

I would also like to say something about the Tehri Dam. I support what my friend has said. There are reports that there were some cracks which have been filled up quietly and the tell-tale marks have been obliterated. I suggest a proper and thorough enquiry should be made on this.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the last month's earthquake had caused devastating effect in the Uttar Kashi district and the hilly regions of Uttar Pradesh. Sir, the Winter Season has started and the people are homeless. Men, women and children are suffering. They need immediate relief and rehabilitation.

But, unfortunately, as we have been told, the Government of Uttar Pradesh is doing it in a partism manner. It is a human cause and it should not be done in a partisan manner. The Zila Parishad was not involved in the relief operation work; it is being done by the party workers. The Government's relief operation is being done by the party workers. The Central Government, which has given assistance to the Uttar Pradesh Government to combat the situation, should come out with a statement what assistance has been provided to the Uttar Pradesh Government for this purpose and how it has been distributed to the people. What action has been taken?

MR. SPEAKER : You please take your seat now.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : My request is that it is not a question of this party or that party; it is a question of human sufferings. So, all human sufferings ought to be combined together. (*Interruptions*) The Government should discuss it with all the political parties here. The Zila Parishad should be involved in this process. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri, please take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : It is not necessary for you to speak again. I am directing the Government to make a statement on this issue. I must bring to the notice of this House that the Government has already indicated that they are going to make a statement on this point. But I would request the Minister to convey to the concerned Minister that the points which are raised here may also be taken into consideration leaving aside the controversial part of it.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Khanduri, you again got up. It is not necessary for you to speak again.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kot-tayam) : The rubber cultivators of Kerala are facing a serious problem. The price of natural rubber has been reduced; it has fallen to Rs. 80-70. The cost of production of rubber is very high. Last year, the rubber imported by the Government was released to the market. This has also caused a serious development in the rubber industry. The price of rubber fixed last year was not at all sufficient. The rubber cultivators have submitted a representation to the Minister; they also met him and apprised him of the serious development. I request the Minister to take necessary urgent steps to tackle this problem. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : If one hon. Member has spoken, it is enough.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : The Minister is here. I request him to reply to these points, because it is a serious problem

being faced by the rubber cultivators in Kerala.

SHRI P C THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : This is a rubber sheet.

MR. SPEAKER : You should not have brought it to the House. You are flouting the rules.

SHRI P C THOMAS: This is a very serious problem. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : May I request to the hon. Minister to control his Members. They do not understand what they are trying to do here. Please take your seat. You are holding the House to ransom. Your matter has been raised. The Minister is very kindly getting up and answering it. And even then you want to raise the same thing.

SHRI P C THOMAS: I am only supplementing what he has stated.

MR. SPEAKER : Even after the Minister has responded immediately, you want to speak. Mr. Thomas, you are not going on record.

(*Interruptions*)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Mr. P.C. Thomas, Prof. K.V. Thomas and other hon. Members were with me when I visited Cochin and Kottayam. Mr. Ramesh Chennithala was also there.

Immediately, I directed that the STC will start buying RMA-5 grade rubber although it is not part of the price support scheme. We have so far purchased all the RMA-5 grade rubber which has been offered, about 924 tonnes. I want to assure the House and through this House the growers of Kerala

that every single ounce or kilo of RMA- 5 grade rubber which is offered to STC depots will be purchased by STC. Secondly, yesterday, although the trigger point has not been reached, in view of the representations made by the hon. Members, I have also directed STC to buy RMA-4 grade rubber, which is a superior quality rubber. Every single kilo RMA-4 grade rubber which is offered will be purchased by STC.

There is a problem of ungraded rubber. There is no support price scheme for ungraded rubber. I have spoken to the Chief Minister of Kerala. The STC will help. The best course is, ungraded rubber, which is lower quality rubber, which is about 6000 to 8000 Metric Tonnes which is causing a problem, should be purchased by the Rubber Marketing Federation of Kerala. I have spoken to the Chief Minister of Kerala. I am willing to help. The Chief Minister also said that he would look into the matter. I think the problem is well under control. Every kilo of RMA-4 and RMA-5 grade rubber will be purchased by the STC. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, Probably the hon. Members are agitated. I request you to meet them and hear what they have to say and do the needful.

(*Interruptions*)*

MR. SPEAKER : I am not going to hear anything. It is not going on record.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : I am not going to hear. If you are unable to understand what I have said I cannot help you.

(*Interruptions*)*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing of what he says will go on record.