया जाय तो सूखे के वक्त में उसको काम में लाया जा सकता है। हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब बहुत ही ऊंचे और योग्य इंजीनियर हैं। ऐसी बात नहीं है कि वह इन बातों को नहीं जानते हैं, लेकिन यह इतनी बड़ी समस्या है जो केवल राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर हल हो सकती है। इसके लिये शार्ट-टर्म योजना और लॉग-टर्म योजना, दोनों तरह की योजनायें बनाई जानी चाहिये।

हम हर साल इस समस्या पर यहां बहस करते हैं। मैं चाहता हूँ कि हाउस के अन्दर ऐसी

[श्री मुल्की राज सैनी]

नदियों के नाम आने चाहिये, ऐसे एरियाज के नाम आने चाहिये, जिसमें कहा जाय कि हमने इन एरियाज को कन्ट्रोल कर लिया है या अमुक नदियों को कन्ट्रोल कर लिया है। यहां पर पहले बाढ़ें आती थीं, लेकिन अब नहीं आई हैं। मैं अपने जिले की बात को लेता हूँ, वहां पर गंगा के कटाव का मसला आया। मैंने मिनिस्टर साहब के सामने उस समस्या को रखा—मैं ऋषिकेश का उल्लेख कर रहा हूँ। उसके बाद ऋषिकेश की योजना बनी। जब स्कीमें बन जाती हैं और उन पर काम किया जाता है तो बाढ़ का खतरा आगे के लिये कम हो जाता है।

इसी तरह से गंगा और जमुना के आसपास खादर की जमीन है। वहां के लोग बहुत गरीब हैं, उनकी जमीनों में पानी फैल जाता है, जमीन कट जाती है। दो तीन गांव विशेष रूप से प्रभावित हैं। न केन्द्र सरकार कुछ करना चाहती है और न उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार कुछ करना चाहती है। अभी हाल में एक बांध की मन्जूसी आई है। कुछ ऐसे गांव हैं जिनकी पिछले साल जमीन भी चली गई—एक गांव रंजीतपुर रायघटी है, जिसकी आबादी की सब जमीन चली गई, वहां के लोग उखड़कर छप्पर बांध पड़े हैं, न उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से कोई मदद मिल रही है न केन्द्र सरकार से कोई मदद मिल रही है। उनके लिये फौरन रिलीफ का इन्तजाम करना चाहिये। रिलीफ के पैसे का ठीक तरह से उपयोग नहीं हो रहा है। मुझे एक दफा एक एस० डी० एम० साहब के पास फ्लड कमेटी की मीटिंग में जाने का इतिफाक हुआ। उन्होंने एक एजेण्डा बनाया हुआ था। जब मैंने उनसे पूछा कि आप किस तरह से काम करते हैं तो उन्होंने कहा कि यह ऐसे ही हो जाता है, यह तो एक रस्मी चीज है, मीटिंग में दो चार बातें करलीं और काम खत्म। पहले से कोई इन्फार्मेशन नहीं ली जाती कि कहां पर पानी आया है, कहां कटाव हुआ है—इस चीज को सीरियसली लेना चाहिये और जो हमारे कर्मचारी और अधिकारी हैं उनसे काम लेने की सुब्यवस्थित योजना बनाई जानी चाहिये।

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO): I am most grateful to the hon. Members for participation in this debate and for giving us their personal experiences from various parts of the country. Unfortunately, I find that some of the hon. Members who made some comments are not here now and I do not know how the information I give will reach them.

Many hon. Members said that the statement I made in the House in the beginning of this session was not correct. I shall explain the position of the Central Government in this matter. We get statements from the States. We do not take information from the newspapers. We tabulate the information we get from the State Governments. Naturally when I laid the statement on the 31st July, full information was not available with the States and floods were occurring in some parts of the country in the middle of July and they were not able to collect full information. Since then they have sent their reports and I have got here the latest position. Hon. Members sometimes say that I am giving wrong information or misleading information. There is no intention of misleading anybody.

From the information I have got at present, the human lives lost in Assam were 85 and the loss suffered is Rs. 17.15 crores. The corresponding figures for Orissa are: 10 and Rs. 2.76 crores whereas for Kerala they are 29 and Rs. 2.5 crores. In West Bengal 21 lives were lost and the damage suffered is Rs. 1.89 crores. If I am not able to give full information when Members want it, I should be excused because we have to get it from the States.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY: You could have given this before the discussion started today; it would have been more helpful.

DR. K. L. RAO: I could have done that; I quite appreciate it. . . . (Interruptions) In Bihar the loss is Rs. 44 lakhs. The total number of human lives lost was 157, cattle, lost 17,000; and the total loss in the country is Rs. 26 crores.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: 800 died this year due to heat wave and 157 due to floods. What wonderful management!

DR. K. L. RAO: I shall circulate it to the hon. Members. As I said, our intention is to give the accurate figures, the latest figures to the hon. Members but this should be based on information received from the States, not on newspaper reports.

Many hon. Members also asked: what are the benefits of 25 years of Independence in this field? What have we done? Now in this country, out of the total land area, 200 million acres of land are prone and liable to flood havoc. Our national plan started in 1954 and by our efforts so far we have been able to protect about 60 million acres. We have also drawn up a future plan. It is my mistake also; this Ministry is not given to publicising itself. I think I should circulate to the hon. Members what our plan is. Our aim is, at the end of ten years, that is in 1981, to secure protection for another forty million acres, so that by 1981 at least fifty per cent of our area is free from flood havoc.

Many hon. Members were impatient and I quite appreciate their impatience because there is so much suffering caused by floods. But we cannot do anything; even if we have money it is not possible to get everything done immediately. It takes years and years. I submit that if we could protect fifty per cent of our land by 1981, we would have done very good work by giving absolute stability and safety against floods.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You went to China and you studied how they control floods. Where is the benefit out of it?

DR. K. L. RAO: I will come to that. I got benefited greatly by that visit, it is true.

In 1964 we appointed a committee of high-ranking ministers. They went round, studied the problem and submitted a report for the whole country costing so many crores of rupees. Last year, when the Ganga basin was heavily flooded and there was an unprecedented loss of nearly 600 crores, we drew up a plan. We have selected 20 projects. I

am glad the Government of India have sanctioned those projects and they are giving money outside the State plans for those projects. I must accept that the States do not attach much importance to flood control. For example, in West Bengal, they provided Rs. 2 crores for 5 years, which is absolutely meaningless. With a great amount of persuasion, we got it increased to Rs. 10 crores for 5 years, which also is inadequate. Of course, hon. members can change the policy and make it a central subject. But as matters stand today, flood control and irrigation are State subjects and we give block grants, loans, etc.

Now, it is not as if we are working in a vacuum. We have the entire picture before us and we know which are the projects which should be immediately taken up and completed. But there are some difficulties. In the whole country, there is practically no flood problem except in the Gangetic basin, Orissa and Brahmaputra. About Narmada etc., when you are enjoying the waters all the time, if in one year, there is some more water, it is not a big problem. Similarly I was surprised when some hon. members from Mysore talked about floods, because they require more water, not less. So, when you talk of the flood problem of India, it means the Ganga basin, Orissa and Brahmaputra. For Orissa, the Mahanadi has been controlled by the Hirakud dam and a number of embankments. Hon. members must accept it. There are three more rivers troubling Orissa—Brahmini, Baitarini and Subarnarekha. These three are the main river systems which cause floods; the others are minor. These three river systems cannot be controlled unless we construct certain projects, just as we have done for Mahanadi. It is my mistake because I did not keep members informed. We have taken complete steps for all the three rivers. Regarding Brahmini, some hon. members accused us saying that we are playing a trick by not sending back the estimates, etc. It is not so. In Brahmini for the Rangoli dam I specially requested the Chief Engineer to come here. I told the Chief Minister last week "it is very bad, here is money given to you for some project, why are you not taking advantage of it, why are you allowing time to pass like that." Then I requested the Chief Minister to send the Chief Engineer here. The Chief Engineer was here and I discussed it with him.

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

I quite appreciate Shri Deo's anxiety to reduce submission which is also our anxiety. The two alternative sites which were selected for this dam were not found suitable. Now the estimate are being prepared. I have requested the Chief Engineer to send the estimates as quickly as possible because there is no difficulty about sanction. The money is there. So, I want them to start the work. What is the use of accusing me here? Hon. Members must pursue the matter with State Government.

Similarly, if the Bhimkund project is completed, there will be no flood in Baitarani.

Coming to Subarnarekha, when Shri Samar Guha was speaking I thought he was going to beat me. No doubt, he attacked me but not the way I expected he would attack me. He has taken the position gallantly. Because, some years ago we had raised hopes that Subarnarekha would be controlled. Now we are thinking of some other plan. It is quite true that at that time there was a lot of trouble with Subarnarekha, causing loss and damage at Midnapore on one side and Balasore on the other. So, five years ago we thought of a plan. But when we sent the Plan to the Orissa Government, they said that these embankments would affect some heavily populated areas. Therefore, they did not accept it.

Then we were wondering what to do in the matter. Then I thought why not construct some dams above. I suggested to Orissa, Bihar and Bengal Governments to investigate the feasibility of some such dams. I am thankful to the Bihar Government that they have done the investigation. Shri Daschowdhury said that I do not visit places. I try to do my duty conscientiously. As soon as I heard that the Bihar Government has drawn up a scheme, I went to the site to finalise all the details for the two dams. I am happy to say that these two dams are extremely good. When they are completed 40 per cent of the Subarnarekha water will be held back. If that is done, I am quite sure there will not be any more damages by breaches in the embankments.

I have requested the Bihar Government to send the estimates as quickly as possible. As soon as they are received, we will see that they are sanctioned. If in combination with that, there are embankments then there is possibility of breaches getting very much reduced. These are our plans for Orissa.

SHRI K. N. TIWARY (Bettiah) : What will be the expenditure for the construction of these two dams and how long will it take to complete them?

DR. K. L. RAO : These two dams in Bihar will be multi-purpose projects. They are in regions where there is no irrigation at present and no water even for industries. Jamshedpur is about 50 miles lower down. When these projects are completed, we will completely shut back the water and store up that water for irrigation, for industries and so on. It has got magnificent value. They are multi-purpose in character and they will prove economical. It should be possible to complete the dams in three or four years if money is available.

AN HON. MEMBER : You wanted one dam in West Bengal.

DR. K. L. RAO : That has not been investigated so far. When these dams are completed, they will store 40 per cent of the water.

SHRI K. N. TIWARY : My apprehension is that you give very low estimates in the beginning and then they go on increasing the estimate, as it happened in the case of other dams. Then, they do not complete them within the time fixed as a result of which also the cost goes up. They go on asking for more and more money and you are not in a position to supply them money. Then there is delay and the project is not completed. That is the whole difficulty.

DR. K. L. RAO : That is quite true. The Chairman of the Estimates Committee is very correct in his observations. We will bear it in mind and we will try to scrutinise the estimates carefully and see that we remain within the amount.

So far as Orissa is concerned, the hon. Members said something. If nothing happens, what can I do? As far as Orissa is concerned, the plan is completely worked out. They have to construct those two dams and the embankment. There is no more problem for Orissa. The hon. Members from Orissa need not be angry with me. We have got a completely worked out scheme. It is for the hon. Members to get it implemented. We will also try to give money. Two of the projects have already been sanctioned. It is for them to do. Everybody is quite anxious about it.

Now, I come to the problem of Ganga basin. As I said, there are two problems. One is about Ganga basin and the other is Brahmaputra. Ganga basin is a very important one because 40 per cent of our country's population is there. It is a heavily dense population living on the banks of the river and its tributaries. We have been trying to identify some areas urgently where the work should be done. We have identified some areas. We have also taken up some projects. Quite a large amount of work has been done. But that is not enough. I quite appreciate that. The problem is one of controlling the river in a very densely populated area where you cannot do much by way of conventional method of storage or anything like that. Of course, if the Nepal dam at Karnali comes in, then there is no doubt that we will be controlling the floods of Ghaghar. But that being in another country's territory, we cannot say when it will come and what will happen. Of course, we have agreed to buy power from them. It is going to be a very good power project of 2 million KW of power. We have not heard from them further. If his Majesty's Government of Nepal takes up the work, it will be quite good. Otherwise, you cannot construct a dam on Ghaghar.

The same thing applies to Rapti. Eastern U. P. is subject to floods. This is the reason for Ghaghar and Rapti floods. There is no dam site in U. P. territory. That is only in Jalkund, that is, Nepal territory. That is the difficulty.

After all, we wanted to make a very serious attempt and, therefore, we have started a comprehensive plan and the Ganga Flood Control Commission has been set up. Its headquarters are at Patna. The Commission is paid for by the Government of India. The works are paid for by the State Governments. But the drawing of plans and the general preparing of comprehensive plan is done by the Government of India at their own expense. We are trying to make a beginning. Every state has been doing quite a good amount of flood control work. They have also been planning. But there has not been a concerted action taken together. This is the first time we are trying to do now. The commission has been set up and, I hope, we will have some good results out of it.

Fortunately, there has been not much of any serious damage so far because the floods have

not occurred there. What has happened this year is that the cloud has behaved in a very erratic way. The monsoon clouds started in Kerala in fact much earlier and caused a heavy damage to the extent of Rs. 2½ crores. Rains fall in the month of May. Then there was a gap. In the next month all the clouds went straight to Assam. In the middle of June there were floods in that area. Generally clouds go to Bengal and turn towards north-west. The trough of the depression travels northwest along Ganga. But this time the first wave went straight across and caused floods in that part. It is a very interesting thing. In the monsoon season if floods occur in Assam, that means, there will be drought in the rest of India. If the floods stop in Assam during their onward March, that means, there will be no more drought in India. That is what has exactly happened now. On August 4 we found a depression in Khulna in Bangladesh and then suddenly the depression turned around and reached Allahabad this morning. That is why the whole of north India is having a good rainfall.

What I want to submit is that these two are different systems—Brahmaputra is different from Ganga. Brahmaputra gets water one or two months earlier. The peaks do not coincide. Normally Brahmaputra must get water two months earlier. But if it gets floods in the monsoon season, that means, the rest of India will have drought. Therefore, we are trying to prepare a good plan for the Ganga Basin. I do not want to take much of the time of the hon. House. I would say that a large amount of work has been done. But there are some difficult spots—Chithoni, for example, in Uttar Pradesh and Piprahi in Bihar. So many crores have been spent. Still it is a very difficult spot. We have not conquered the river at that place. It is proving to be a very difficult spot. The river has got its own vagaries—either it bends itself or it begins to persist in that. It is an engine of destruction if it is not controlled. In Bihar also it is like that. Shri Chandrika Prasad was very mild today. He is not here now. I expected a big bomb from him. His constituency is being eroded by Ganga. We are trying to protect it. We have spent nearly a crore of rupees, and some more crores are required. Because there are a large number of people and we cannot get the land once the land is eroded, my advice was to spend one or two more crores of rupees to protect that area. But I understand that the U. P. Government

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

has taken a different view; they propose to retire at that place. What I want to submit is that I have told them that they should try to protect that area. As I have said, there are some spots in Ganga Basin which are difficult. We are trying to control them.

Then we come to Bihar. Bihar is a drought area and also a flood area. The two extremes are there. Today, of course, it has got the rains; otherwise, there is a complete confusion there. (*Interruptions*). So far we have not had any problem in Bihar this year. So I am not going to talk about Bihar.

Then I come to Brahmaputra. Brahmaputra problem is a very difficult problem. . .

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH : What about taking over by the Centre of Gandak, Kosi and Bagmati projects? The Bihar Government has submitted a proposal.

DR. K. L. RAO : I shall come to that latter. We are talking of floods now. I have heard. Shri Kotoki's speech with great feelings: I also share with him whatever feelings he has expressed. It is quite true that one would get disgusted, but what is to be done? Brahmaputra is the most difficult problem in the whole world from the point of floods. A very narrow valley of 50 miles. The Brahmaputra basin is only 50 miles wide with the mighty tributaries Subansari, Manas etc. and rainfall of 100 to 150 inches in the catchment area.

SHRI LILADHAR KOTOKI : All these we know. Will you kindly confine yourself to the simple question? Since the constitution of the Brahmaputra Commission, how many projects have been taken up? That question only you please answer.

DR. K. L. RAO : I will deal with it.

I am dealing with the whole problem threadbare. What I want to say is that the Brahmaputra is a very difficult and an extremely difficult problem. Now, realising, that, after the beginning of the Fourth Plan we have spent nearly Rs. 30 crores and another Rs. 30 crores we are spending in the Fifth Plan.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI : The Assam Government has given Rs. 15

crores for the Brahmaputra Control Commission. Altogether only Rs. 15 crores, not Rs. 30 crores has been spent; and that too, after very much strained accounting by the Assam Government.

DR. K. L. RAO : Let me explain the problem.

Then, we felt that this being a river—Mr. Kotoki knows about it but I thought the hon. Members might like me to talk something about it, therefore, I am explaining—with very difficult problems, we consulted a number of foreign experts. Generally, I don't believe in taking advice from foreign experts and we try to solve our own problems. But, in this case, we found it necessary to take any advice that is useful to us. So, we took the advice of foreign experts and we have sent a number of teams there. Then we thought that what is required is a systematic effort to investigate and undertake as many of them as possible and try to see what we can do.

The main river, Brahmaputra, coming from Tibet carries much less water and most of the water is added within the territory of Assam. Therefore, the tributaries are more important and the control of the tributaries is the most important. We thought the only way of controlling the tributaries is by construction of dams and with this idea we established the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission. We have set up the Commission. We have established the Technical Committees. We have established everything connected with that and these are all working under the State Ministry. Now, so far they have not finalised any dam site. Or course, the dams have got to be very high as the rivers have steep slopes. They have to be nearly 800' high. We have requested the geologists also to come in and so far, they have not investigated any dam site. The only site that has been finalised is the Pagladia dam, and compared to others, this is a smaller river, but it gives a lot of trouble in that area. This one they have investigated and have recommended a detention basin with a storage of 0.1 million acre feet, a small storage, but it is very helpful for the river passes through densely populated area and creates a lot of difficulties and this project report we are now awaiting formally from the State Government to send it and as soon as it comes, we will have it sanctioned and I think after the monsoon is over, we will start the work.

But the main thing is the question of having a thorough investigation and trying to see how it fits in and in what way it helps. That is how the work has to be done. The Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission has been working now for a little over two years and I myself feel that they should have done much more work. One of the main difficulties is to get suitable people to fill the senior posts. We are now trying to do our best and to push on with the work of the Commission. Whatever it is, I am afraid, I must say this, I expected much more. At least, I wanted them to finalise one dam.

SHRI LILADHAR KOTOKI : The Commission started functioning from the 24th of June, 1970.

DR. K. L. RAO : About 2 years, I said. There is no use in being angry with me. You have got a big child in Assam. What can I do ? If you tell me what I can do, certainly, I am prepared to do that.

The hon. Member, Shri Kotoki talked about embankments on the Kopili river. I do not know why the embankment could not be made perfect and why the flood authorities did not fight for it there. It is a very small river. What can we do from here ? The local people must take interest. I have said, the management is wrong there. Kopili is a minor river, it is not like the Brahmaputra, where it is of a vast area.

There are various difficulties and there are various problems in terms of taking up these projects. The questions arise, what can the State do, what can the Centre do and so on. We have gone into these various aspects. It is now nearly at the highest level for taking a decision. Merely by taking over, one will not solve the problem. I want to assure the House about that. I will get more abuse ; that is all that will happen.

SHRI DHARNIDHAR DAS : Where lies the obstruction in taking it over ?

DR. K. L. RAO : I said, this matter is now at the highest level. It is under very serious consideration, in other words. Some legislation is also necessary for this. All those facts will have to be taken into account. The main point is not about taking over. The main point is that the people who are there also must work together as one unit. The whole

system must work. They must fight flood. Everybody must fight it.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI : How do you expect the people to fight when you yourself have said that this is a river which is incapable of being fought ? You have said that the Brahmaputra is a river which cannot be tackled.

DR. K. L. RAO : What I meant was this. There are banks. Those banks have got to be protected at the time of the floods coming on. That is the time when all of us must cooperate. That is what I meant.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI : There are 27,000 miles of embankments.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am standing. I have to make a request that you may please address the Chair. Then you will not be disturbed.

DR. K. L. RAO : I want to be quite clear about this. What I meant was, there are situations when, with the best of intentions, a bank is going to be breached. At that time the only way in which we can protect these banks is by all of us actually cooperating together. That is what I meant. I did not mean anything further than that.

I was talking about the Brahmaputra. The North Bengal rivers like the Tista and all others which form tributaries of the Brahmaputra will all be taken up together along with the Brahmaputra. Shri B.K. Daschowdhury has said that nothing has been done and Jalpaiguri is under water and so on. Jalpaiguri will be under water till the Karla diversion work is completed. Money has been given by the Centre. Unless the work is done, how can he get the result ? It is under construction, and it will take probably another year before it is completed.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : What is the money sanctioned for the North Bengal Flood Control Commission ?

DR. K. L. RAO : They have given Rs. 1 crore for the Karla diversion work.

So, I would like to submit that the Brahmaputra is receiving utmost attention, and if there has been no effective solution for it, it is because of the intrinsic difficulty of the problem. I

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

also concede that we should put in more and more efforts in order to tackle this problem.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : What are the measures taken to control the North Bengal floods? There have been recurring wave after wave of floods in North Bengal. The North Bengal Floods Control Commission has been constituted. As I have been told, and as I have already stated it before also in the course of my speech, sufficient funds have not been released by the Centre. I would like to know whether any special project has been taken up there.

DR. K. L. RAO : The main point is that the flood control work and the irrigation projects are all part of the State plan. It is not so only for West Bengal but for every State. Every State has got to adjust it. Money is given as block grant or block loan, and out of that, each State has to meet the flood problem, unless the National Development Council decides otherwise. But, in spite of that, they have given some extra money for West Bengal. They have given Rs. 10 crores during the last two years or perhaps Rs. 11 crores, for the lower Damodar and some projects like that, of which the Karla project is also one.

SHRI N. R. LASKAR (Karimganj) : What is the latest position about the Barak river?

DR. K. L. RAO : I am glad that he has raised that point. The Baraka is also a very difficult problem for us. It is not a problem from the engineering point of view. But it is difficult from the point of view of submission and so on. Very thorough investigations have been done, and we have decided on a site, and we have got the estimates ready and all that. The only problem is that some parts of another State will be submerged and this has been the difficult problem. So, I discussed it with the Chief Minister of Assam the other day. He has written a letter to that State. I shall be going there in October and we shall be spending about a week in that area. We have written that the neighbouring State also may join there to finalise the discussions. That is where the matter stands.

The lady Chairman wanted to know something about Lucknow. I think I should answer her question. The Gomati is a small river indeed, but now and then, every ten years, it

causes trouble; last year, it gave much more trouble. There are some very important towns located on Gomati. There is not only Lucknow but also Jaunpur and so on. The Government of India are giving extra funds in order to protect these towns and the necessary works have been taken up. There is no difficult engineering work there in Lucknow. There are a number of old bridges there which have got a limited span, and we have got to break them all and put the bridge right across; then, there is a weir which has to be demolished and it has to be replaced by a barrage with shutters. It is not difficult from the engineering point of view. That work is also being done. I am not sure of how far they have done it, but I think that it will take another year. We only hope that the Gomati will behave till that time in the ordinary way.

I think I have tried to answer as many points as hon. Members have raised. I want to submit once again that we are trying to do our best in the matter having regard to the financial constituent. It is not as if we have thousands of crores at our disposal for this purpose. We do realise there are some difficult problems. I will consider it a great privilege if hon. members would come round and offer any more suggestions they have. I will only be too happy to consider them as best I can.

SHRI N. P. YADAV : What about the Adhorvara irrigation and flood control scheme in Muzaffarpur district in Bihar?

DR. K. L. RAO : This passes through a very densely populated area. I think the best way to deal with it is to dredge the river. So far we have not got any estimate from the Bihar Government. I again will get in touch with them. It is worthwhile to dredge it. It will save a lot of congestion in that area.

SHRI LILADHAR KOTOKI : I would request the hon. Minister to give a categorical answer to one question. I have already referred to the statement of the Prime Minister in this house regarding the setting up of the Brahmaputra Flood Control Commission. I know for certain that work is being held up for want of finance. Last year, they approached the Centre with schemes costing Rs. 11.5 crores, but after a lot of higgling they got Rs. 3 crores and then Rs. 2 crores. I want to know whether the Commission's schemes for controlling the Brahmaputra is going to be financed entirely by the Central Government or not.

DR. K. L. RAO : I am not aware of any financial constraint at the moment. There were some arguments and so on. Finally the Government of India agreed to release Rs. 30 crores including the amount for purchase of dredgers. Unfortunately, the arrival of dredgers is delayed. Otherwise, they would have come by this time. Whatever was agreed upon is being placed at their disposal.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI :
Could not the dredgers lying unutilised in Farakka be sent to Assam ?

DR. K. L. RAO : In the Brahmaputra, we require a different type of dredger. They are of a gigantic type, not the small type in Farakka. Actually they were ordered, but the delivery is delayed.

17.53 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the
Clock on Wednesday, August, 9, 1972]
Sravana 16, 1894 (Saka)*
