

non-controversial, long-term solution to the acute power crisis that has been the State's greatest bottleneck in industrial development for the last two decades."

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 May I request the Government to immediately look into this? The Chief Minister of Kerala came here and made a representation to the Ministry of Petroleum; he was pursuing this matter. For the last two decades, we are waiting for this.

It will not help the Kerala State but all the southern state will be benefited by this grid. So, may I request the hon. Minister and the Government to look into this? If it is rejected, it should be reconsidered for industrial development of Kerala.

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RE: TEHRI DAM

[*Translation*]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise such an issue before you on which I would expect an assistance also from you. The question on Tehri Dam has been raised so many times in the House and a number of statements have also been made on it by the Government. Mr. Speaker Sir, recently, about 10 to 12 days back, Sunder Lal Bhuguna, who is a leader of this movement has started hunger strike. His hunger strike has completed 20 today. Before starting the hunger strike, he had staged a *Dharna* some 2 to 4 days back in Tehri. The police not only arrested him but the people who were sitting with him were also beaten up by the goondas and has tried to make them run away from there by opposing him in a very rude manner. After it Sunder Lalji was arrested and sent to Roorkee jail. He started hunger strike in Roorkee jail. Later on, the Government decided to release him and the District

Magistrate released him but Shri Sunder Lalji has started hunger strike/again after reaching Tehri. As I have already said that he has completed 20 days of his hunger strike, I do not want to discuss the various aspects of the case, but I would like to draw your attention on some authentic news which have been published in the newspapers during the last 3-4 days. According to the news there are some statements made by the Environmental Minister, Kamal Nath that his Ministry opposes the dam firmly. His Ministry is not only opposing the environmental conditions of the region but is also opposing the situations which crop up after the earthquake.

Now a new situation has been created and the money which was to be given by Russia for the dam, has been stopped. I have got one other information through some letters received from there that the contractors are doing the construction work of the dam with their own money because the Government is unable to provide the amount. Plastering work is in progress there. The whole of the arrangements and the situation are under the control of the contractors. They are carrying out the construction work of the dam as if they are the owners of the land and the country without paying any heed to the administration. Perhaps they are sure that they will get their payment. I know that this matter is a bone of contention for the Government but here I have a copy of the letter which Bahugunaji has written to the Prime Minister and copy has been sent to us. This letter is of 15th i.e. of three days earlier. There is a mention of the meeting held with the Prime Minister. It has also been mentioned in the letter how did the Prime Minister realised the gravity of the problem sympathetically and Shri Sunder Lalji was very much confident that this matter would be resolved but there is no progress at all in this regard.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am worried about the

life of Shri Sunder Lalji. Today he has completed 20 days of his hunger strike. He is a Gandhian fellow. All of you know him very well. He has gone on a severe hunger strike. You know that Sunder Lalji is not only known in India alone but in the whole world also. He has been awarded with the 'Right Livelihood', which is known as an alternative of 'Noble Prize', in connection with his work on Chipko and environment. The life of the same person is in danger today. One of the departments of the Govt. comments that the role of Sunder Lalji is right; may be these words are not theirs, but they do admit that it is not wise to advance the construction work of dam there. The other body of the Government feels that this work should be done Lalji is sitting here. I know that the Bhartiya Janata Party has shown its resentment over this Tehri issue, both in the House as well as outside the House. Many of its Members have raised this issue many times in this House. Once, half an hour debate was conducted here over this issue and the other questions related to it, the people's representatives of that area have made their roles clear against this issue. The Members of Bhartiya Janata Party from that area are also present in the House. In these circumstances, through you, I request Lalji. I do not know whether it comes under rule or not but I want to say one thing that the prevailing terror of police and Magistrate through the contractor in Tehri and Garhwal, should immediately be stopped. No steps is being taken to stop that terror of the contractors. The terror should be stopped in that area because on the 20th, a big public meeting is going to be held there.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of my request is that whatever steps is required to be taken by the Government to save the life of Sunder Lal Bahuguna should be taken immediately. You please direct the Government to take that step without further delay.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to repeat the

words of George Sahib, I want to say this much only that on that on the 28th February, when the activists of the movement were sleeping and particularly when there was no question of demonstration, raising slogans, launching agitation etc., the arrest of the people while they were sleeping, and not even giving remand for 8 days, are against the prescribed procedure of the Indian Penal Code. Under some circumstances, Sunder Lalji Bahuguna was released but the 18 persons, arrested along with him, are still in jail and nothing has been done for their release.

Secondly, the Government should make it clear before the House as to what is the present position of this Tehri Project since the aid which was to be received by us from Russia is likely to be curtailed due to disintegration of that country and there is every possibility that this aid will not be received any more to enable us to complete this projects. Will the Government get that project completed or not under these circumstances? In view of all the geographical situations after the earthquake, it is said that the completion of that project will be against the environment. According to the newspapers reports, the Environment Ministry states that it would reconsider the issue of issuing a 'no objection certificate' to this project because the Technocrats did not comply all the directives given by the Government in this regard so it is not known whether they would reject it or not. Such a situation has come up, therefore, the Government should give statement on these issues, as to what will be the treatment of the Government with those people who were arrested under the leadership of Sunder Lal Bahuguna? Secondly, will that project be completed or not in case the aid from Russia is stopped. Thirdly from the technical point of view, the completion of that project is still desirable or not after the earthquake? I submit that the Government should give a complete statement before the House on the present situation of

doubt and distrust prevailing in the country.

[English]

SHRIMATIMALINIBHATTACHARAYA (Jadavines): We also feel that the environmental security aspect of the Tehri Dam should be reviewed.

SHRI LAL KRISHNA ADVANI (Gandhinagar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on one aspect of the question raised by my friend George Fernandes just now, I think that the whole House will be unanimous that a person like Shri Sunder Lalji Bahuguna who has done a lot for environment, has done such a penance, if it is the 20th day of his hunger strike, then it is a matter of great concern.

We would make an appeal to all those persons who can influence him. We will make an appeal to him that whatever he has said on this problem has attracted the attention of the whole country. So he should break his fast. I had a talk to this effect yesterday with the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. He had also told me that he was going to make an appeal to him to break his fast. There are two opinions of experts as well as two opinions of public on the question whether the dam should be constructed there or not and if it is to be constructed, what should be its height. This House has also held a discussion on it once or twice. The members elected from there had opposed it particularly after the earthquake. It is high time that the Central Government apprised the House of what it has thought of so far on the basis of technical experts' advice. The Environment Minister had written only one thing. That would not do. If the Government does not do anything in this matter, that will not suffice. We can express our views only after information on the dam is made available to us by Government about its views which it has based on the technical consultations, particularly after the earthquake.

I have taken up this issue with the State Government and the State Government also says that it appears from the reports of technical experts that there is no danger to the dam even after the earthquake. If this dam is not constructed, the area may suffer. These are the two aspects of the issue. The Government of India should decide the aspect which carries more weight and then place the information available with it before the House. With this request, I support George Saheb. (*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): We also join the appeal.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): The hunger-strike should end. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is true to say that Government should make up its mind and the State Government should reconsider it, as Advaniji has said. We have all regards for Sunderlalji. But is it proper to stake one's life to prevent the construction of a dam? (*Interruptions*) When such a big project of Narmada has been taken in and someone may feel about it strongly on environment, but how far is it proper to resort to hunger-strike while the Narmada development project is in hand? As Advaniji has suggested that George Saheb should use his influence. Sunderlalji has been released. Let him call off the hunger-strike so that the entire issue can be reviewed by the Centre. There can be no objection to it. But if the hunger-strike continues, tension will continue to prevail there.

[English]

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katwa): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we also join with other in this appeal.

About these big projects, certain concerns have been expressed by many people, who are very reputed people and who have done a lot of work on this area. Shri Vajpayee has referred to about Narmada project. Their representatives came to us and they have also expressed certain doubts about the displaced persons. Now, if certain doubts are there and certain questions are raised by people like Shri Sunder Lal Bahuguna and those percolate down to the common people, then what steps the Government would take to remove the fears from the minds of the people? Now there has to be development projects. There may certain objections and they may not be from right angle. But how to create an opinion in the country and how to convince the people? It should not be something of confrontation but it should be to convince the people. That is why we urge upon the Government to take the leaders and all others who are concerned into confidence, to place before them everything and to really convince the people that it is being done for the interest of the country and not for any other purpose, and that those who are going to be displaced, will be properly rehabilitated. This is a very serious aspect. The way the concerns are expressed, we just cannot brush them aside by saying that these are motivated. No. With a clear outlook we have to deal with the situation. That is my appeal.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RABI RAY (Kendrapara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we all make an appeal to Bahugunaji along with Kalyan Singh ji's statement and Advaniji's appeal to him to call off his hunger strike. He is not a leader of a particular party. He launched 'Chipako' movement on environment and has specific knowledge of environment. He takes pains for it. He is a public leader. That is why I request Shri Kumaramangalam that an appeal should be made on behalf of the Government of India to the effect that Bahu-

gunaji may call off his hunger-strike immediately as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh is going to make an appeal to him to call off his hunger-strike so that his valuable life can be saved.

Secondly, we have expressed our fears on this issue in this House, I would like to raise a fundamental question as the Government has said nothing about it. For the last three-four days it has been appearing in newspapers that the Environment Minister Kamal Nath ji was going to withdraw the interim clearance given for the construction of the Tehri dam. If it is so, the cause will end for which Bahugunaji is fighting and working for the hill-people in case the Government accepts it. Instead of letting the news leaked out - - which has been leaking for three days and the press reporters are told - -

[*English*]

"Sources close to. Shri Kamal Nath say"

[*Translation*]

That Government should have informed us about its stand, its technical stand on such a serious issue on which the entire House is worried, as Russia has said that it will not give money, so that the House can make up its mind.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani): Mr. Speaker Sir, the House should make an appeal to Bahugunaji to break his fast. As far as its technical aspect is concerned, much time and resources have been spent on its utility. Water resource are the biggest resources to the country. If we don't harness it, there are floods, droughts and powers crisis. So it is totally against the interests of the country as well humanity to stop these multi-purpose river projects in the name of environment. Shri Rabi Ray has submitted in right spirit that if the Environment Minister

does anything on his own, it is not proper. The Government should adopt unanimous stand otherwise internal problems arise. As far as the displaced persons are concerned, all of us should make a demand for them. But to create obstacles is against the national interests. There should not be any condition for it. The fate of the nation depends of it. This is not case on a particular region. Electricity is generated from water and coal but the electricity from coal causes environmental degradation. If orders are issued for planting trees on both sides of canals, then the number of trees will become fifty times more than earlier. In the same way plantation of trees on both sides of rail track and roads should form part of the national policy. If it is done, the entire country will become a garden. Environment should form part of the national policy.

I request you to make an appeal to Bahugunaji to call off his hunger strike.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Chandulaji, are you to speak on this point?

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR: (Durg): On this point and also on another point.

MR. SPEAKER: On this point 'yes', on the other issue probably 'no'.

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR: That is also very essential, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Then you speak on the other issue. I will give you a chance after this. You take it up afterwards please.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINIS-

TRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARANJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue of Tehri Dam has been raised by almost all the parties. I totally agree that Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna is not a person who belongs to any particular party. He is a well-known environmentalist. I would like to join, and the Government would also like to join with the House in unanimously requesting him and appealing to him to give up his fast. This issue has been discussed many a time in this House with various Governments. As rightly pointed out by Shri Bhogendra Jha, the technical and financial aspects have also been discussed. There are equally strong feeling, both from environmental angle as well as the utilisation point of view. I think it would be advisable, instead of going on and on this subject, to say that all the parties are concerned about this matter. I think we should all sit together at some particular period of time -we have time during this session-and really work out a solution, instead of having a constant barrage whether it is right or wrong, whether it is technically perfect or not etc. There is no party involved in this. This is a development matter. Let us take up this development matter in that sense of the term that it is for the benefit of the country, whether the benefit is such that it justifies or does not justify, may be, certain other problems.

I think it is better that we discuss it between ourselves first and come to a complete picture on it and then, instead of confusing the atmosphere more, come out with - as rightly pointed out- a collective thought, through the people, so that a development project does go through.

With regard to the so-called leakages. 'sources close to the hon. Environment Minister has quoted this matter' etc., I think the hon. Minister who is present here would find out which are the papers being referred to and come back, if you want to. But I do not think it is necessary.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): I do not know what is happening.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, the matter relating to Shri Bahuguna's hunger strike and Tehri Dam was raised. Are you interested in saying something at this point of time?

SHRI BHOGENDARAJHA: What about leakage?

MR. SPEAKER: No, leakage is a very minor issue.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, I was not in the House earlier. My colleague, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, was telling me what happened here. I suppose the Members here would be happy if he would tell me what was discussed. He was appraising me what was discussed in this House. I was in the Rajya Sabha. A similar issue was raised in the Rajya Sabha.

I have stated on the floor of this House before that environmental clearance to the Tehri Dam project was given in July, 1990. But this clearance was given subject to certain conditions. I have also stated on the floor of the House several months ago that some of these conditions have not been fulfilled. I have brought this to the notice of the Tehri Dam authorities and we have been interacting with them. Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna has been on fast after his release from arrest. I would like to inform the hon. Members here that in this connection I wrote to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh offering any information, any input which may be required to facilitate any negotiation or discussion which could, perhaps, take place. Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna had met me also some time ago and asked me about the status. We all know that approval on the Environmental Protec-

tion Act does not mean that the Government alone has to act but the people who are non-government can also act. notices have been issued to my Ministry for stoppage of this work. We are actively considering them. There is no subterfuge. There is no secret in this. I have stated on the floor of the House and I reiterate that I would not have any hesitation in withdrawing environmental clearance to the Tehri Dam if the environment conditions are not met or are not going to be met.

If they are going to be violated, I am not going to accept that situation. We are very clear on this because this is just not the question of a development project. There are many reunifications of it and more so after the earth quake. I have also talked to the hon. Members from that area. Hon. Members won't mind my saying that I talked to Col. Khanduriji and others on this and they have written to me, they have met me, and I have discussed with them to find out what are their views since they are people's representatives. So, I have constantly been having this interaction, there is no subterfuge that somebody is leaking something there is nothing like this, it is all very open and whatever conditions are there are there, there is nothing to leak, what has not been fulfilled, has not been fulfilled there is nothing to leak. I have taken a very clear and open position on the floor of this House. So, I would only like to inform the Members that I had written to the hon. Chief Minister of U.P. saying that there cannot be any difference of opinion on issues relating to environmental impact on catchment area treatment, on disaster management plans etc. I did write to the U.P. Chief Minister last week that we could perhaps have discussions with Shri Sunderlal Bahugunaji and I would be very willing to provide any forum, any information, any input required to facilitate this discussion because it is not a very happy situation that Bahugunaji has been on this agitation - first he was arrested and now he is on fast,

and also there are reports which I do not know whether they are correct, I am not making any allegation, he has not been treated properly. So, Sir, I would assure this House that this matter of withdrawing environmental clearance to the Tehri Dam is, as I have stated in the Rajya Sabha, under active consideration and with this I thought we could appeal to Shri Sundarlal Bahugunaji to withdraw his agitation.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Sir, he has made the confusion worse confounded. He has not told what are the conditions that have not been fulfilled and which conditions need to be fulfilled.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, let us take that he has not confused any issue, he has not given any assurance, he would look into the matter very carefully.

Well, on your behalf, on behalf of the Members of Parliament, I would like to say something.

I know Shri Sundarlal Bahugunaji. I had several occasions to meet him and discuss some issues on environment with him. He is an evolved soul. We want his guidance and blessings for the protection of the environment. He should remain hale and hearty. The environment should be protected and preserved. The development should be brought about. If at times they look contrary to each other, we have to strike a balance between the two.

On the Tehri Dam, people have different views. They have to be studied carefully and action has to be taken carefully. Certainly necessary steps can be taken by the Government to study the issue carefully. We, the Members of Lok Sabha, would like to entreat that he should give up his hunger strike and continue to guide the environmentalists and the movement for the protection

of the environment in this country and we hope he will heed to our request.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of you know that the Bhilai Steel Plant is the largest plant in the country and it is running well. But iron ore is brought here from Dalli-Rajhara but the sources are likely to be exhausted within three years. The construction of rail line from Dalli-Rajhara to Bailadilla has not begun so far. But there are chances of the closure of the Bhilai Plant after three years.

[Translation]

All the workers of Bhilai, whether they are in steel plant or SAIL and even the Union Steel Minister are worried that this large industry which is giving maximum profit, shall be closed after three or four years, if a railway line is not laid there. That is why, through you I would like to make a special request to the Minister and the Council of Ministers, to expedite construction work on that railway line. If this is not done, it will be of serious consequences. District Bastar is the Biggest tribal district-bigger than Haryana- but it has no railway line. This is the reason, why there is no progress and development in the tribal area. There are various kinds of metals and minerals there which are not being tapped properly. That is why, today, through you, I would like to make a special request that they should start the work for the construction of the railway line.

Secondly, I like to thank the hon. Speaker for appealing to Shri Sunder Lal Bahuguna to end his hunger strike. I also know him for the last forty years. When I was in a Newspaper, he too was associated with the News-  
pa-