

[Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma]

breadth of Brahmaputra widened to the extent of 15 kilometres due to excessive silt desposition.

During the last two decades more than 10 thousand villages including part of the river islands Majuli amounting 10 per cent of the total fertile cultivable land of Assam were engulfed by the river system. Every year there are loss of life, property of several hundred crores including disruption of road and rail communication. The maximum damage done last year resulting in disruption of road communication and breach of embankments could not be repaired yet due to financial stringency in Jonai, Dhemaji, Majuli, Lakhimpur, Sodia, Chabua, Dhakuakhana and Nowboicha areas under my parliamentary constituency.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Ministry of Water Resources to draw a special plan for desiltation fo the river system by way of dredging and to provide additional fund urgently for immediate restoration of the protection bundhs and road comunication before the start of rainy season. the Brahmaputra Board may also be specially advised for prepanng a master plan to deal with the situation by applying remote sensing device and dredging operation

(viii) Need to solve acute scarcity of drinking water in Bonda district, UP.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSAJEEVAN (Banda) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a large tract of land in district Banda, UP consists of plataues, hillocks and uneven topography. Drinking water is avaiabile at about 150 to 200 feet below the ground level. The drought affected farmers have utilised whatsoever little rain water was left in all ponds etc. by flushing it out with the help of the pump-sets for irrigation purpose. Lakhs of people are at present faced with acute scarcity of safe drinking water and this problem is going to acquire serious dimensions during the coming Summer.

Therefore, the need of the hour is to solve the drinking water problem urgently and for that immediate steps should be taken by the Government. The Government should also provide funds for the pending drinking water schemes. The antiquated rig machines for digging hand-pums should be declared obsolete and more and more hand-pumps should be installed by procuring modern rig machines of greater capacity. In ordder to sovie the drinking water problem the Central Government should release Rs. five crore directly to the District Development Agency of Banda.

(ix) Need to take steps to Revive Sick NTC Mills in U.P. Particularly in Kanpur

[English]

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA (Kanpur) : Sir, there are 11 mills, five in Kanpur itself and the rest in other parts of the State, under the control of NTC (UP) Ltd. These were taken over as sick unit and nationalised by STUNA in 1974 with a view to cater to the needs of poor and middle people.

Since September, 1991, their production activities became standstill due to budgetary cut and now declared under "C" category. In order to revive these mills, the Production Plan was prepared by NITRA under Textile Ministry in 1993. A reference was also made to BIFR regardig the accumulated losses suffered by the subsidiary which opined that unless the accumulated losses were converted to equity or else written off, the net worth of subsidiary cannot become positive within stipulated period

I urge upon the Government to take up immediate steps to revive their sick mills.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai-North) : Sir, I have been allowed by the hon. Speaker as a standby to raise a matter under Rule 377.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am not aware of it. What is the subject ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : It was regarding keeping INS Vikrant in the Museum.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : All right please speak.

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am also a standby. I request you to allow me also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am allowing him because he had said that the hon. Speaker has allowed him

(x) Need to Preserve INS Vikrant as a Symbol of Patriotism and Nationalism

[English]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai North) : On 31st January 1997, the grand old lady of the Indian Navy, INS Vikrant was decommissioned from the Indian Navy after thirty-five years of distinguished and meritorious service.

Vikrant has been the nation's pride and her name is synonymous with India's naval aviation. In fact, she has trained and groomed a whole generation of India's naval aviators in the post-independence era.

After giving a war winning performance in the 1971 war, considered by many as one of the fourteen most important wars in the history of warfare, Vikrant will now end up in the ship-breaker's yard.

A glorious symbol of India's naval superiority will be unceremoniously destroyed and sold off as junk.

Two of India's celebrated warships INS Delhi and INS Mysore have already been destroyed after their decommissioning. The same fate lies in store for INS Vikrant if speedy steps of save her are not taken.

No Indian can ever forget Vikrant and she has been loved by the young and the old alike. In today's times, when we rarely agree on any particular issue, Vikrant is a true symbol which every Indian loves and will wholeheartedly agree should not be destroyed. Vikrant can indeed be preserved as a symbol of patriotism and nationalism

I urge upon the Government to consider the proposal keeping in mind the opinion of the populace and the benefit of the country at large and preserve Vikrant as a symbol of patriotism and nationalism

14.42 hrs.

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL OF
PORT LAWS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE

AND

*PORT LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : I beg to move .

"That this House disapproves of the Port Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997 (No.1 of 1997) promulgated by the President on January 9, 1997."

[*Translation*]

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Government has brought many ordinances in place of Bills. During this inter-session

many ordinances have been promulgated. There is one similarity between these ordinances. Everytime the pretext is that as the Parliament was not in session and the President was satisfied that there was urgent need to bring about an ordinance, that is why it was promulgated. Except this nothing has been said. What was the need of bringing an ordinance here ? This ordinance was promulgated on 9th January. What action has been taken by the Government in this regard so far. Heavens would not have fallen if this was not done. In a parliamentary democracy it is the right of Parliament to frame laws but this Government is trying to deny us that right and laws are being thrust upon us through back door.

The experiment of Standing Committees is in the fourth year. It has been provided in the Rules that the Chairman of Rajya Sabha and the Speaker of Lok Sabha can refer any bill to these Standing Committees. They can discuss at length on these bills and then submit their report to the Parliament. It is in this backdrop that Parliament discusses these bills. If it is not possible to refer all the Bills to the Standing Committees, the Speaker and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha have a right to selectively refer some of the Bills of the Standing Committees. The Government has a tendency to bypass the Parliament and deny the Standing Committees of its rights. The Government has not be able to satisfy the Members of the Rajya Sabha as to why an ordinance was brought in regard to this Bill. Now this Bill is being discussed in this House. There has been not much discussion over this Bill in the Rajya Sabha. I do not want to comment on that. One hour has been allocated for discussing this Bill in this House. The situation today is that we are opening up our ports and privatising them. Any individual can invest in them. If this happens what will happen to national security. I do not want to quote from the reply that the hon. Minister has given in the Rajya Sabha because the time at my disposal is short. The hon. Minister has said that Rs. 750 crore would be invested by private parties. This is the only achievement. Investment has not come so far but he has got a commitment to this effect. I would like to ask that though the ordinance was promulgated on 9th January but what happened to the setting up of the authority. I fail to understand why there was such a hurry for issuing this ordinance. It would have been proper if this Bill would have been referred to the Standing committee which would have discussed in detail all the aspects and it could have been discussed here in this Budget Session. Today we are not able to discuss it in all its aspects. Besides issuing ordinances for such matters is not goods. By doing so assault is made on the