

Vol. V.

No. 1.

1036
8

The
Bihar Legislative Assembly
Debates

Official Report

Monday, the 6th September, 1948.



सत्यमेव जयते

SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRINTING
BIHAR, PATNA.

1950

[Price—Annas 6]

7. Officers deputed on flood duty are doing their best.

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE HAS WIRED AS FLOWS:-

From, Collector, Monghyr:

To: Revenue Secretary,
Ranchi

No. 13053-G. GANGA LEVEL KASTHANRNI GHAT
SIX MORNING TODAY 130 FEET TWELVE NOON 130 FEET
STOP FALLING STOP RESCUE RELIEF OPERATION CON-
TINUE STOP NO LOSS OF LIFE REPORTED

COLLECTOR.

SARAN

The floods in Saran have been terrible. As I flew from Sonapore to Chapra on 18. 9. 48 I found the entire area had become one sheet of water and men and cattle were taking shelter on railway embankments. All the major and most of the minor bandhs of the Sadar Subdivision have been breached badly, flooding all the Thanas except three namely Banipur, Marhora & Mashrak. The standing crops of all the affected thanas have been completely washed away. The number of villages affected so far is approximately 1000. Out of these 700 are wholly affected and the rest partially affected. This flood is unprecedented & has caused extensive devastations. Naini bandh was badly breached. A part of Chapra town north of the railway line and also its extreme eastern portion have been affected. The other parts of the town were threatened. No official figures about loss of human life or that of animal is available but some deaths are unofficially reported to have occurred either due to drowning or house collapse. The total number of houses damaged cannot be estimated with accuracy at present but it is gathered that several thousand houses have collapsed so far.

RELIEF MEASURES.

In all the affected thanas gazetted officers with a number of assistants belonging to other departments have been deputed for flood relief work at various centres. The officers have subdivided their jurisdictions into a number of operational centres and are doing their job in cooperation with the local public workers and with police help. The relief operations have been considerably hampered owing to lack of adequate number of boats. Besides Government & District Board boats, a number of private boats, wherever available have been hired. The Collector was unsuccessful in his attempts to get the ducks from the Military or a Steamer from railway I.G.S.N. Some tugs of U. P. were stranded at Revilganj and were utilised by him for rescue work. One motor launch of U. P. was also utilised for the purpose. One steamer of I. G.N. Co. Ltd. which happened to be passing via Revilganj and Chapra was commandeered and is being used for evacuating the stranded and marooned persons in Diara villages, in Revilgan and Chapra Mofassil thanas. None of these facilities were, however, available in Dighwara and Sonpur areas where he had to depend on boats available. The Steamer has, however, now been sent to that side.

Food and other essential commodities are being rushed to the relief centres for distribution among sufferers. The railway authorities have extended their full cooperation in providing transport facilities as far as possible. One of the worst affected parts is Sonpur where the entire railway colony and other Government buildings were submerged rendering the railway and other employees shelterless. The thana building and A. S. Is quarters have collapsed. The police officers have been accommodated in tents on the platform. The Sonpur railway station yard is now being used by these railway employees and a large number of other sufferers as a place of refuge. Arrangements for sanitation and inoculation have been made through the District Board. The Commissioner and the Collector paid a visit to Sonpore on the 15th September 1948 with the S.P. Railway communications have been seriously threatened and the Collector was not getting gauge reports for the

last two days but there are indications that Ganges and Ghoghra will now fall. The areas in the northern portions of the railway embankment are now more affected after the breach in Tajpurand Naini Bandhs.

About five thousand people have taken shelter in Chapra town. Officers, Professors and non-official workers are supervising relief. Fair price shops have been opened for those who would not accept gratuitous relief. Sanitary measures have been taken and inoculations against cholera are being given. Sanitary and relief arrangements have also been made in Revilganj where about 4000 have taken shelter.

Foodstuffs have been locally requisitioned and further supplies are expected through Supply Department from Purnea.

The greatest problem is about fodder for cattle. The maize crops have been washed away and whatever the people could cut after floods, will last for a few days only. Local Goshalas are unable to help. Several thousand cattle have taken shelter in the town also and it is very difficult to solve the fodder problem.

FOOD ALLOTTED FOR DISTRIBUTION :—

Previous food allotment— 2,500 mds.

Food grains issued for
distribution in addition
to above.

10,363 mds.

Nearly 13 thousand mds.

Maize— 7678 mds.

Gram 1789 „

Rice 480 „

Wheat 5 mds.

Satu 51 mds
10,363 mds.

Kerosene oil 132 tins

Salt. 266 mds.

No. Of evaceues.

Chapra town. 5000

Revilganj 4000

All are being fed at Government cost. People are taking shelter on Railway embankments. They would not like to shift.

The floods are fast receding. As I travelled on the plane from Hathwa to Arrah via Balia I found that the green fields had once more become visible. Whereas I saw the area from Jahanabad to Patna covered with water on the 17th September, in my return journey on the 19th I found that the green fields had once more begun to peep out. But the floods have left tremendous problems behind which may be summed up as follows:-

(1) Patua and Shahebad districts are trying to have fodder from their other areas in the districts which have not been affected by the floods. But the Collector of Saran pleaded inability to obtain local supply. He thought that Gorakhpur might be able to help. As floods overtook the districts of U. P. also we are doubtful that help can the U. P. Government give but we have written to the U. P. Government to come to our rescue.

(2) Any number of houses have collapsed in all the floods affected areas. Such of the people as are indigent will have to be given gratuitous help either in cash or kind, preferably in kind.

But loans will have to be advanced to those who would not take gratuitous help. Following the principle that some times good cometh out of evil we propose to plan reconstruction of the houses in the villages so that congestion may be avoided. No scheme has been as yet drawn up but the idea is being examined.

(3) When the floods were on, it was not so difficult provided boats were available to reach relief to the people in the flood affected villages. But now these unfortunate villages will become surrounded by mud and it will be difficult to reach them. Still relief will have to be reached. Food grains shops will have to be opened. Such of them as can afford to buy will buy from these shops. But gratuitous relief will have to be given to a large number of indigent persons. Such indigent persons may also be employed on road reconstruction or on construction of bands and Vhars which the Revenue Department is undertaking. The Collector of Saran thinks that if the repair of Najni Bandh which has been breached is undertaken a large number of persons could be employed.

(4) Supply of seeds is the most urgent problem. The Agriculture Department is being requested to make the necessary arrangements. But in any case seeds will have to be arranged. People may not be able to purchase seeds. So loans will have to be provided.

(5) The Public Health Department has done its best to relieve distress. But its problems will increase when the water will recede altogether. There is danger of epidemics like cholera and typhoid breaking out. Wells will have to be disinfected and inoculations given.

(6) The Collector of Saran has suggested that 3 motor launches as in U. P. should be made available to meet floods in future. The Commissioner of Patna has suggested that the Patna protection bandh should be raised by 1 ft.

For giving the above mentioned reliefs it is expected by rough calculations that a sum of Rs. 50 lakhs have to be spent. But my own opinion is that we have got to find out permanent solution for the problem and though it might look like my talking shop, I think that the permanent solution lies in covering the plateau of Chota Nagpur, specially the districts of Palamau, Hazaribagh and Santal Parganas with forests and a number of small irrigation bandhs. Besides being useful to the people of these 3 districts they will serve the purpose of arresting the rapid flow of water of the rivers which have their rise in these three districts and flow into the districts of Gaya, Patna, Sahabad, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. As a result of the rapid flow of water in these rivers their banks in the South Bihar districts have been washed away and water can now easily overflow the lands and cover them with floods. The rivers will have to be dug deep so that the water might easily flow into the Ganges without inundating the areas round about. Government are examining whether a Commission should not be appointed for this purpose. Similarly for the North Bihar districts, though it is true that the Kosi Dam will solve the problem of Purnea, Srharsa and Darbhanga, for the solution of the flood problems of Saran and Muzaffarpur it is necessary, in my opinion, that a belt of forests 2 miles in breadth should be planted on the border of Nepal to arrest the rapid flow of rivers that come from there.

So far as Government is concerned I would like to assure the Hon'ble members that we are quite awake to the situation and are determined to play our part. It is a happy augury that in this distress the officials and non-officials of all ranks and grades have co-operated to relieve human misery. I must take this occasion to thank both the officials and non-officials for what they have done.

SHRI MURLI MANOHAR PRASAD : Sir, with your permission I would like to make a suggestion to the Hon'ble Revenue Minister and to the Leader of the House in view of the unprecedented flood of this year and the very narrowing account read by the Hon'ble Revenue Minister. Sir, many of the houses of people have been washed away during this flood and rendered homeless and they stand

in need of help from Government. I would be grateful if the Leader of the House would give us an opportunity to discuss this matter on the floor of the House.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : 28th of September may be fixed for this purpose.

MR. PRABHUNATH SINHA : इसे far earlier कर लिया जाय तो बहुत अच्छा है ।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : यह far earlier कैसे हो सकता है । कल तो इसे नहीं कर सकते हैं । क्यों कि कल तो फाइनेशियल बिजीनेस है और कल हमलोग ११ बजे से लेकर ५ बजे तक बैठेंगे । परसों नान आफिशियल रेजूलेशन है । उसको हम आपलोगों से छिन नहीं सकते । यदि छिनना चाहूं तो आपलोग पसन्द नहीं करेंगे । आपलोग शनीश्चर को भी बैठना चाहें तो बैठ सकते हैं ।

MR. PRABHUNATH SINHA : शनीश्चर को हमलोग बैठ सकते हैं ।

HON'BLE MEMBERS : नहीं, नहीं ।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : तो मैं चाहता हूँ कि Financial Business पहले हो जाय क्यों कि उस विषय में हमें कौंसिल से मदद लेनी है । इसलिए जितने Urgent Matters हैं उन्हें पहले मंजूर कर लिया जाय । इसके बाद २७ को official business है । उसके बाद आपलोग चाहें तो एक दिन flood के लिए ले सकते हैं ।

MR. PRABHUNATH SINHA : मेरे ख्याल में Flood से बढ़ कर कोई दूसरा Urgent काम नहीं है । इसलिए यह तय हो जाना चाहिए कि आज लड़ाई ही Urgent matter हो सकती है । जो लोग यह कह रहे हैं कि नहीं, नहीं, हो सकता है ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : यदि आप चाहें तो शुक्रवार को इसे Non-official business की जगह रख सकते हैं ।

MR. PRABHUNATH SINHA : मेरी भी यही राय है कि २६ को Non-official resolution के लिए रखा जाय और २४ को flood पर बहस कर लिया जाय ।

Mr. MURLI MONOHAR PRASAD: May I, Sir, very respectfully submit that Saturday should be fixed as the day for discussion of this.

MANY HONORABLE MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. MURLI MANOHAR PRASAD: I would just tell those hon'ble members who have said "No" to remember that whole village have been washed away and thousands have lost all that they had. If they knew what actually happened, they would never say "No". They would rather prefer to sit here the whole night and discuss this problem. This would only mean just a little rest and recreation for us; but the damage done this year is of such magnitude that no consideration for rest and recreation should be allowed to intervene in the discussion of this very, very grave problem. The non-official resolution tabled for the 34th of this month is very important.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : Order, order. Such a charge can be done with the consent of the House. The House is supreme in conducting its business.

Mr. MURLI MANOHAR PRASAD: Sir, am I entitled to make an appeal to the House to permit the discussion to take place on Saturday in view of the gravity of the situation that has been created by the unprecedented floods that have occurred this year ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Order, order. In view of gravity of the situation as remarked by the hon'ble member just now, I would like to support the suggestion made by Shri Prabhunath Singh who wanted this discussion to be fixed for a previous day instead of having it fixed for Saturday, that is on Friday.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes, yes.

Mr. MURLI MANOHAR PRASAD: I have no objection, provided this discussion takes place as early as possible.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Then another suggestion was that on Friday the flood situation may be discussed and the non-official resolution may be transferred to Tuesday, the 28th.

THE HON'BLE Dr. ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINHA: Sir, I appeal for not postponing the non-official resolution fixed for the 24th, because it is a very important resolution which will come before the House on that day. It is as vital as the floods because it relates to food and cloth. If we are not able to discuss that resolution on that day because of floods we shall never be able to do that. Therefore there is no justification for postponing the non-official resolution fixed for the 24th to some other day and discuss the floods on that day. I do not suppose anything will be lost by discussing the floods on the 25th, 26th or 27th.

HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Now, I find great difficulty in deciding priority between these two matters: (Laughter)

THE HON'BLE Dr. ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINHA: Sir, as food concerns everybody everyday it is of more vital importance to us than floods which have come and gone and normal life has to be resumed.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I could not anticipate, although I ought to have anticipated, that one hon'ble member might rise & suggest that a day should be set apart for this resolution. But what I had settled in my mind was this that there is also a demand with respect to flood, and tomorrow is the day for discussion of the cut motion arising out of demand No. 5. The complete demand relates to a provision for flood-affected areas, Then if members try reasonably to reach that demand as early as possible the entire day may be devoted to the discussion of floods, or this may be done partly tomorrow and partly on any other day.

Mr. JAGANNATH SINGH : May I know if various points can be made legally while discussing the cut motion on floods ?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : Yes, because the demand is for that purpose. When the demand provides for gratuitous relief to flood affected areas, it relates to the entire provision and does not localise the discussion. I have therefore allowed cut-motion No. 39 regarding discussion of gratuitous relief in the flood-affected areas of Shri Jagdish Narayan Sinha which arises out of Demand No. 5 presented by the Hon'ble Mr. K. B. Sahay.

Mr. JADUBANS SAHAY : Sir, we are thankful for your pointing this out to us; but may I most respectfully point out that if this procedure is adopted, I apprehend that other cut motions will be wiped out as there will be no time left for them ?

Mr. MURLI MANOHAR PRASAD : Sir, in view of the gravity of the situation I would most respectfully urge that a separate day be allowed for the discussion of the flood problem. It may be either the 24th or the 28th.

THE HON'BLE DR. SRIKRISHNA SINHA : हमको कोई उज्ज नहीं है। जिस दिन हो आप बहस करें। यह आपको तय करना है।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : यह बात तय है कि आपको एक दिन बहस के लिये मिल सकता है। इसमें उज्ज नहीं है। आप २४ तारीख को इसको लेना चाहते हैं या २८ तारीख को लेना चाहते हैं ?

MR. PRABHUNATH SINHA : अगर २४ को बहस न हो तो २५ को लिया जाय।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : एक बात और है। Government को हिदायत किया जाय कि Statement छपवा कर मेम्बरों को बांट दे।

THE HON'BLE MR. KRISHNA BALLABH SAHAY : मैं यह बात कहने ही जा रहा था।