

Shri B. S. Murthy (Eluru): I want one clarification.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is the point.

An Hon. Member: You may speak.

Shri B. S. Murthy: I am not speaking. I am only putting a question.

May I know whether the Minister is aware that there are several of these drivers and conductors who have been making requests that some facilities should be provided to them for their conveyance from their respective residences to the place where they must take out the buses? May I know whether the Minister will see that at least a special bus is provided to pick them up at four o'clock or five o'clock in the morning so that their inconvenience will be lessened?

Shri Alagesan: I have to inform that staff buses are provided to bring the operating staff from their houses. There are enough number of buses to bring these employees.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, there is a half-hour discussion.

An Hon. Member: We cannot be taking it for another ten minutes.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We will take it up and disperse five minutes earlier. There is no harm.

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): In the light of the statement.....

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): It was fixed for 12-45.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now we have finished this. Am I to proceed then with the Estate Duty Bill?

Ch. Ranbir Singh (Rohtak): Yes, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: If I take up the Estate Duty Bill, I will have to close it at 12-45. We are at 12-35 now. If the hon. Minister has any inconvenience, I will put it off to 12-45.

Shri M. C. Shah: The Finance Minister is going to reply. He is not here. Anyhow, I am here. We may continue.

Ch. Ranbir Singh: May I speak, Sir?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: No. I will take up this half-hour discussion. There are barely ten minutes.

FAMINE AND DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN MADRAS

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): In the light of the statement of the Chief Minister of Madras State in the Madras Legislative Assembly in March last that the famine conditions and the suffering of the people had assumed very serious dimensions throughout the State that his Government could not cope with it and that the national plan for the State had been completely upset, I asked question No. 1362 which was unanswered on the floor of this House on the 16th April, 1953.

I had asked for information about the conditions and the nature of the famine and drought which made the Chief Minister make that desperate statement referred to above, and also the measures particularly adopted or proposed to be adopted for preventing or mitigating the situation. The answer given by the hon. Food Minister confined itself to a mere and bare statement of the districts and areas affected by the famine. Thus this discussion arises.

It is an admitted fact that the areas presently affected are the 13 districts of Tamil Nad. There are other areas about which I am not referring. The present malady has exclusively concentrated itself over the 13 districts of Tamil Nad, of which Tiruchirappally and Ramnad are the worst affected, and in Tiruchirappally my constituency of Pudukkottai is the worst affected. I made a detailed reference to the development of the famine conditions in my district in my speech on the Finance Bill last month and I emphasised the desirability of the urgent need for a revision of the policy of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to attend to and concede the immediate needs by permanent facilities of water for drinking and irrigation purposes for reclaiming once-cultivated lands but since lying fallow, to be provided with irrigation facilities instead of devoting attention substantially to reclaim new lands by mechanical cultivation.

The present famine conditions are not the creation of this year or the previous year. They had appeared a decade before, gradually developed without interruption and acquired