

ley; the rest 9/10 is a hill area. The road is just near Indo-Myanmar borders in the hill district of Ukhrul where, about 25 kms., belt the Army does not allow the PWD people to enter and do their works. They chase away the PWD people while they do their work.

Since a large portion of Manipur is a hill area, exploitation of the hill areas is very much important for the development of Manipur. The State Government is taking a very keen interest in the development of hill areas. But now the Army which is posted on the Indo-Myanmar border is preventing the construction of roads.

We all know that the road is very important for economic development. It is recognised all over world. In this connection, Sir, The Chief Minister of Manipur has already written to the Defence Minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav. However, no reply has come yet.

If this situation is allowed to continue, the laying of roads in the hill areas would come to a stop. Already, in the wake of this obstruction, the construction of more than 250 kms. of road covering seven roads has been affected. Therefore, while drawing the attention of the hon. Defence Minister this, through House I would like him to look into this matter. This is an undeveloped area. In the context of the Common Minimum Programme of this Government, attention should be paid to such backward areas.

Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): Shri S. Niraikulathan. There should be no disturbance now. It is his maiden submission.

Need to Enhance the Financial Assistance under Jeevan Dhara Scheme to SC/ST and Backward Classes Farmers

***SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN (Tamil Nadu):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I begin my maiden speech, I express my

*English translation of the original speech delivered in Tamil.

profound gratitude to my revered leader Dr. Puratchi Thaivi, who has sent a commoner like me to this august House. But for the benevolence of the General Secretary of AIADMK, Goddess of the poor, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and our guardian angel, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Annai Jayalalitha, I would not have been in this hallowed assembly of hon'ble Members.

I also thank the Chairperson for permitting me to make my special mention. Sir, I wish to refer to the Million Wells scheme known as Jeevan Dhara introduced by the centre for helping the poor farmers belonging to SC/ST and backward classes. Though this scheme is generally beneficial to the farmers, I feel it my duty to bring to the notice of the centre, the necessity to modify this scheme for better results.

Under this scheme, Rs. 40,000 is given as financial assistance to small and marginal farmers for digging up open well for irrigation. This amount is generally insufficient for constructing a well for the purpose of irrigation. Only in areas where the water table is on a very upper level, a 40-feet deep open well can provide water for irrigation.

But in dry regions like Ramanathapuram district, 40-feet deep open wells constructed under the Jeevan Dhara scheme remain dry and the disappointed farmers are unable to cultivate their lands without water for irrigation. Even the report of the geologists of Ramanathapuram district says that water can be obtained only if a tube well of more than 150 feet is sunk into the open well. The report states, "after completing the well, bore well may be sunk upto a depth of 30 to 40 meter below the open well for better yield". This is the report of the Assistant Director of Geology of Ramanad district.

Sir, I am only trying to point out as to how both, the spirit of the scheme and the order of the Government are contrary to each other. Because of this, small and

marginal farmers of Ramanathapuram district belonging to SC/ST and backward classes are not able to derive the benefits of Jeevan Dhara scheme, even though they are getting rupees 40 thousand financial assistance. These poor farmers do not have money for sinking 150 feet deep tube well in the open well for obtaining water. One can see a number of 40 feet deep dry wells in my district of Ramanathapuram. Therefore, Jeevan Dhara scheme has remained a mirage for the farmers of Ramanathapuram district.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I wish to make a few suggestions to the Government for making this scheme more useful and beneficial to the farmers. While I say this, I am reminded of the inaction of the present D.M.K. Government on the matter. The D.M.K. Government in Tamil Nadu is busy celebrating its 100 days in office. Therefore, I appeal to the centre to enhance the financial assistance from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 80,000 at least.

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): Sir, I am on a point of order....I am on a point of order, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI Md. SALIM): Mr. Niraikulathan, just a minute.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN: Sir, he can't comment upon what is going on there with regards to programmes and other things. The Chief Minister has said something there with regards to certain programmes and all that. He is referring to that. But he can't do that here.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI Md. SALIM): Without referring to anyone who is not in the House, please conclude your speech.

SHRI R.K. KUMAR: (Tamil Nadu): It is not an accusation on anybody.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): What is this? If you want you can reply to it later.

SHRI S. MUTHUMANI (Tamil Nadu): He is only referring to the problems of poor farmers in the rural areas....(Interruptions)

SHRI S. NIRAikulATHAN: Sir, the amount of 40 thousand rupees for digging up an open well was fixed several years before. Due to inflation and price rise the cost of construction of a well has escalated. Therefore, this financial assistance should be raised to at least Rs. 80,000. The Government should give the farmers the option to have either open well or tube well according to the requirement of the area. While open wells can be constructed in areas where the sub-soil water is in upper level, farmers in dry areas like Ramanathapuram district should be allowed to sink tube wells. Then alone farmers belonging to SC/ST and Backward classes would be able derive the benefits of this scheme.

Our hon'ble Prime Minister hails from peasant's family. He knows the difficulties and hardships of farmers. So, I am hopeful he would modify the *Jeevan Dhara* scheme and enhance the financial assistance under the scheme. I urge upon the Government to make the announcement in this regard during the current session, itself. With these words I conclude.

Devastation Caused by the Floods in Bihar

श्री नरेण यादव (बिहार): धन्यवाद उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार का ध्यान बाढ़ की ओर आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ। बिहार में बाढ़ और उससे विनाश यह पिछले वर्ष से ही प्रारम्भ हो चुका है। पिछले वर्ष 55 में से 26 जिले बाढ़ से प्रभावित थे और इस वर्ष भी 55 में से 25 जिले बाढ़ से प्रभावित हो चुके हैं। पूरे 25 जिलों के 5000 गाँवों के लोग आज सड़क पर बा रेल लाईन के बगल में अपनी किंगी जी रहे हैं और कई तटबंध टूट चुके हैं। आज गाँवों के लोगों के सामने गंगा और कोसी में आई बाढ़ से भीषण समस्या उत्पन्न हो गई है और मैं आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि केन्द्रीय सरकार की तरफ से जो सहायता जाती है, बाढ़ तो आती है एक साथ या तीन माह का बाढ़ का समय है जून के मध्य से जुलाई, अगस्त, सितम्बर तक लेकिन