

[Shri Lokanaih Misra.]

of Delhi, he is the appropriate authority or the Government of India is the appropriate authority.

SHRI R.K. KHADILKAR: I would like to give, with your permission, one clarification because the hon. Member, Mr. Misra, has raised it. As I have said, there was a question of a general nature and a supplementary was put about an establishment. If I were to give a wrong information, I would have been admonished.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, please. We cannot go on likethis. Please sit down, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am not asking any question, but are you allowing a system of clarification on clarification ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed to the next item of the agenda, I have to refer to the passing away of Shri Prithviraj Kapoor an ex-member of the Rajya Sabha.

Shri Kapoor born in 1906 was educated at Lyallpur, Peshawar and Lahore. An outstanding personality of stage and screen he had the unique distinction of receiving admiration of the millions of people in India and abroad. He collected funds through stage performances and 'Jholi' for various famine relief and other national and humanitarian causes. His eminence as an actor, playwright and producer received national recognition and he was honoured with Padma Bhushan in 1969. He was a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha from 1952-1960. On the occasions he spoke in this House, he expressed himself with sincerity, understanding as well as with wit and humour. We deeply mourn his passing away.

I would request the Members to stand and observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

[Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute]

Secretary will convey to the members of the bereaved family our sense of grief and profound sympathy.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

ACUTE FAMINE CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN ORISSA

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the acute famine conditions prevailing in Orissa and the reported starvation deaths as a result thereof and the assistance given by the Government of India to mitigate the hardships of the famine affected people.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, . . . hon members will recall that my senior colleague made a statement in the House on May 16, 1972, regarding drought conditions prevailing in some areas of Orissa. As he informed the House on that occasion parts of Orissa were affected both by floods and cyclone during 1971, and the after effects of these calamities continue to be felt in parts of the State. Since then, the state Government has intimated a few days back that a large number of people in the whole of the State have been affected by drought and widespread failure of crops.

Besides continuing the relief measures necessitated by the floods and cyclone, the State Government has extended test relief works and gratuitous relief, to all the drought affected areas. Over a million children and adults are receiving mid-day meals and gratuitous relief.

Central Teams visited the state three times during 1971-72. On the basis of the recommendations of these teams, a sum of Rs. 16 crores was released as Central assistance to the State during 1971-72. This includes a sum of Rs. 3 crores sanctioned by my ministry for the purpose of short-term agricultural loans in the affected areas. During the current year, my Ministry has released Rs. 3 crores for the same purpose. These relief measures are to continue till the end of June at the present and would be extended further, if necessary.

As we have told the House before, Central assistance is provided according to the prescribed procedure. For the present, the Government of India has fixed Rs. 3.05 crores as the ceiling of expenditure for the purpose of Central assistance for the period April-June 1972 to continue the relief measures due to flood and cyclone. The State Government has recently informed us that it has decided to