

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: We accept what is coming from the hon. Prime Minister. Certainly we respect him. Only thing is that certain reports have been circulated in the Press and it would have been better if there had been a denial earlier. But once it has come from the Prime Minister, naturally, there is no question of controverting him factually. We accept him and we respect him. It would have been better, and probably that is what is being mentioned, if this has been denied earlier. Then, these things would not have been raised. But, speaking for myself, I accept him.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Chatterjee, it is very nice of you and very dignified of you to have made a statement and I think this should be the attitude of all Members of this House. Generally, when things appear in the newspaper—and we have so many newspapers—it is not always possible to give explanation to all that is happening and that is why we have been saying that we do not depend on what is given in the newspaper. But if we raise anything on the floor of the House, we shall have not only to depend on what has happened in the newspaper but we shall have to say that we stand by it; we know that it is correct and we taken the responsibility. Otherwise, we do not do it.

Anyway, we would not like to prolong the discussion on this point and I don't think it is necessary. Hon. Prime Minister on the floor of the House has stated what he had to say and Members should be more than satisfied.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: May I have a permission to say something? Not only that, I think the Prime Minister has given directions to all the Members of the Cabinet to furnish all the details of their possession and their relations.

So, it is all beyond any doubt and one should adhere to that. I think everything will be taken care of.

SHRISOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I want to know whether the Ministers would like to

share some property!

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Yes, why not!

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we have a good information.

16.01 hrs.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

Launch of Second Indian Remote Sensing Satellite, IRS-1B

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO): Nine hundred kilometres above the surface of the earth, India's second indigenous Remote Sensing Satellite is circling the earth. IRS-1B was launched successfully at 19 minutes past noon today, Indian time, from Baikanour Cosmodrome in the Soviet Union.

All systems and subsystems of IRS-1B satellite have been designed and fabricated indigenously. It weighs less than a thousand kilograms and carries three sets of state-of-the-art imaging cameras.

Our nation's most experienced hands are controlling the satellite at the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) Spacecraft Control Centre at Peenya, Bangalore. This is connected to other ISRO tracking ground stations at Lucknow and Mauritius. During the initial phases of the mission, ground stations of foreign space agencies located in the USSR, Kenya, USA and Germany are assisting in monitoring the performance of the satellite.

Remote sensing is an important area of space applications all over the world today. For a developing country with diverse geological features, it is critically relevant in providing vital inputs for the management of our vast land and ocean resources.

The successful launch of IRS-1B marks our commitment to use space technology to provide operational services on a continued and assured basis in the vital areas of natural resources management. It also represents a continuation of our commitment to U\$E science for peaceful, constructive and developmental ends which can be translated into areas of tangible benefit for our people. We are determined, with the support of our Parliament and people, not only to preserve the position of Indian science at the frontiers of professional excellence and international recognition, but to make it a vital instrument in fulfilling national needs.

I am sure the House would wish to join me in extending our felicitations to the Scientists, Engineers and supporting staff of the Indian Space Research Organisation whose dedicated efforts have brought this great success to the nation. This reaffirms our pride in being Indian.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE
(Bolpur): Sir, we all join in the felicitations.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE
(Dum Dum): Sir, we look forward to that date when it is launched from our own soil.

16.03 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL)
1991-92 CONTD.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MIN-
ISTRY OF FOOD MINISTRY OF RURAL
DEVELOPMENT.—CONTD.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Amar Roypradhan
may continue his speech.

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN (Cooch
Behar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am happy that at
least—though it is late now, the hon. Prime
Minister has come forward and clarified the
news item which was published.

The Government is not at all serious in
implementing the scheme for distributing the
surplus lands to the people who are landless
labourers and so on. I think, the Government
should take necessary action now, so that
the lands can be distributed within a short
period of time.

16.04 hrs.

[RAO RAM SINGH *in the Chair*]

Already, we are late and we should not
further delay it. When we were demanding
the Crop Insurance the other day in the
Question Hour, the hon. Agriculture Minister
Shri Balram Jakhar said: "We would like to
have the Crop Insurance. But what would be
its pattern? How will it be implemented?
What would be the area?" In this connection,
I do not like to make any remarks at the
moment.

Only through you I would like to request
the hon. Agriculture Minister to convene a
meeting of all the agricultural organisations,
kisan organisations and take their consen-
sus regarding the crop insurance scheme.
My suggestion in this respect is that the area
must be a gram panchayat level, not the
block level; block level is too a vast area. If
there is drought, it may be throughout the
block area, but the floods and the hail storm
may not be throughout the block area; it may
be in a particular part of the whole area. So,
a gram panchayat level area should be taken
into account.

Regarding the minimum wages, the
conditions of the agricultural workers in our
country are the worst. If you go through the
Pande and Das Gupta Committee Report,
you will find that they are not getting the
minimum wages, particularly in Madhya
Pradesh and Orissa. They are not working
throughout the year. So, I request and
demand that a comprehensive legislation
should be brought in such a manner so that
the agricultural workers can get work through-
out the year and the minimum wages must
be guaranteed to them.