

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: I am repeating the same. What we want to know is whether you are ready to revise the prices or not. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: Jaswant Singhji was the Finance Minister for a long *lime*. *(Interruptions)*... Our Finance Ministry is much better than what it was during your tenure. *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, that matter is over. Mr. Venkaiah Naidu.

Need to provide immediate relief to people affected by floods in States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Sir, the Minister could have responded immediately.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That subject is over.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: It is also a burning issue. It was raised in the House earlier and a notice was also given. It is not that we have suddenly raised this issue in the zero hour. MSP is a burning issue. Let them take it seriously. Let them fix the price at the earliest. What is required is, not a mere discussion, but a decision with regard to increase in the MSP.

Sir, I am thankful to you for having permitted me to raise another important issue which is agitating the people of this country particularly in the States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat. A serious situation has arisen due to floods in these parts of the country. In Karnataka, as you are aware, in Belgaum, and in Bhagalkot to Gulbarga, there is a serious situation in this entire area because Maharashtra has released water, which is affecting almost 100 Taluks. Many people have lost their lives. A lot of cattle have also been lost. Many of the thatched and temporary houses have collapsed. Even in Andhra Pradesh, the situation is more serious today. Sixteen districts of the States have been affected by floods. The level of water has increased in the Godavari River and it has reached the dangerous level. It has crossed 60 feet mark. I am told that if it increases further, water

will enter into the Rajahmundry city which is one of the important cities of the State. Water has entered even in Bhadrachalam, where there is the temple of Lord Rama. Agricultural crops on thousands of acres of land have been affected. Cattle have also been affected. Poor people's houses have totally collapsed. Many people have died in Andhra Pradesh also. Same is the case in Gujarat. Water has entered in the Surat city. In this area, there are a lot of factories. This area has totally submerged. Water has also entered into the Baroda city. Sir, today morning, we saw water even in the Capital of the State. The situation is very grim in Surat and Baroda districts of Gujarat. I am told that 10 lakh cusecs of water has been released by Maharashtra which is causing havoc there. Even my Karanataka counterparts were also saying that they have been affected because water has been released by Maharashtra. In Andhra Pradesh also, the Godavari is overflowing. A lot of damage has already been done. With your permission, Sir, I would like to show some pictures here. I am not quoting anything else. Kindly see the pictures of floods in Anadhra Pradesh. This is the Godavari Bridge. Water is almost touching the Godavari Bridge. This is something which has never happened earlier. There is one village with a population of 1,000 people. That village has totally submerged. That village cannot be seen now. Here and there, only some trees can be seen. Some of the people have escaped and whereabouts of some of the people are not known. These pictures have been taken by a helicopter. Sir, such situation warrants immediate Central intervention. My point is, this is an issue where the Central Government and the State Governments should come together to rescue the people and provide them relief. Then we can think about rehabilitation a little later. What I am requesting to the Government of India is — I do not know whether somebody concerned with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Home Affairs is sitting here — they need to rush Army helicopters to some of the States. Some boats need to be sent there. Even trains are required because we cannot reach some of the areas by road. This is the first thing which they have to do. The second thing is, make arrangement to support the State Government for dropping food packets in the areas which are inaccessible by road. The third thing is, there is need to provide drinking water to the people who are caught in these areas; otherwise, they will drink contaminated water which will affect their health and the casualties will increase further. In addition to this, what I am suggesting is, there is need to send a

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Central Team there. The practice is, the Central Team goes there, then they come back and give the report after some days. At the end of it, the Centre announces a very meagre amount. The Government might say that we have CRF guidelines and NCF guidelines. All these guidelines are there. Even in Maharashtra — I am not blaming the Maharashtra Government because it is nature's fury — water level has gone up. I am told that they have, at once, released water from Koina Dam. Now, the downstream situation is very horrible. In the Almatti also the water level is rising. The water level has risen even in the Narayanpur Dam. They may also open the floodgate anytime. That being the situation, I would urge upon the Government to inspect the affected States and find out some way to solve their problems. If you suddenly allow the water to reach the top level, you suddenly open the floodgates because you feel that your State is affected, what about the neighbouring States which are made to bear the brunt of it? Moreover, the people of these States are taken unawares by this development. We should ensure that some mechanisms are evolved with regard to the opening of dams. As and when there is excess flow of water, some agreement has to be reached.

Today, in Gujarat, 99 dams are overflowing. You can understand the gravity of the situation by this fact. That is why I urge upon the Government of India to kindly understand the seriousness of the situation and to extend maximum possible help to these States. The Government of Karnataka has already sent a memorandum; in fact, we met the Prime Minister just now and requested him for help. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has sought the help of the Army to tackle the situation in the State. He has also asked for financial assistance. But I am not asking for any amount of money now. I am only saying this much; please treat this as national calamity and extend all support to all the affected States/without any discrimination, whether they are ruled by this party or that party. Kindly send a Central team immediately. Alert the Army and direct them to make available helicopters, aeroplanes, naval boats, etc. Arrange for lifting of drinking water from wherever it is available as well as food materials so that immediate relief can reach these people. We can think a little later and discuss in this House also about the rehabilitation package to these affected States. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Penumalli Madhu....

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI (Maharashtra): Sir, I just wanted to associate myself....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have called *him...* (*Interruptions*) I will give you a chance.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, I would also like to speak.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me first call the Members who have given their names. If time permits, I will call you. Otherwise, they would take exception to it.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the flood situation in several States in India, today, is very serious. In Andhra Pradesh, almost half of the State is under serious floods. Out of 1,100 mandals, 447 mandals have been affected by floods. Godavari, a mighty river, has seven tributaries in two of them, the riverbank has breached, thereby marooning several hundreds of villages. We have never come across this type of floods in the last 15 years. Several people have lost their lives. Not only this; several cattle have perished in several areas. When a village is flooded with water, people at least try to climb to house tops or trees. What about the cattle? The entire cattle, in some flooded villages, have perished. The situation now demands that it is declared as a national calamity. Sir, as per the preliminary estimates, it has been observed that several hundreds of crores worth of crops have been damaged. In this situation, we request the Government of India to rise to the occasion. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has sought the help of the Army. I understand that the Government of Maharashtra and Gujarat also have requested the Union Government to send Army to tackle the problem. Moreover, in these four States, namely, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat, the relief operations are not up to the mark. The situation is that, in the last four days, lakhs of people have been affected and are facing serious problems on account of their villages being flooded with water.

Sir, again, in Andhra Pradesh, because of the water that is coming from various rivers of Maharashtra, there is going to be the problem of over-flooding. So, Sir, through you, I request the Government of India to provide all necessary help to Andhra Pradesh. Sir, flood banks of the

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

two tributaries of Godavari river have been breached. Because of that, the entire area of 160 villages is cut-off from the State for the last four days. So, a very, serious situation is arising there.

Sir, I have received a message from Maharashtra which shows how the bureaucracy is behaving at the time of rendering relief operations. At one place called Sahada, when some people died in natural calamity, the local authorities asked to produce panchnamas. The people are dying in this calamity and the authorities are asking for Panchnamas ...*(Interruptions)*... Is it possible? It is not possible. ...*(Interruptions)*... So, the Government has to consider all these things. Sir, 50 per cent...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please be brief. You will have one more opportunity when the statement is made on this issue.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, 50 per cent input subsidy...*(Interruptions)*... 50 kilograms of rice should be given to those people who have lost their employment. The agricultural labour, tribals and Dalits are very much affected by this. They have to be supported by 10 litres of kerosene, two kilograms of cooking oil immediately. Unless they are given these things, it is very difficult for these people to make both ends meet. So, under these conditions, hundred per cent subsidy support for silt removal is to be given by the Government of India. I request the Government of India to immediately rise to the occasion and help these people.

Sir, finally, I would like to ten one thing. Sir, Governments come and Governments go, but every year we face problems of floods in various parts of the country. Why is it so? It is so because the investment in agriculture, as a percentage of GDP is going down.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; don't go into the GDP and all that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, it is the net result of this decreasing investment in agriculture....*(Interruptions)*...The investment in agriculture has gone down. That is the main reason for this floods. ...*(Interruptions)*... So, the Government should rise to the occasion, and see to it that the investment in irrigation and flood relief are enhanced.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, thank you very much for allowing me to raise this issue. The State of Andhra Pradesh has received unprecedented rains and flash floods. By virtue of these unprecedented rains...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reddy, already one Member from Andhra Pradesh has spoken on this issue. So, you can curtail your time. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the situation is so grave that it warrants every Member to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, as a matter of fact, I gave a notice yesterday only. Sir, by virtue of these unprecedented rains and flash floods, more than 200 people have died so far, more than thousand habitations are still under water and about 10 lakh people are badly affected, and they are displaced. Sir, many fishermen are still missing. About 12 lakh acres of standing crop is damaged, and the people are crying for help. The heavy rains have not only damaged the standing crops and paddy nurseries but also the harvested paddy kept in thrashing. Sir, the fishermen's fishing nets and fishing boats are damaged. Sir, the immediate and urgent need is the restoration of rural roads which are badly affected by rains and floods. The electrical installations are totally disrupted. Till today, the power problem is not addressed, and the villages are in darkness. Sir, I would like to request the Government to come forward and help the people. Since the State Government has miserably failed, the callous and casual attitude of the State Government....
(Interruptions)...

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): What is this? ...*(Interruptions)*... This is not correct. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us not make such remarks.

...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, I will explain it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: On this issue, speak with one voice. ...*(Interruptions)*...

[8 August. 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, Mr. Subbarami Reddy was not in Vishakhapatnam, but he was in Delhi only. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reddy, all of you are from Andhra Pradesh; so, speak in one voice. No criticism and all that because it is a grim flood situation. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, let him understand the gravity of the situation. I read in newspapers that the hon. Agricultural Minister has left for Australia yesterday. *(Interruptions)*

MR. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, the entire State is flooded with water and the Ministry had left for Australia. Are they trying to justify it? *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandraiah, please sit down. *(Interruptions)* Mr. Hanumantha Rao, please sit down. *(Interruptions)* You explain the situation, Mr. Reddy why deviate? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, what for the Ministers are there? *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, please sit down. *(Interruptions)* Nothing will go on record, except Mr. Reddy.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, let them contradict, and say that the hon. Minister for Agriculture has not gone to Australia) If they say so, I welcome it. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: He said that the systems were functioning and there was no necessity of the Minister's presence. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandraiah, please sit down.

श्री नारायण सिंह केसरी (मध्य प्रदेश) : उपसभापति जी ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री उपसभापति : आप बैठिए । आपको नहीं बुलाया गया है ।

श्री नारायण सिंह केसरी : सर, मेरा व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है कि सदन में हर बात पर बोलने के लिए श्री नारायणसामी जी अधिकृत हैं क्या ?

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, why do I cite this example? When people are affected by the chikungunya disease, the

Chief Minister says, "It is but natural. This fever will come and go, I do not bother for all these things." Taking advantage of the callous attitude of the hon. Minister and the hon. Chief Minister, one ITDA officer, by name Mr. Buddha Prakash, in Bhadrachalam, when people went to him for help, says, "You useless fellows, jump into Godavari, there are no boats; I will not help you." This is the...

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): We will take action against him. *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): Sir, may I answer? I appreciate the hon. Member's concern. We all come from the same State. But I also want to say that the floods were seen, floods are being seen, not just in Andhra Pradesh. It is a universal phenomenon that is happening today. We are equally concerned. The Chief Minister and all of us... *(Interruptions)* I am personally visiting... *(Interruptions)* If you can talk about that, you do not want to hear what they are doing! *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, is she replying to the debate? *(Interruptions)* I never wanted this... *(Interruptions)* This very attitude of the hon. Minister has inspired the officers below, to ignore the people. This is a very bad attitude. *(Interruptions)* I agree, I need not learn lessons from this Minister. *(Interruptions)* Sir, she was crying in the same manner when she was...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, please address the Chair.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, the ITDA officer has abused the people when they were in distress. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please go to the next point.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, if I am not allowed to speak, what is this? I am here to represent the grievances of the people but I am obstructed by the hon. Members.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are responding, and hence they are... You address the Chair.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, I am trying to narrate the plight of the people.

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do not look at that side.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, I am not looking at them. People have stopped looking at them. Sir, I request the Government of India, rather I demand the Government of India to go all out and help the poor people in the State, by restoring normalcy. *(Interruptions)* Sir, my information is... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is your demand. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: I will conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, it is a natural calamity ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, there is an objection and a point of order was also raised as to why Narayanasamy interferes in every thing. ...*(Interruptions)*... There is an objection. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Sir, the biggest calamity is Mr. Narayanasamy. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: The only way to contain him is to induct him into the Cabinet. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी : हाँ, जरूर बनाना चाहिए । ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): I am very happy about it ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, that much is sufficient. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, to my information till late last night, the Army and the Navy had not been pressed into service. I demand that immediate restoration work starts. ...*(Interruptions)*... The attitude of the State Government ...*(Interruptions)*... The people have lost confidence in it. ...*(Interruptions)*... I request and demand of the Government of India to extend all possible help to the people. Thank you.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY (Karnataka): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, with a heavy heart I stand up to speak on this subject. Sir, whenever there is flood, we as a nation fail to control that flood situation. I am very sorry to say that. Every year thousands of people die and properties

worth crores of rupees are lost or damaged. In fact, when we see the people who are affected, they are poor people, slum dwellers, poor farmers and farm labourers who are living in the low-lying areas. When floods rush to their houses, people, particularly children and women who are in those houses receive the shock of their life. This is the situation every year. Sir, whenever there is flood, we rush to them as people's representatives and we give some compensation to them. When people lose their bread earners, we give them some money. The nation as a whole has to think whether a time has come to consider whether the compensation that is being given is sufficient. When crops are lost or completely damaged, what is the amount that we are giving? I would like to ask whether the Government is in a position to understand this aspect of the problem. I want to know whether they are going to revise the guidelines, and whether the time has not come to revise them. When were these guidelines framed; and, has the Government applied its mind to it? Is there any political will in this regard? I do not want to confine to one Government. For the last so many years, we have seen so many Governments. We have to find a solution now. After taking into consideration all this what would be solution? Sir, how to control floods in those low-lying areas where people are staying? Are you going to interlink the rivers? When interlinking of our rivers takes place, then we can control floods and we can use water, we can have power generation, we can also improve our food production and where there are one-crop fields, three crops can be raised there. All these things can be done. I would like to know whether the Government is thinking on that line. The Government has to pay some attention to this aspect ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, let us not politicise it. A very grim situation is there. It is not in Karnataka only but it is everywhere. What the hon. Member has stated is correct. Water is rushing from Maharashtra to Bhemanadi and Ujjaninadi. Water is creating havoc there. Sir, you may not believe even sufficient boats are not there to take the people to safer places. When the situation is like that, Sir, and since we are in Parliament today we have to think and we have to apply our mind, otherwise, it would be very difficult for the people to stay. With these words. I conclude.

SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, ask them to give water to Tamil Nadu.

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu): They will not give.

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't want to start a new flood situation here.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश) : उपसभापति जी, हिमाचल प्रदेश में भी बाढ़ की वजह से बुरा हाल है...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : आप बैठिए । ZeroHour has taken 35 minutes. It is the longest. (*Interruptions*) No, no, we are going to have some more discussions on this. It is not as if this is final.

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI (Maharashtra): Sir, the whole country is facing flood situation. Sir, there is a very serious situation. For the last three days I was in the State of Maharashtra and I know what is happening. The people are absolutely worried. For the last three days, about 100 people have died and about a lakh of people are to be shifted to some other place. Sir, I am more worried about those who are still caught in difficult areas. Nobody is reaching them and the people need something to eat. The first thing to be seen is how the people can be saved and secondly, we have to see how we can serve food wherever they are. I know the Government is trying to do it by way of sending helicopters or some other vehicles but it is really very difficult and there is danger to the life of the people of Maharashtra State. I know that such a situation has not arisen for the first time. In some parts of India, such situation arises sometimes and what is required is the disaster management by the State Government and also by the Central Government. But, I do not think that such disaster management has been organised either at the level of the State or at the level of the Central Government and, therefore, the people are worried. They do not know about their future. In some places, the trains have also stopped running. Vehicles are not reaching at the proper place. No boats are being supplied. Therefore, my few request to the Government is to see that they get it done through the State Government. Firstly, I want a disaster management cell to start forthwith the work that is expected to be done. Secondly, Sir, those people whose villages are surrounded by water should be given first attention and the people should be brought to a safer place and the third is planning that can be done immediately in order to save these people. Sir, this matter is very serious. I do not want to go into any type of politics. The issue can be discussed in detail in the House but at this time I would only suggest, both the

Prime Minister and the Minister concerned to take steps forthwith and we have sought the appointment of the Prime Minister just now. I will be going and meeting him and explaining to him whatever I want to tell him, not only in the State of Maharashtra but other States also should be given attention forthwith. Thank you.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, this is indeed a very grave situation. I associate myself with all the sentiments expressed by everybody here and I don't think this is an issue on which there should be any political divisions or politicisation that should take place. This is a matter of grave concern and for this we only urge upon the Government that all possible assistance and all possible requirement to the State Governments must be given and it is not only waiting for their requests and thereby, to respond to it. I think, *suo motu*, the Central Government should also take the initiative to meet the situation. The damage has been done and we are hearing heart-rending stories of people, how they have suffered and how they are dying and the Godavari River Photo has been shown by Shri Venkaiah Naidu. I come from that district and in that sense this is not the occasion but, I should share it, the name Yechury was actually a village Yechury which does not exist any more. It was washed away by the floods last century. That is why you don't find many 'Yechuries' around; only my ancestors survived.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Only one Yechury is here ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Like that, in these floods, many villages have been inundated and they will just be a part of history. This is a very serious matter. So, the first point I want to make is that the Central Government should take up this challenge *suo motu* and help the States.

The second point is what Shri Janardhana Poojary has said. It is a very correct point. We will always be talking about a water policy in our country. Some parts are facing drought and some parts are facing severe floods. Tamil Nadu is now asking for water. And, Andhra is wondering why there is so much of water. Sir, the tribal regions of Maharashtra — we have just got the information — is one of the worst affected areas and it is these poor sections which are, actually, more affected than others. So, therefore, I think, the time has come that the Central Government should have some thinking as to how to prevent this recurring of floods. I am not asking for a reply now. I am only raising

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

this during the Zero Hour; drawing the attention of the Government that proper water policy needs to be formulated to stop recurrence of floods. And, every year we cannot be bemoaning the deaths. This is something which has to be seriously taken note of. So, Sir, these two points, I hope, the Government will take note of. Thank you.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD (Bihar): Sir, I just take one minute. I am grateful to you, Sir. Will the Government also respond, in view of the contentions made in the House, to, at least, rethink about Inter-Linking of Rivers Project once again, objectively, because abundance of water is creating problem. I want the Government, at least, to respond to it.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA (Andhra Pradesh): Thank you Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on this grave situation. Sir, nearly fifteen districts of Andhra Pradesh have been devastated by torrential rains and flash floods during the last one week. The damage engulfed, particularly North coastal and Telangana districts of Andhra Pradesh. Sir, nearly 250 villages have been inundated. In Srikakulam district alone, more than one lakh people have rendered homeless since floodwater gushed into the habitations from Nagavalli River. Rainwater has entered into Visakhapatnam Airport, resulting in cancellation of all flights and other operations. Sir, the incessant rains killed more than 100 people in Andhra Pradesh, more than three lakh hectares of standing crop has been destroyed, apart from thousands of cattle died and lakhs of people have been rendered homeless. The steps that are being taken by the State are insufficient, looking at the massive scale of damage caused to the State due to heavy rains. Hence, I beseech upon the Government of India to immediately come to the rescue of the people of Andhra Pradesh and release sufficient amount from the National Calamity Relief Fund and the National Calamity Contingency Fund. Thank you.

श्री उदय प्रताप सिंह (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभापति जी, यह एक बहुत अहम मसला है और इसके ऊपर हम यह कहना चाहेंगे कि इस पर राजनीति नहीं होनी चाहिए ।

SHRI N. JOTHI: There are no floods in Tamil Nadu, at least.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jothi certified that there is no flood in Tamil Nadu.

श्री उदय प्रताप सिंह : यह जो मसला है, इसके ऊपर सरकार को राजनीति से ऊपर उठ कर सोचना चाहिए। हर साल बाढ़ आती है, हर साल संसद में दो — तीन घंटे चर्चा होती है और उसके बाद अगले साल बाढ़ फिर आती है। आपका एक मौसम विभाग है, जिस पर करोड़ों रुपए खर्च होते हैं। अगर वह इसके बारे में नहीं बताता है, तो सरकार इस पर सोचे और अगर वह बताता है और सरकार कार्रवाई नहीं करती, तो सरकार स्वयं अपने अन्दर झाँक कर देखे। होता यह है कि आदमी की क्षति होती है, पशुओं की होती है, सम्पत्ति की होती है और सबसे बुरी स्थिति बच्चों और महिलाओं की होती है। जहाँ पानी भर जाता है, वहाँ पर उनको जीने के लिए, यहाँ तक कि शौच तक के लिए परेशानी होती है। किस कदर परेशानी होती है, हम यह हर साल देखते हैं, लेकिन होता कुछ नहीं है। हम यह जानना चाहते हैं कि जब हमारा अनुभव बताता है कि यहाँ-यहाँ बाढ़ आती है, सवाल आन्ध्र प्रदेश का है, महाराष्ट्र का है, बिहार का है और तमाम जगहों का है, तो उस पर कार्रवाई क्यों नहीं होती? वही बात, जो अभी कही जा रही थी कि ऐसी जगहें हैं, जहाँ पीने का पानी नहीं है और इधर दूसरी तरफ ऐसी स्थिति है। इस पर सरकार को गम्भीरता से सोचना चाहिए। मेरा तो अपना यह विचार है कि अगर सरकार इसे अनुभव करती है, तो सारे दलों की मिल-जुल कर एक कमेटी बननी चाहिए, जो उन्हें कोई सुझाव दे कि इस पर यह — यह काम करना चाहिए। यह मामला केवल संसद में बहस करके फिर उसे समाप्त करने का नहीं है। इस पर सरकार गम्भीरता से कुछ कार्रवाई करने की सोचे और इस पर हम लोगों की जो चिन्ता है, उसका जवाब भी यहाँ दे। मैं यही अपील करना चाहता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, I fully agree with the other Member that this is not an issue that should be politicised. But since Independence we have not been able to evolve a National Water Policy, a National Agricultural Policy. The East Coast is always susceptible, whether it is turbulent weather or cyclones. But, unfortunately, at the same time, this year the West Coast has also been affected. Water has been released from the upper States. When lower States face water crisis no upper State will release even the surplus water. So, unfortunately, this has happened. What I am trying to say is that the Government should have a long-term policy. We have been discussing about the linkage of rivers. I may tell you honestly, Sir, unless 'water' is brought under the Central List, it cannot be done. With all the regionalism that is pervading in this country, no regional party, in spite of it being surplus in water, will allow that water to flow into the deficit areas. So, let us have a consensus on this. Let us have consensus on the subjects that are affecting the nation.

Coming to the issue under consideration, the Government of India, till today, irrespective of the party in power, has not been successful in

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

the efforts that have been initiated during the national calamities because it does not have a proper policy; disaster management was not good; it does not have clarity. Today, in Andhra Pradesh launches are unable to function because of the lack of fuel. In spite of a request made by people of a village to provide medical assistance to a pregnant lady, who was about to deliver, no helicopter was provided. It is not that I am politicising the issue. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI N. JOTHI: She died on the roof. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT (West Bengal): She died, Sir. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: She died on the roof. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: This is the state of affairs. When we say the facts, which may not be palatable to you, it does not mean that we are politicising the issue. Is it proper for the Minister of Agriculture to leave the State? I am saying so out of anguish; I don't want to level any allegations. He has gone on record justifying, when the Press people asked, and I quote, "Systems and institutions will function; there is no necessity for the Minister to interfere." *(Interruptions)* Then, where is the need for the Cabinet? *(Interruptions)* So, this is the state of affairs. And, he says that no damage has been done to the crops — it is there in the newspapers, it came in the media — when the farmers are languishing, more than thousands of acres of standing crops have been damaged.

Sir, I am very happy, I read in the newspapers, that Madam Sonia Gandhi is visiting there. But we request that the Prime Minister should also visit so that the Government machinery may act on a war-footing. The machinery is not alert even today in Andhra Pradesh. They are not up to the expectations to deliver the goods. People are suffering. It is a very sorry state of affairs. Epidemics are going to be spread. The State of Andhra Pradesh is already suffering from *chikungunya*. Lakhs of people are being affected. This is the sorry state of affairs. The systems have collapsed in Andhra Pradesh. Gear up your Government there; kindly provide some protoplasm for the Government. Let it function properly; let them deliver the goods to the people who are in distress. I appeal to the Government of India to come to rescue, dispensing all formalities and procedures and provide relief to the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, the Godavari is....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are no floods in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Jothi has certified. *(Interruptions)*

DR. K. MALAISAMY (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I can still talk on floods. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, *chikungunya* is there in Tamil Nadu also, *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. I will allow on *chikungunya*. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Sir, people are in distress because of the floods. They have no shelter, no food, no water. That is the exact situation for the past three days in the State. The communication system has disrupted. The State is not able to cope up with the situation because of the heavy magnitude of the floods. The administration is also not geared up to meet this situation. There is a need for the Central Government to interfere immediately to rehabilitate, rescue, and to give relief to the people. So, I request the Government of India to declare this as a national calamity and take up the rescue and relief operations immediately. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, normally during Zero Hour, on issues raised, we don't expect the Government to come forward with readymade replies. But, here is a situation; in four States an unprecedented situation has arisen. Sir, for 72 hours people have been in water. I only request that either the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs or somebody should convey this to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister should make an early visit. There should be some response; otherwise, people will think that they spoke in the House and nothing happened....*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us see. Already one hour.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Let Mr. Keshava Rao speak and others also speak. There is no problem. ...*(Interruptions)*...But don't say that we are taking too much time, it is an issue people will appreciate you. ...*(Interruptions)*...

[8 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Never has the Zero Hour taken one hour.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, we are discussing about a public issue,
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: See, it has been decided...(Interruptions)...

One minute...(Interruptions)...It has been decided in the Business
Advisory Committee...(Interruptions)... We are discussing it. We are again
taking up the matter...(Interruptions)...

SHRI K. KESHAVA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this
is a serious issue. I really welcome what Mr. Venkaiah Naidu has said. We
are not trying to politicise the issue at all. I had been there for two days. I did
an aerial survey. As the Members' shared the agony of the people there, I also
want to convey the sympathy of this House to the people who are suffering
there. Only this morning there have been three more breaches in the
Godavari *Ayacut*, so much so the entire area of Amalapuram; a big area of
Amalapuram is totally inundated. There are something like 132 villages which
are today under water cover. What I am trying to say is, we need not try to
politicise the issue. To say that the food is not available or medicines are not
available is not correct. I have myself seen and can say that the entire district
administration is fully geared up. All political parties,—let me thank them also
from this floor—are really active. They have pressed their cadres into action. I
am trying to talk about the BJP also. They are all there. They are trying to do
their best. The people are trying to do their best. And the district administration
is really doing its best. Already the IAF is there...(Interruptions)...Let me
complete it ...(Intervptions)...A really do not want to join issue with you at this
stage...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jothi let him finish...(Interruptions)...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, I am not saying anything, it was somebody else.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Sir, he is misleading the House.
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no ...(Interruptions).Mr. Mysura Reddy, let
him finish...(Interruptions)...

SHRI K. KESHAHA RAO: If I am misleading Mysura Reddy...*(Interruptions)*... Nobody can mislead him because he has never led at all...*(Interruptions)*... The question is...*(Interruptions)*...

MR DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mysura Reddy, please sit down.
...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI K. KESHAHA RAO: Sir, I would only like to submit to you that something like six districts are affected. The cyclone depression came from Puri. Later, a heavy downpour was there in Maharashtra, and the water discharge from Maharashtra has come into Godavari. So, we have this twin danger coming. One is from cyclone, another is from the rivers going in spate. This has affected the entire six districts where over 16 lakh people are affected and something like three lakh people— it is never seen in the recent history of rehabilitation— are today in the relief camps...*(Interruptions)*... And the Centre is providing them total relief. The District Administration political parties, NGOs, people...*(Interruptions)*.. Sir, 2,30,000 people are today in the relief camps. The Home Minister is going to these areas tomorrow evening. I will also be going along with him. Mrs. Sonia Gandhiji is in touch with administration every half an-hour. Our Prime Minister is also in touch. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: He should say something about the Prime Minister also...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI K. KESHAHA RAO: Mr. Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy will bear with me, I will not be able to...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let the Government respond, why do you ask him? ...*(Interruptions)*... *(Interruptions)*... “आप बैठिए...*(व्यवधान)*... मैसूरा रेड्डी जी, आप बैठिए...*(व्यवधान)*... आप बैठिए...*(व्यवधान)*... He heard you; you should also listen to him.

SHRI K. KESHAHA RAO: Mr. Mysura Reddy is from Andhra Pradesh ...*(Interruptions)*... Let me complete. All those people sitting in safe-places here are trying to speak about the people whom they have not seen. But there are places they cannot even imagine. They cannot even think of their plight and they are trying to tell us what is being done. We know the kind of relief that is reaching them. We know the kind of

reports that are coming in the media. We know what the people are trying to say. We know how all the NGOs are trying to praise the Central Government; in fact, all the political parties. Because I think 50 per cent of the relief that is being given there today is by the people themselves. A new experiment we have seen! The Member of Parliament from Srikakulam, Mr. Yerran Naidu, was along with us yesterday. These are the kind of things that are being attended to. This is a great calamity. A massive relief work has been taken up. Let us all appreciate this. Let this House express its sympathy to the people who are suffering there. Sir, no estimates have yet been made of the total damage, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, What we have is this. In Bhadrachalam, because of the Godavari being in spate, and because the water is also being let out from the other two projects that we have upstream, the danger today still lies with the Godavari. The depression in the North coast of Andhra is reaking. That is within our control. So, if all the Members who are here, who are representing the Council of States, can also lend some funds from the MPLADS and send some help to them, whatever, it be, it would be very nice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI K. KESHAV RAO: Sir, for the first time—I would like to inform them—I have seen it, I have the first hand knowledge. Everything is being done, we should thank the people who are standing in sympathy with them. We should express our concern to them on this calamity...*(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I share all the concerns expressed by the distinguished leaders pertaining to the fury of the flood and the miseries of the people. Very humbly, I submit through you, that I also represent one of the worst flood-prone zones of my country, and during the rescue operation few years back, after one month of marriage, rescuing ten families, my own nephew died, when the eleventh family was being rescued. So, I personally share the concern. When our Government was formed, the UPA in its own NCMP made it clear though the Constitution says it is subject of the State, that it must be given a national importance in all possible manner. Sir, I shall

1.00 P.M.

respectfully submit, through you, the tragedy that has been stated by all the Members of the House, right from Shri Venkaiah Naidu to the last Speaker, Shri K. Keshav Raoji, with all seriousness, I will put it immediately, after fifteen minutes, to Prime Minister; and I can only tell you, Sir, for the last eight days the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Agriculture Minister by rotation, are closely in touch with all the State Governments monitoring not on day-to-day basis, but on three hours, four hours, five hours basis. Even I have also been allotted to negotiate day-to-day issues of Maharashtra, and Sir, I can only tell you the Government of India shall offer all support that is required besides the parameters that have been stated by Shri Venkaiah Naiduji, Shri Yashwantji knows the parameters, even beyond the parameters the Prime Minister has made it very clear that this is the hour of crisis and we should stand by all the State Governments, be it Gujarat, or, Maharashtra, Andhra or Karnataka; and we are doing so. Sir, as the Information and Broadcasting Minister, I have to watch these channels till midnight, and I have seen the Minister of Gujarat, the Minister of Irrigation, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, the Chief Minister of Karnataka are touring day and night the districts and villages, sharing works with the people in the rescue operation, NGOs and the officials. Let us have that spirit, and once again, I submit to you, Sir, that I shall communicate to the Prime Minister immediately and take all possible steps to stand by the people.

**Appointment of a Foreign National as Chief Operating Officer at
IGI Airport, Delhi**

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir. I thank you for having been given the opportunity. I rise to draw serious attention of this August House and the Government to a serious matter of internal security concern. In the process of handing over the management, control and operation of the airports of Delhi and Mumbai to private operators with foreign collaboration, and as a natural corollary to that, a foreign national, that too from the NATO group of countries is being appointed as Chief Operating Officer of the Delhi Airport by Messers GMR FRAPORT who has been allowed to take over the operation of the Delhi Airport.