

Friends, you have spoken about my work in the legal sphere. I do not know whether I deserve even a modicum of the praise you have bestowed on me. It is true that I spent half a century, the best part of my life, in the service of the law. The training and experience gained have created in me the faith that nothing is higher than justice. The office to which I am called involved the exercise of some judicial functions. The ordinary task of interpretation of the Constitution and the Rules devolves on me. I assure you that I shall give fair and impartial judgment in the fullest measure I am capable of.

I shall always be anxious to help in the preservation of the dignity and decorum of the House. Our House has great traditions. I pledge my service to the cause of Parliament and shall faithfully observe the traditions that belong to it. I deem it a great honour and privilege to serve it as its presiding officer. I assure you that I shall make every endeavour to protect and defend your rights and privileges and the rights and privileges of this House. For all this, I need not say, I need your goodwill and co-operation which you have so kindly offered me today. I am confident that working together we shall be able to meet successfully the challenges of these times. I thank you once again for your felicitations.

SHRI C. D. PANDE (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, before we proceed further, I would like to bring to your notice a matter of great concern to the country . . .

OBITUARY REFERENCE

Mr. CHAIRMAN : I want first to make an obituary reference. Before we proceed to the next item on the Agenda, I have to refer with regret to the passing away of Shri Ajmal Khan, sitting Member, and Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman, ex-Member of this House.

Shri Ajmal Khan was a well-known Urdu scholar. He was the Secretary of the Khilafat Committee, Allahabad, in 1920. He was closely associated with the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He worked in the Indian Council of Cultural Relations during 1958-64. He helped in the preparation of the Urdu version of the Constitution of India and edited the works of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for the Sahitya Academy. He was nominated to this House in 1964 and continued as a Member until

the day of his death. On the occasions he spoke in this House, he expressed himself with sincerity and understanding. In his passing away we mourn the loss of a valued colleague.

Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman was a Member of this House from 1952 to 1956 and again from 1958 to 1964.

He actively participated in the freedom struggle, suffered imprisonment several times and underwent privation. He was a respected leader of Punjab and worked ceaselessly for the uplift of the common people. A man of deep conviction, he will be remembered for his great dignity and sense of values.

I shall now request Members to stand up and observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the memory of Shri Ajmal Khan and Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute.)

Secretary will convey to the Members of the bereaved families our deep sense of sorrow and sympathy.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE RESIGNATION OF SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF RAJYA SABHA

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have to inform Members that Shrimati Violet Alva has resigned her office as Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha with effect from the 16th November, 1969.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

RECENT CYCLONIC HAVOC IN VARIOUS PARTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa) : Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Irrigation and Power to the recent cyclonic havoc in various parts of Andhra Pradesh destroying property worth crores of rupees and rendering thousands of people homeless.

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : Sir, I will briefly describe the cyclonic havoc that took place recently and I am laying a detailed statement on the subject. Hon. Members could put questions today or after reading the statement.

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

Briefly, this cyclone started on the 5th November at Port Blair and crossed the mainland on the 7th November in the afternoon. It was one of the very large ones with a diameter of 800 kilometres and gale winds of about 110 miles per hour. It was accompanied by rains. It unfortunately came at a time when the coastal districts from Guntur to Srikakulam were ready for harvesting. When the winds blew at such a rapid rate, all the paddy plants fell down, there was water in the fields and a lot of damage was caused to the paddy fields. Now, the districts which were very badly hit are the districts of Krishna, West Godavari and East Godavari. The neighbouring districts of Khammam, Guntur, Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam were also affected. Unfortunately more than 180 people lost their lives and the damage was of the order of Rs. 100 crores. Nearly 14 lakh acres of paddy fields were affected. Practically all the plantain and coconut trees were uprooted; many large trees were uprooted. Many houses collapsed. The thatched houses of the poor people collapsed. Some of the pucca buildings and rice mills also got badly damaged. This is the general picture. Further details are being collected by the State Government and I have given in this statement such of those details as I have got.

Now, while you cannot really do very much in the matter of these cyclones, still there are some steps which we can possibly take. I have inspected the area and I came to the conclusion that some steps could be taken which would reduce loss of human life and possibly help also in reducing the loss to the crops. For example, without much of tools and equipment, the meteorological department there had given warnings as early as on the 5th; as soon as it started, they gave the warning. Unfortunately they were not able to pinpoint exactly where it was going to affect, so that people were not taking precautions. They were taking it as any other weather forecast. In order to pinpoint specifically the area where the cyclone is going to strike, it is necessary that they must have some tools, some radar. I am glad that the meteorological department are setting up the first radar installation in the east coast at Visakhapatnam. In the next two or three months, it will be ready. I am suggesting that another should be set up at Masulipat-

nam so that the losses to these rich, fertile areas, which have been struck four times this year by cyclones, could be reduced. I am also suggesting, among other things, that we should set up a Distress Mitigation Committee consisting of the various officers of the various departments concerned so that they can go into this question very thoroughly, advise the public, educate them about cyclones and also arrange for transport wherever it is possible; they can also advise fishermen not to go out into the sea at these times and so on. This Distress Mitigation Committee will first be set up here and later on for other States like Orissa—Orissa is also one of the badly cyclone-affected States—Madras and Bengal and such other areas in the east coast, we shall appoint committees in course of time. This briefly is what I have to submit. And the detailed statement is before you. I admit that the losses are very colossal. Only in May the coastal areas suffered losses of the order of Rs. 100 crores and again this has been further inflicted on them. The Prime Minister has released Rs. 50,000 from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The Central Team from the Government of India will go there shortly to assess what assistance the Centre should give.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh) : It is strange that the Team has not yet gone. It is such a serious situation; the Team ought to have been there by now.

DR. K. L. RAO : There is no use of the Team going at this stage because all the connections are cut off. Even communications have been cut off. It has not been possible even to get telephone connections. Unless reports are made by the State Government, unless they have got information, the Team from here cannot do anything. As soon as that is ready, the Team will go and try to find out whether what the State is assessing is correct and so on. That is usually what is done everywhere.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : Sir, from the reply given by the hon. Minister that the meteorological department has given a general warning that there would be a storm from the Bay of Bengal and it might affect any point in the East Coast, I am thinking within myself whether it is worth maintaining such a meteorological department. With such a general information, they could not have prevented the fishermen from going out into the sea. The loss of life

of fishermen who went out into the sea was something like 140 or 146. If no warning could be given specifically about the places which are likely to be affected, what is the use of keeping this department which seems to function only for name's sake? If a radar is extremely necessary in order to pinpoint the exact area which would be affected by the cyclones, then why not have it? If you can spend crores of rupees on visits to foreign countries by the so-called dignitaries why can't you have a radar to save the poor people by giving them proper warning?

That is my first point. What is the difficulty, impediment, in the way of obtaining a radar if that is necessary for pinpointing the exact location which is going to be affected by cyclone? Then number two. I would like to know whether, when Andhra Pradesh was affected by this havoc twice this year, once in the month of May and subsequently in the month of November, the Government of India had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 9 crores to be spent by the State Government and the State Government has not been able to spend even Rs. 3 crores even though the loss in the May cyclone was colossal, as colossal probably as the loss in the November cyclone. Now I am told and I have read in the newspapers also that Shri Brahmananda Reddy is going like a shuttle cock between Delhi and Hyderabad—I do not know for what reasons. If that is the reason why he has not been able to pay his attention . . .

AN HON. MEMBER : He was functioning like a cyclone himself.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : Yes, you have put it very well. If he was functioning as a cyclone himself and did not look after the responsibility that was given to him by the Central Government in providing the money to be made available to the people for rehabilitation, then the blame should squarely be put on Shri Brahmananda Reddy and his Government. And if it is a real failure, if it ultimately comes to a real failure on his part, I feel that he should either be asked to resign or he should himself resign voluntarily. Now, Sir, the honourable Minister will kindly let me know whether Rs. 9 crores were actually sanctioned by the Central Government and whether only Rs. 3 crores have been utilised till now and that too in a very partisan manner. It has not been very impartially distributed for rehabilitating the affected people.

Another point that I would like to know is whether there are four lakes which have been caused to rise due to the lack of drainage and outlet. If that is so—the honourable Minister is an eminent engineer himself and Andhra Pradesh is his own State—I am surprised why nothing has been done as yet to find an outlet for these four lakes which are causing heavy damage to property and are causing loss of life in the area. I want to know whether for those four lakes any outlet is possible or whether there is any difficulty in letting out the water because I am told in one or two villages because of the water in those particular lakes where the water level rose beyond a certain limit, some people were killed—I do not know how many were killed. Now the loss has been colossal—Rs. 180 crores. I would like to know how the Central Government is going to provide at least some compensation to those people who have been affected. It is beyond the resources of any State Government, to be very frank about it. It is only the Central Government that can come to the aid of the State Government. How much money has been sanctioned by the Central Government for the rehabilitation of and compensation to these people?

DR. K. L. RAO : First regarding the Meteorological Department I am afraid I must differ from the honourable Member. The Meteorological Department of the Government of India is one of the very good departments of the country of which we are really proud. The people in the Meteorological Department have done their best. But they do not have the equipment. They do not have the radars. They do not have the tools. Yet, as soon as they got the information, they broadcast it over the All-India Radio or by whatever means available to them. It is true they could not pinpoint but it is not their mistake. Now they have already planned installing radars at Calcutta, Paradeep, Visakhapatnam and Madras. As I have already submitted, the one at Visakhapatnam is being accelerated. The necessary equipment has gone there. It may be ready even by the next month. Of course, the main trouble is all the time we have got this trouble of foreign exchange. Things have to come from outside. That is where the trouble was. I agree with the honourable Member that there have been cyclones of a very big type. But we have to get foreign exchange and give the highest preference to this. Then we can definitely reduce the damage to

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

property and loss of life, we can reduce the suffering.

Then with regard to the other question of the utilisations of money, given by the Centre, the mere fact is that there was a heavy damage in the May cyclone and the Government of India sanctioned an amount of, not Rs. 9 crores, Rs. 15.6 crores. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has spent more than Rs. 8 crores so far. The main difficulty was the intervening period was one of monsoon when there was a heavy rainfall and after that the cyclone and so on. That is why they could not spend the money. This money is available till 31st March, 1970, that is one year. And therefore, I expect that they will surely spend this money.

Then with regard to drainage also, the hon. Member was correct. There is one Kolleru lake, a huge one. It is 200 sq. miles in extent and that is a trouble spot. Unfortunately, it has got only one outlet, Upputeru, drawing water to the sea. It has inadequate capacity and we have sanctioned schemes and we are starting implementing now. Unfortunately the money has to come from the public. The public has to subscribe for that work. We could not find money from the State. As money comes in we are purchasing dredgers and are trying to widen and deepen the outlet channel. Then the lake will go down and causes less submersion than at present.

With regard to the other matter which the honourable Member has mentioned—the water level rising up in the lake and a number of people dying—it is correct, but it is not the water level of the lake as a whole which rose. It just happened that the core of the cyclone went over the waters. If it goes overland, it will uproot the trees and houses. It just went over the lake. At the point where it crossed the lake, there was a depression. Usually, all the cyclones have got a depression in the middle regions so that with a low pressure on the water surface, the water all round rises, and that is what happened here. There was a storm. It came suddenly and stayed for few minutes. Here people were collected in a hut and they were trying to hold on, but the hut was blown away by the wind. Due to depression, the waters just rose by 20 to 30 feet. I think it was about 20 feet. And all the people were submerged under water and more than half the number of the people lost their lives. I am afraid

we cannot do anything to avoid this type of accident because there is bound to be some water in a lake and if the core of the cyclone passes over surges occur and nothing can be done with regard to that. In fact I was told that one of the people had also a transistor set with him and they were all hearing the warnings. But, as I said, because the warnings are of a general nature, they did not take much precaution.

I agree with the honourable Member's general remarks that we should do everything possible to find out and see that these cyclones are taken much more note of because on the east coast of India cyclones are usual. They are bound to come every year. Twenty cyclones at least occur, two or three of them of a very serious nature. They may strike anywhere from Cape Comorin to Calcutta. Some State or the other is bound to be affected. It so happened that this year Andhra Pradesh bore the brunt.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat) : It appears from the honourable Minister's reply that sufficient warning to the people about the approaching cyclone could not be given because we have not got enough radar equipment. Is it not more economical to have a radar equipment than to organise cyclone relief after the event and after a damage of crores of rupees has taken place.

DR. K. L. RAO : Yes, it is correct. In fact, it is one of the great lessons which we have learnt from this. We are going to have these four radars and we will have one more at Masulipatnam also.

SHRI K. G. PANDA (Orissa) : I would like to know from the Minister in view of the fact that floods, droughts and cyclones are occurring successfully one after another devastating vast areas of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, what permanent measures, as has been assured in the House from time to time, have been taken to rehabilitate the people and to allow them earn their livelihood after the devastation.

DR. K. L. RAO : Sir, against drought probably you can make some efforts. We may provide irrigation projects and see that droughts can be contracted. But against cyclones I am afraid we cannot do much except warning people beforehand to reduce loss of life.

Regarding rehabilitation, it is a matter for consideration by the various States and they can provide as much assistance as possible.

4 P.M.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Chairman, according to the information given by the hon. Minister, no report has been received either from the Collector of Khammam or Visakhapatnam and no assessment has been made so far as East Godavari is concerned. How is it that he could not contact the Collector of Khammam and Visakhapatnam to get the exact information of what happened? I come from the town of Visakhapatnam which was caught by the cyclone. For 24 hours all the communications were cut off, no electricity, no water, no telephone, no train, no newspaper, no aeroplane, in fact nothing was there; everything was cancelled for 24 hours but the Minister failed to say about the damage done to the beach—beach erosion. The whole part of the town was under knee-deep water. I do not know why the information could not be collected even after one week from Visakhapatnam. Further he said that the damage was to the extent of Rs. 100 crores. I feel that it is only an underestimate of the damage. In West Godavari alone the damage was caused to the extent of Rs. 50 crores. So the damage in Krishna and East Godavari and part of Visakhapatnam may be much more. So taking these things into consideration, what is going to be the Central assistance given to them? The team now can easily visit Visakhapatnam and all those places; it may take four to six months of course. But what is going to be done to immediately rehabilitate the poorer sections of the people? What is the Government of India going to do in this direction? Will the Minister see to it that the team goes there immediately? It is not as if everything is cut off; normalcy is being restored now and communications are being restored; so there is no difficulty for the team to go to Visakhapatnam and the district headquarters.

Then there is damage done due to sea erosion; some of the buildings were about to be blown off on that day but somehow they were saved. What is going to be done to protect that beach?

DR. K. L. RAO : The hon. Member is talking about the beach erosion. It is true that in Visakhapatnam there has been a very serious erosion for some

time past due to various factors, one of which is that the harbour authorities have not taken sufficient care to provide sand nourishment. But whatever might be the reason, beach erosion is there. But I am afraid the hon. Member has to seek relief from the Ministry of Transport because that Ministry is concerned with this subject.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : What about the collective responsibility?

DR. K. L. RAO : That is true, but the sanction has to come from that Ministry.

Then with regard to the collection of detailed information, I tried to contact even yesterday the various Collectors in Andhra Pradesh. Whatever information I have been able to get, I have given; it may be supplemented later. If the question had come up two or three days later, probably I might have been able to give more detailed information.

With regard to the question of assistance, it is not so much connected with the team. That is not an important point. The point is that the State Government are expected to spend some of their own money in the first instance; they have to spend Rs. 75 lakhs before they can claim any Central assistance. However, if they cannot afford that much, then they can write to the Central Government for some kind of advance.

SHRI Y. ADINARAYAN REDDY (Andhra Pradesh) : In view of the colossal losses and in view of the fact that these people have been rendered homeless and have lost everything that they had due to this cyclone, I feel that the State Government will not be in a position to raise any resources for the immediate rehabilitation of these people. In view of that, may I know whether the Government of India will take the responsibility of giving the entire amount for this purpose?

DR. K. L. RAO : I have just now answered that question. If the Government of Andhra Pradesh are unable to meet the expenditure for their relief immediately, they can write to the Government of India and such a request will be considered.

SHRI K. P. MALLIKARJUNUDU (Andhra Pradesh) : Sir, I come from the district of Krishna which is one of the worst affected districts during the

[Shri K. P. Mallikarjunudu.]

recent cyclone. It is most unfortunate that our district has been subjected to three natural calamities. Last May there was a heavy cyclone when people suffered a good deal. Subsequently in October, as mentioned in the Statement there were heavy rains flooding all the fields, with the result that there was much loss of crop. To add to it comes this heavy cyclone with a strong gale. I was there at Vijayawada on that day. The gale was so terrific that it was calculated at more than a hundred miles per hour. That was the type of wind that blew. Many of the houses collapsed, many trees were uprooted and all the telegraphic and telephone wires were cut off. Till 12th or 13th when I started from Masulipatam there were no train communications; one or two trains were running only. That was the magnitude of the havoc caused to our district. I am glad that our hon. Minister is trying to set up a radar at Masulipatam. I congratulate him for that. But I should think that any radar must be able to give the warning sufficiently in advance, at least 3 or 4 days in advance, of the impending disaster and then only the people can be evacuated to safer places. I might inform the hon. Minister that in the delta districts, particularly Krishna and West Godavari, the problem is of drainage; the loss of crops is mostly due to want of drainage facilities. The P.W.D. is there for executing the drainage plans. I think the Central Government must press upon the State Government to see that proper drainage facilities are provided for these delta districts. If there are no drainage facilities, there will be no benefit derived from the irrigation system and there will be losses of crops. In order to provide sufficient relief in times of distress I would like the Government to constitute some statutory relief fund by which adequate relief can be provided in times of distress. I do not know whether there is any such proposal, but if there is no such proposal or system, I would request the Government to set up a statutory relief fund which can be utilised for providing relief in times of distress.

DR. K. L. RAO : I thank the hon. Member for the various suggestions. We will try to study them.

MR CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Yashoda Reddy.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh) : Thank you, Sir, I

would like to say one thing before I put my question. The hon. Member, Mr. Lokanath Misra, was saying that, may be, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh was going about like a cyclone here and there instead of looking after his State. In spite of my being in the opposition I would like to tell him that the Chief Minister has not been going about like a cyclone here and there; on the other hand he has been a gentle breeze and has been trying to control the cyclone here and there. I have been in Hyderabad a few days back and I must tell you that he and other Ministers have been moving about to undo the havoc caused by the cyclone, and the whole Government machinery has been geared to look into this thing, and I must say that the Government of Andhra Pradesh has not been irresponsible in the matter.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : Quite correct.

AN HON. MEMBER : He is moving like a shuttle-cock.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY : I would further like to say this. The hon. Minister said that they do not have the meteorological or other weather-forecasting systems which can pin-point the location of the cyclone. Coming from Andhra I am very sorry to say—apart from the political troubles which Andhra had to face—that this cyclone, coming again within a short period of six months, has devastated the whole coastal area—as the hon. Minister knows—and the people have suffered beyond imagination. I hope this House will express the concern for the people who have suffered there. Sir, the hon. Minister said that they had announced the coming of the cyclone through the radio. But may I remind him that in spite of all our socialism the poor fishermen have not yet come to the stage of owning even a transistor radio? Moreover, the A.I.R. has been doing some other propaganda than tell the people what is necessary to protect their lives in the circumstances. Anyway I would request the hon. Minister, just as many Members of this House have done, that some permanent relief measures and funds be created for natural calamities like famine, flood and cyclone—apart from the Prime Minister's fund—because they have been a recurring feature. And the money we spend on relief measures after, say, a famine or cyclone has taken place, is far more

than would otherwise be the case had we given priority for these things in time. If we had spent half the money now being spent—as the hon. Minister himself said—the location of the cyclone then and there would have been easier. I add my appeal to the appeal made by Shri Adinarayana Reddy to the Government of India, and I hope he will be able to persuade the Government of India to give all the assistance they can, in the shape of money and other things, so that the Government of Andhra Pradesh can do its best for rehabilitating the people of these Circar districts who had to face this tragedy again in quick succession when they had not yet recovered from the last natural calamity.

DR. K. L. RAO : The hon. Member's remarks are duly noted and they will be acted upon.

SHRI MUKHA GOVINDA REDDY : Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have admitted a number of motions . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : One moment. If the hon. Members agree, let me finish the laying of the papers on the Table. Then I will call you.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

STATEMENT OF BILLS ASSENTED TO BY THE PRESIDENT

SECRETARY : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a statement showing the Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament during the Sixty-ninth Session of the Rajya Sabha and assented to by the President.

1. The West Bengal Legislative Council (Abolition) Bill, 1969.
2. The Indian Railways (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
3. The Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Bill, 1969.
4. The Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Amendment Bill, 1969.
5. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 1969.
6. The Salaries and Allowances of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
7. The Gold (Control) Amendment Bill, 1969.

8. The Press Council (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
9. The Central Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
10. The Appropriation (Railways) No. 3 Bill, 1969.
11. The Appropriation (Railways) No. 4 Bill, 1969.
12. The Appropriation (No. 4) Bill, 1969.
13. The Bihar State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill, 1969.
14. The Foreign Marriage Bill, 1969.
15. The Banaras Hindu University (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
16. The Criminal and Election Laws Amendment Bill, 1969.
17. The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
18. The Delhi High Court (Amendment) Bill, 1969.
19. The Constitution (Twenty-second Amendment) Bill, 1969.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE REGULATION (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1969

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SARDAR IQBAL SINGH) : Sir, on behalf of Shri K. Raghuramaiah, I beg to lay on the Table under sub-clause (a) of clause (2) of article 123 of the Constitution, a copy of the Foreign Exchange Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1969 (No. 9 of 1969). [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1941/69.]

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR PAPER, PULP AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES AND MACHINE TOOLS INDUSTRY FOR THE YEAR ENDING ON THE 31ST MARCH, 1969

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI D. ERING) : Sir, on behalf of Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Reports, under sub-section (4) of section 7 of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 :—

- (i) Annual Report of the Development Council for Paper, Pulp and Allied Industries for the year ending the 31st March, 1969.