

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

censored? Sir, they are caught absolutely redhanded with documentary evidence before the House. You may appoint any body to inquire into the matter. I am lying it on the Table of the House. It will be seen how Parliament is being treated. Sir, they would cheat you also. What can I do? Sir, I am interested...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have done your duty very well.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I always do my duty very well. But do others do their duty very well? Sir, We all should do our duty very well. Sir, More than anybody else you should discharge your duty. Indeed you are trying to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: But the Samachar does not understand it. The Censor does not understand it. Those who want to hoodwink the Prime Minister can easily hoodwink you, Sir. But let us all exercise eternal vigilance in such matters. Sir, I am giving it to your Secretary General. You kindly go through this thing and see whether I am sufficiently quick with unassailable, irrefutable documentary evidence to show how the Samachar and the Censor are behaving.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Calling Attention.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, Mr. Abu just now told me that some newspaperman had told him that earlier also the Prime Minister's statement had been censored.

[Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Serious Flood and Drought Situation in the Country

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation to the serious situation arising out of devastating floods and drought conditions in various parts of the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE): Sir, this year the South-West monsoon set in time on 31st May, in Kerala and moved rapidly to some parts of the peninsula. However, the monsoon activity weakened, during the second and third weeks of June. The monsoon revived in Southern and some eastern States in the last week of June, but in most parts of the country it remained weak until the first week of July. During the second part of July and August wide spread rains occurred in different parts of the country. Deficiency of rainfall which was experienced in the various parts during the month of June and first fortnight of July has been made up in most of the areas. The total rainfall during the monsoon season so far (1-6-76 to 25-8-76) is normal or in excess of the normal in all parts of the country except in parts of Kerala where it continues to be deficient. Though the overall picture indicates the position to be normal, rainfall has been erratic and not well distributed in some parts of Gangetic West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and South Interior Karnataka affecting agricultural operations.

According to the available information, crop position in the States of Punjab, Haryana, West Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh is good as the monsoon has been adequate in these States. In these States, we can look forward to

a good crop not only of foodgrains but also of groundnut. Groundnut areas of Saurashtra have received good rainfall and the rains during the last two days have further improved the prospects. In Madhya Pradesh and Orissa too, the crop position is satisfactory except in a few isolated pockets. In Kerala, the crop sown in the first part of Viruppu season was affected because of deficiency of rainfall. In Karnataka rains received during May to July were delayed and deficient. However, the northern districts and the coastal and Malnad areas of the State have not been affected. In fact, during the month of July, there has been rainfall all over the State except in some Talukas where the crop position is not satisfactory. In Tamil Nadu due to inadequate rainfall in the catchment areas in Western Ghats in the states of Karnataka and Kerala, the reservoirs have not filled up. This has affected sowing of Kuruvai Paddy crop in many parts of the State.

There have been no reports of death of livestock for lack of fodder in any part of the country due to drought. Reports have been received of drinking water problems in certain parts of Tamil Nadu.

In areas affected by drought the State Governments have taken relief measures by way of providing work for agricultural labourers, provision of drinking water facilities, remission of land revenues etc.

Floods

In most parts of India rainfall is concentrated between the months of June and October. The country is traversed by a large number of rivers and torrents which have to carry heavy discharges during these monsoon months. During this period floods of varying intensities are experienced in some area or other. These floods are usually heavy in the Ganga and Brahmaputra basins. This year, so far, floods in these basins have been relatively of moderate nature, whereas the floods in certain other areas have been rather

unusual. In the early part of the monsoon, heavy floods were experienced in the Barak valley in Assam. Due to heavy intensity of rainfall there were floods in parts of Tripura, Manipur, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Floods have also been experienced in parts of Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Eastern U.P. and in Jammu and Kashmir. Recently due to heavy rainfall there have been floods in parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Western U.P. (Agra, Mathura areas). As a result of these floods and unusually heavy rains unfortunately human lives have been lost in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and there have been reports of damage to crops in low lying areas. Very large number of houses in some of these areas also are reported to have collapsed as a result of heavy rains and floods. Animals are also reported to have died.

Clear picture of the magnitude of the losses caused by the floods would be available after detailed assessment is made by the State Governments. This would be possible only after the floods recede.

The concerned State Governments are taking necessary relief measures in the areas affected by floods. These measures include: distribution of gratuitous relief, supply of seedlings and fertilisers to the farmers, disinfecting drinking water sources, rehabilitation of flood affected people, cash relief for the human lives lost, subsidy for cattle lost, loans for repairs/reconstruction of houses/huts, etc. Army assistance is also being made available to the Civil authorities in conducting relief and rescue operations and in plugging the breaches, wherever necessary.

The food situation in the country is comfortable at present. As a result of the bumper crops in 1975-76, there is easy availability of foodgrains all over the country. In addition Government hold a record stock of over 17

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million tonnes which will enable it to meet the full needs of the public distribution system and maintain prices at reasonable levels. Additional allotments of foodgrains are also being made to deficit States.

The overall position is such as need not cause concern. In fact as a result of widespread rains in most parts of the country, contrary to earlier fears, promising prospects of kharif harvests are emerging and the country seems to be in for another year of very good kharif production. However, we are in constant touch with the State Governments and depending on the developments in the remaining period of monsoon such steps as may be necessary will be taken.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:

Sir, with your permission, I would like to make an observation on this statement. The first part of the statement was made in the Lok Sabha the other day when the drought situation was being discussed. Now, something has been added on the flood situation. But the observation in the first part of the statement in regard to the crop position, which should have been amended in view of the flood situation, remains unamended. According to the statement made by the hon. Minister, the crop position is said to be very good in Punjab and Haryana. The real position is that in large areas of Punjab, specially the whole of Ferozepore district, more than two thirds of Amritsar district, comprising of Ajnal and Patti tehsils, the border areas of Gurdaspur district and a part of Faridkot district, crops have been destroyed. This is a big damage. The plantation of crops is also not possible. The picture is the same in Rohtak district of Haryana. Similar picture prevails in Mathura district of U.P. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister not to read out what he has read out already in the other House in regard to the drought situation. The

calling attention is on the flood and the drought situation in the country. He should amend this statement in view of the damage that has been caused. He says that the full extent of the damage is going to be assessed. I agree with him that it will take time to assess the full extent of the damage. Much has appeared about this in the newspapers. This is my first point. I am mentioning this point because I visited this week all the three districts in Punjab, which have been affected by floods, Amritsar, Ferozepore and Faridkot. In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that though the floods and the droughts are caused because of natural calamities, man-made bunglings have also contributed a lot to this situation. I was with the Deputy Commissioner of Faridkot only day before yesterday. When I took up the question with him, he told me that all the flood channels have not been cleaned for years and that there is such a big growth of bushes and other things that water cannot pass through them. I told the Deputy Commissioner of Faridkot that even a serpent cannot pass through the channels. His reply was 'You are talking of a serpent; you cannot even look through them'. They are so thick and they have not been cleaned in spite of many written notes by the Deputy Commissioner of Faridkot, by the present incumbent as well as by his predecessor. The entire drainage department has eaten away all the money that was provided for cleaning these channels. It is this that has caused so severe a damage that apart from floods, the water level in Faridkot district has also gone up very much. I am drawing his attention to this so that he can investigate the matter. It is said that this has been covered up by some staff of the Irrigation Department including the Minister. Because of the floods, the D.C.'s bungalow, the S.P.'s bungalow and the Darbar Ganj rest house have all been affected. They are all under water and they are sinking day by day. They have become uninhabitable.

Coming to the main issue, up to the 8th of August, before this House met, in 10 States, 254 lives have been lost. According to Government estimates, the loss was of the order of Rs. 439 million. We began thinking of flood control from 1954. We have spent Rs. 409 crores over the last 22 years on flood control, while the loss due to the floods, according to official estimates, is of the order of Rs. 400 crores a year. The loss includes both direct and indirect losses. Direct losses are: crops, houses, animals and property. There are also indirect losses. Because of the floods, there is a change in the pattern of rains. Deafforestation takes place. Silt does not come down. Apart from this, now and then, there is also the damage caused to the railway lines. Railway lines get breached. This affects not only the passenger and the goods traffic, but also causes damage to the railway lines. We have seen how the railway lines and the roads in various parts of the country have been affected. The total loss comes to about Rs. 400 crores a year. Our total expenditure has so far been Rs. 409 crores since we began thinking of flood control. I would ask the hon. Minister whether he would give serious consideration to the fact that there must be an urgent national plan for the control of floods and for the control of water as such. I ask this because it is on record that the Irrigation Ministers met in New Delhi in 1975 and recommended a new national flood control commission. In February, 1976, all the national newspapers carried the news that such a commission is being set up. On 6th May, 1976, Shri Jagjivan Ram said in the Lok Sabha that it is being set up. Then, on 12th August, 1976, an official release of the Press Information Bureau said that a "Bar Control Commission—I do not know much of Hindi—has now been set up. In July 1975 the Irrigation Ministers meet and demand a new flood Control Commission and in May the Minister says something else. Why is this being delayed?

The other question that I want to ask is: Is he aware that 70 hectares of land

suffer every year on an average from floods and about Rs. 180 crores are lost? Despite 22 years, is it a fact that out of 250 hectares of land that is flood-prone, we have been able to tackle only 80 hectares? In this connection, I would like to ask: Is it a fact that because of inter-State quarrels and disputes, not only we are unable to control flood but even national plans, like building of dams, etc., have been held up. I am referring to the BSL project where 35,000 workers, who have built up the project which is unprecedented in the whole world, without any technological help from outside, are being thrown on the streets. Will he intervene and see that along with conserving the national energy, there is a national plan for full utilization of natural resources both in the case of building of dams and building up the irrigational potential of the country?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
Sir, the hon. Member said that I have repeated some portion of my previous speech and not amended it. I hope the hon. Member was careful enough to read the statement as a whole. In fact I made the statement in the other House about a fortnight earlier. Since then the situation has changed and if there is a change it is for the better because large parts of the country have received rainfall. Therefore, I have made up-to-date the current assessment. I hope the hon. Member would try to read very closely and will not misunderstand my statement.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:
Even Punjab and Haryana.

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
Even in Punjab and Haryana. I do not agree with the views of the hon. Member. Haryana and Punjab are in for a bumper crop this year also. In the areas which were submerged, human sufferings are there. The people who are affected lose very heavily. But the suffering is in the limited area and not in the State as a whole. I am giving

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the statement not for the areas which are flooded but for the State as a whole. As far as the States as a whole are concerned, this year Punjab, Haryana, west U.P., Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra are expected to give bumper crops. Therefore, I do not think my statement is wrong. I have also qualified my statement that since the monsoon started only four or five weeks back the real position will, emerge only at the end of the whole monsoon period. Therefore, I do not want to minimise or exaggerate the position in this respect.

The hon. Member has referred to human failures. I cannot make a statement that there cannot be human failures here and there but the State Government will take care of them. They are expected to look into this. If there has really been some human failure on the part of somebody, some responsibility has to be fixed. I am not trying to protect anyone if some failure has been there on somebody's part. But my request to the hon. Member is to consider the magnitude of floods from some other angle. Unfortunately, the monsoon in our country many a time comes in a unprecedented manner. You see the rains that have fallen in Delhi. It is not here alone. If the hon. Member is careful to read about the meteorological forecast all over the world, even with the best technological advancement which has taken us almost to the mars, humanity has not succeeded in having a precise forecast about rainfall. The monsoon is just like other natural calamities. So, our efforts should be to see how courageously we meet the situation. I must say, in our country our people are so courageous, so brave that despite these hardships, these calamities, they are able to stand on their legs. In fact, all our sympathies go to the people who are suffering. In fact, valuable lives have been lost but the way our people are facing the natural calamities is admirable. The State Governments are active, social workers are active and it is the valour of the people which ena-

bles us to face these calamities courageously.

I can agree with the hon. Member that deforestation does lead to land erosion and that de-silting of dams, etc. should be done. That is why the Government of India is now taking a number of steps for having projects in the catchment areas or river valley areas and trying to have an integrated approach on the water-shed areas for the conservation of soil, afforestation and conservation even of the whole ecology in those areas. The entire approach would be to see that in the long run we do not cause too much damage to Nature and also see that the whole system is not affected because of either wrong policies or wrong implementation.

Then the hon. Member has raised the question of losses. It is very difficult for me to mention the precise figures. Though I have got some figures which I can give for the benefit of the hon. Members, I cannot vouchsafe the validity or preciseness of these figures. We know that the State Governments are in the process of compiling them and if I mention some figure, some State Government might come forward and say, "No, here the loss of human lives is more than that", or "The damage is so much". Therefore, these figures are tentative. But I can tell the hon. Member that this year, as compared with last year, the flood damage has not been so much. Last year the flood damage was colossal; it ran into several hundred crores. Compared with that, this year the intensity in the normal flood areas, the Brahmaputra Valley, the Ganga area, etc., has been less. But, even then, the total losses are quite heavy. As I said, in particular areas the losses are very intense and because of that, human suffering has been more. I will give you whatever information is compiled by the Irrigation Department, my Ministry, etc. The area affected is 21 lakh hectares; the population affected is 60 lakhs; the area of damage to crops is about 10 lakh hectares, and the value is Rs. 23

crores; houses damaged are 1,90,063, and the value is Rs. 8.53 crores, the number of cattle is 49,000; the number of human lives lost so far is 367. The damage to public utilities, roads, public properties, etc. is also very large. Roughly, the total damage to roads, houses, public utilities, etc. comes to Rs. 74 crores. But this is, as I have said, a tentative figure and as we shall be getting information from the State Governments, those figures can be brought up to date in times to come.

As far as flood control is concerned, the Government of India has constituted a Flood Commission now and Mr. Hatni, who has been an honourable Member and also the Leader of this august House and who is now the Governor of Haryana, has been nominated as the Chairman of this Commission.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Karnataka): Now that he is appointed a Governor, will he be the Chairman?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE: Government will decide it, naturally.

So far as the Brahmaputra is concerned, the Brahmaputra Flood Control Board is already there and, similarly for the Ganga also there is a Flood Control Board already existing.

SHRI IRENGBAM TOMPOK SINGH (Manipur): What about the Barak?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE: That can be looked into. If the main rivers are covered, the tributaries can also be covered. That suggestion can be considered separately.

The hon. Member referred to inter-State disputes coming in the way. I think I would be inclined to agree with the hon. Member on some of the points, for example, the controversy about which we are reading in the papers with regard to a *nala* on the border of Rajasthan, Haryana and U. P.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Govardhan *nala*.

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE: Govardhan *nala* or whatever it is. In the interests of the country it would be better if the adjoining States come to a better understanding and arrive at an agreement so that they can co-operate with each other and try to help each other. If there are any differences or different viewpoints, they should try to sit across the table and try to settle them so that people's sufferings can be reduced.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Karnataka): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, almost for the last twenty years we have been discussing the flood situation and the drought situation in the country. Some parts are affected by floods and some parts are affected by drought. It is unfortunate that the floods have not been controlled and the rivers are not harnessed to the extent we should to avoid floods and recurrence of famine situations in some parts of the country. Sir, in most of the talukas in Karnataka there is a drought situation. In 13 districts, 97 talukas are affected by drought and 40 talukas are very badly affected by the drought situation in Karnataka. There is scarcity of drinking water in some parts of 40 talukas and there is scarcity of fodder for the cattle. Though many cattle might not have died for want of fodder, they are suffering for want of fodder in most of these 40 talukas. The funds which were allocated by the State Government, about Rs. 65 lakhs, have already been spent and the budgeted works that are now being undertaken by the State Governments are to be undertaken vigorously, but they have no funds to spend for the relief works. I do not want that relief works should be undertaken only to remove the earth from one place to another, but some permanent or semi-permanent works should be undertaken. But we have money to spend for that. I understand the State Government has already represented to the Centre to

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send a Central team to inspect the situation there. Some 25 MPs met the Prime Minister on 25th of this month and requested her that a Central team should be sent to Karnataka. So far no Central team has been sent there and the funds that are available with the State Government are not adequate to meet the situation. The situation has really become alarming. We have seen that in some parts of Karnataka the crops are withering. In some parts of these 40 talukas the people are suffering very much. I would urge that the Central Government should immediately undertake to send a Central team and while the Central team gives its report, they should make funds available with the State Government to effectively deal with the drought situation in Karnataka. Sir, in Tamil Nadu, they have already spent about Rs. 15 crores and the Centre has already given money to the Tamil Nadu Government. In some parts of Kerala also there are scarcity conditions. I would urge that the Central Government should come forward with liberal grants for meeting the drought situation in Karnataka. I should like to know whether they are going to send a Central team; if so, when and how much money they are going to advance to the State Government for meeting the drought situation in the State effectively.

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
Sir, it is really unfortunate that while there has been good rainfall in many parts of our country, this year Karnataka is facing unfortunate conditions, particularly southern Karnataka, where the rainfall has not been normal, though recently some improvement has taken place because during the past two or three weeks there has been some rain. This has affected the poorer sections of the society; the agricultural landless labourers are the first to be hit by such natural adverse conditions. But, Sir, while we appreciate what the honourable Member has said, I think all the State Governments, including

the Karnataka Government, are very well organised and well equipped to meet such situations. With so many experiences of meeting such situations, I am sure the Karnataka Government will be able to face the situation very well and take all the necessary relief measures which are required to meet the situation by providing employment, making fodder and water available, if need be. If the honourable Member has any apprehension in his mind that the resources would come in the way to meet the situation adequately, I can tell him that, though under the Sixth Finance Commission's recommendations there are certain limitations placed our experience is that nowhere in any part of the country, including Karnataka, lack of resources comes in the way of adequate and necessary relief measures. So far, we have not received any request from the Karnataka Government for sending a Central team there. We are trying to utilise the margin money under the Finance Commission's recommendations.

But whenever a request is received, we shall depute a Central team. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, a Central team may leave tomorrow or the day after. This is the second team. The first team has already gone and recommendations have been made and Rs. 7½ crores have been made available to Tamil Nadu. As far as Kerala is concerned, we are constantly in touch with the State Government. I can assure the hon. Members that the situation will be kept under control. If need be, we will also see that all necessary resources of the State Governments and of the Government of India by way of advance Plan assistance will be made available to the State Governments to meet the drought situation there.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY:
In Karnataka they have stopped all relief work for want of funds. I would like to know whether the Government are giving some funds for starting relief works

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
As the hon. Member is aware, I shall be there after three days. My senior colleague Jagjivan Babu will also be there. We will enquire from the State Government. If they have any difficulties, we shall try to remove them.

श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
उप-सभापति जी, जनसंख्या की दृष्टि से हमारे देश का सबसे बड़ा राज्य उत्तर प्रदेश एक ऐसा राज्य है जिसके पूर्वी और पश्चिमी दोनों भागों में प्रति वर्ष बाढ़ आती है। इस वर्ष भी दुर्भाग्य से वह बाढ़ का शिकार बना हुआ है और इस बाढ़ की आजकल समाचार-पत्रों में बहुत चर्चा हो रही है। इस बाढ़ से हर साल करोड़ों रुपयों का नुकसान होता है। इस संबंध में मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि बाढ़ग्रस्त राज्यों में आपस में जो तालमेल होना चाहिए था वह नहीं है। परिणाम यह होता है कि इन राज्यों को बाढ़ का शिकार होना पड़ता है। गोवर्धन नाले के संबंध में यह समाचार आया है कि उसके एक भाग में मिट्टी जमा हो गई है और दूसरे भाग के बारे में समाचार आया है कि वहां से बांध टूट गया और उस बांध को अब ठीक किया जा रहा है। अब तक सैकड़ों मौतें हो चुकी हैं और हजारों पशु मारे जा चुके हैं और करोड़ों रुपयों की फसल बरबाद हो चुकी है। समाचार-पत्रों में यह पढ़ने को मिला है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री उसको देखने गये, सिंचाई मंत्री भी गये और प्रधान मंत्री भी उसको देखने गई। लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि केन्द्रीय सरकार के जिस विभाग का इस संबंध में मुख्य दायित्व है अर्थात् कृषि मंत्रालय का कोई मंत्री या अधिकारी उस क्षेत्र को देखने गया या नहीं? अगर वहां पर कोई गया तो उन्होंने तीनों राज्यों में

परस्पर समन्वय करके आई हुई बाढ़ को तात्कालिक विभीषिका से बचाने के लिए क्या कोई प्रयास किया? पहली बात तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं। दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि यह जो प्रति वर्ष बाढ़ आती है उसके संबंध में आप आंकड़े देते हैं कि इस बार इतने करोड़ रुपयों की हानि हुई। लेकिन इस संबंध में अगर मैं सही कहता हूं तो जब हमारा देश स्वतंत्र नहीं था तो हम गुलामी के दिनों में दूसरे देश को दोष देते थे। लेकिन स्वतंत्रता के बाद बाढ़ में जो प्रति वर्ष करोड़ों रुपयों की हानि हो रही है उस सब को अगर मिलाया जाये तो यह हानि खरबों रुपयों में जाकर के बैठेगी। ऐसी स्थिति में अगर केन्द्रीय सरकार ने कोई दीर्घ-कालीन योजना इस प्रकार की बनाई होती जिस के अंतर्गत जो नदियां प्रति वर्ष बाढ़ लाती हैं, चाहे वे आसाम की हों या यूपी की हों या और किसी स्थान की भी हों उन के ऊपर मौ-सौ मील तक भी बांध बना दिये जाते और उन बांधों पर कुल खर्च का 10वां हिस्सा भी व्यय कर दिया जाता तो अब तक कम से कम इन नदियों के 30 हजार मील किनारों को बांध दिया गया होता और जो बाढ़ समस्याएं आज हमारे सामने आ रही हैं वे नहीं आती। प्रति वर्ष जो बाढ़ आती है उससे करोड़ों का जो नुकसान होता है उसके आंकड़े यहां पर दे दिये जाते हैं और दुःख प्रकट कर दिया जाता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार इस प्रकार से केवल अफसोस जाहिर करके संतोष कर लेना चाहती है?

तीसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जो नदियों के ऊपर बांध और पुल बनाये जा रहे हैं उसका परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि धीरे-धीरे इन नदियों में सिल्ट

[श्री प्रकाश वीर शास्त्री]

बढ़ती जा रही है और इन नदियों का घरातल ऊंचा हो गया है इसके फलस्वरूप इन नदियों में जब थोड़ीसी भी बाढ़ आती है तो पानी चारों तरफ फल जाता है। मैं अपने क्षेत्र की ही बात आपको बताना चाहता हूं। नरौरा में जहां राजघाट के पास एक एटोमिक एनर्जी प्लान्ट बन रहा है वहां पर गंगा के ऊपर जो पहले बांध बना था उसका परिणाम यह हुआ कि गंगा का घरातल ऊंचा होते-होते इतने ऊपर तक आ गया है कि प्रति वर्ष अगर थोड़ा सा पानी भी बढ़ता है तो गढ़मुक्तेश्वर और अनूप शहर के बीच में गंगा का पानी भर जाता है और कई सौ गांवों में फसल चौपट हो जाती है, पशु मर जाते हैं और गरीब इलाका होने के कारण मकानों को भी भारी क्षति पहुंचती है। सौभाग्य से केन्द्रीय सरकार ने यह निर्णय किया कि वहां पर तटबंध को पूरा कर लिया जाए। अब वह तटबंध पूरा तो हो रहा है, लेकिन उसके लिए जो राशि रखी गई है वह इतनी थोड़ी है कि जो मिट्टी डाली जानी है वह बरसात में फिर वह जाती है। इस संबंध में उत्तर प्रदेश की सरकार ने एक योजना बनाई थी जो लगभग 13-14 करोड़ रुपये की थी। लेकिन उसको घटाकर मंडे तीन करोड़ रुपये कर दिया गया है। इतनी थोड़ी राशि में यह तटबंध पूरा नहीं हो सकता है। इस संबंध में जब उत्तर प्रदेश के सिंचाई मंत्री से बात करने का मौका मिला तो पता लगा कि अब तक केन्द्रीय सरकार के योजना विभाग ने पूरा पया नहीं दिया है। ऐसी स्थिति में मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि बाढ़ के ऊपर दुःख तो प्रकट कर दिया जाता है, लेकिन इस प्रकार की जो योजनाएं होती हैं जिनसे प्रति वर्ष करोड़ों रुपयों की हानि से बचा जा सकता है उनके संबंध में सरकार क्या कर रही है? मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि इन सब बातों के संबंध में यह सरकार कोई भावी योजना बना रही है

और जो तात्कालिक समस्या है उसके समाधान के लिए क्या कार्य-पद्धति अपनाई जा रही है?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
Sir, as far as the current position is concerned, my Ministry is constantly in touch, and particularly the Irrigation Department is constantly in touch, with the State Government. Our officers, who know about floods, who have special knowledge about floods, have twice during the last one week visited the area. And even our highest representative, the Prime Minister, was good enough to spare some of her valuable time to go and see some of these areas. Even otherwise, practically every day we are in touch with the State Government. As far as communication between the State Government and the Centre is concerned, there is no lack of communication about the flood situation. Sir, not only that, a number of relief measures are being taken by the State Government. The Government of India is also helping the State Government in providing necessary reliefs.

Now, the hon. Member has naturally raised a very basic issue as to what is really the long-term strategy for meeting this situation. The hon. Member will appreciate that after all, nowhere in the world has it been possible to have a foolproof method of preventing damage from floods or natural calamities. Even then, as far as our country is concerned, see the terrain, particularly in North India and even in South India, floods do occur. But in North India, the way the Himalayas are situated, the way the Indo-Gangetic plains are situated, the geographical conditions here, the physical conditions here, provide the necessary conditions for floods. Now, steps have been taken during the last 20 to 25 years for protecting these areas from floods. But in some of the areas—I can appreciate the hon. Member's point—even some of the embankments themselves, because they were not taken up

not taken up as part of an integrated plan, are providing impediments in certain areas. Even in the case of some of the currents which used to flow naturally, some of these embankments were providing some impediments. But we have benefited from this experience and naturally the future plans will take into consideration the previous experience in this regard. That is why the very purpose of the National Flood Commission is to look into the whole basic approach so that whatever investment is being made or will be made in the times to come, will be made as part of an integrated development of flood control measures. But I would like to submit for the consideration of the hon. Member that ultimately the whole strategy is linked to the utilisation of the water resources available in the country, the harnessing of the water resources and to their regulation and control, when the water is in excess. This, of course, involves a very large investment. And even then I will not say that it will be a foolproof method. But to the extent some avoidable damage can possibly be avoided and the situation brought under control from that angle, already we are taking action. As I said, the Brahmaputra and Ganga Flood Control Commissions are working there and they are making recommendations to the Government of India. And because of last year's devastating flooding of Patna, some steps have been taken and some basic positions are being examined.

I will concede that sometimes the way reservoirs or dams are constructed leads to silting of the river-beds. Now, the ecological balance, the changes which come about as a result of construction of reservoirs, etc., all those factors need to be looked into in an integrated way so that the projects which are undertaken with the best of intentions, benefit our farming community and others, and they do not become responsible for causing further damage to us. So, the Government is well aware of all these

matters. We have expert divisions in the Irrigation Department to look into these matters, and with the expertise and specialised knowledge that we have and with the Commission which we are going to appoint, I think it should be possible for the Government of India to evolve, to the extent possible, effective plans for flood control in the times to come. But it will be necessarily a very, very long-term plan and a very large amount of resources will be required to meet such situations.

SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR (Punjab): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this year the flood situation in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan has been very grave and has caused damage worth crores of rupees to the crops which, under normal conditions, would have yielded a bumper harvest of paddy and corn. The worst-affected States are Punjab and Haryana. The floods have taken their toll of human lives and have left thousands of people homeless. Hundreds of head of cattle have been lost and thousands of milch cattle have no fodder to eat. It is painful to note the lot of the Punjab agriculturist who was just recovering from the devastation caused to him by severe hailstorms. He had sown his present crop with high hopes of recovering his losses, but now he has been left empty handed. His future is very bleak.

These floods have been a constant affliction to the village masses year after year and usually from the same sources. In Punjab and Haryana we have yet to tame flash flood rivulets such as the Ghaggar, Markanda and the Tangari which leave destruction in their wake right upto Rajasthan. We must realise that floods know no boundaries and therefore it is imperative now that the affected States join their flood controlling systems into one single unit, so that a united re-assessment and effort is made for evolving fresh plans for controlling

[Shrimati Amarjit Kaur]

these rivers and flash rivulets which so far we have been unable to channelise into induced courses.

I request the Government of India to send immediate aid to the affected States for the relief of the poor people, and to examine in depth the existent flood control measures and for raising substantial funds for the urgent implementation of effective schemes for the control of floods.

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE: The hon. lady Member has given us a lot of information and I am thankful to her for that. As far as help is concerned, drought relief and flood relief are technically State subjects. But normally we do not stand on technicalities and there is very effective and full co-operation between the States and the Government of India. Certain norms have in this connection been established and we know what kind of help is to be extended when natural calamities overtake the States or when there is loss of human lives or loss to agriculture. The State Governments are well aware of the procedure and when they approach us we extend all help to them.

As far as information is concerned, we are in constant touch with the State Governments which give us all the information on the subject so that we take it up without any red-tape or delay.

The hon. lady Member also made one suggestion that there should be full co-operation between the various State Governments and the Government of India. I entirely share her view that in such grave situations there should be complete co-operation among all the States because without that co-operation it will not be possible to have an integrated approach to flood control or other measures.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA

The Fifth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1976

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha signed by the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha:

"In accordance with the provisions of Rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose herewith the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1976, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 30th August, 1976".

Sir, I lay the Bill on the Table.

THE CENTRAL AND OTHER SOCIETIES (REGULATION) BILL, 1974

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (DR. V. A. SEYID MUHAMMAD): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the incorporation, regulation and winding up of Central societies and declared Central societies and regulation of aided Union territory societies and amalgamation of Central societies or aided Union territory societies with similar societies and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as reported by the Joint Committee of the Houses, be taken into consideration."

Sir, you are aware that from after Independence, the Central Government had sponsored a large number of organisations having promotion of literature, science or fine arts or diffusion of knowledge as their