

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

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## LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 18, 1980/Phalguna 28, 1901 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission

\*102. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN:  
SHRI KRISHNA PRATAP  
SINGH:

Will the Minister of ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission had a round of talks in the last week for February, 1980, on the question of sharing river waters between the two countries;

(b) if so, what specific issues were discussed therein and what decisions were taken as a result thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY): (a) to (c). The 18th meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission was held at New Delhi between the 27th and 29th February, 1980. Discussions took place on the Augmentation of the dry season flows of the Ganga, a task entrusted to the Commission in the November 1977. Agreement on the sharing of the Ganga Waters at 2793 LS—1

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Farakka and on Augmenting its flows, as well as on issues relating to the sharing of the Tista waters.

The differences on the issue of association of Nepal in the study of Bangladesh proposal persisted. It is proposed to resume the meeting early for finalising the record of discussions including the areas of difference.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: The question is very much related with the life and death problem of Calcutta port. Calcutta city is the heart of West Bengal. The Calcutta port requires a minimum of forty thousand cusecs of water even during the lean season. For this purpose, India had proposed the Ganga Brahmaputra Canal and Tista Mahananda Project to improve the dry season flow of Ganga. The discussions had, however, to be discontinued due to the fact stated in the reply. Further, it is clear from the impression expressed by Shri M. Dubey, High Commissioner in Dacca and the press statement made by Shri Anwarul Haque, Irrigation Minister of Bangladesh on 5th March, 1980 that Bangladesh deliberately blocked the consideration of various schemes for over two years by proposing to enlarge the scope of 1977 agreement by way of inclusion of Nepal in the agreement. In view of this, I would like to know clearly from the hon. Minister, (a) whether the Government is ready to include Nepal in Joint River Commission, (b) whether the construction of Tista River Dam will continue, and (c) what are the positive steps that are going to be implemented just to improve the dry season flow of Ganga if Bangladesh stands in the way?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY: You are fully aware that this

understanding was reached by the Janata Government... (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: It is just a statement of fact. You just take it. Some Government has to do this and the then Government did it.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: This is an international agreement and in these matters, we have to act within the provisions of the agreement. According to the provisions of this agreement, first review will be due in November, 1980. So, in that review, we can discuss many matters, but at present, as things stand, we have to go according to the provisions of this Ganga Water Agreement of November 1977. And the same thing applies to Teesta. I would like to tell the hon. Member that the our stand has always been that it is a dilateral agreement; and we stand by this bi-lateral agreement even to-day.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: It is clear that in the regime of Janata Party, the Janata people who were on the other side used to say that it was due to the fault of the Congress regime, that the Ganga river flow was not proper. Now we have the Congress regime, and they are also saying similar things. Some daily newspapers of Calcutta have published a statement under the caption, "Farakka pact to go"; and the statement was made by our hon. Minister of Irrigation, Mr. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri. I would like to know whether the Minister made it seriously, or did he do it in connivance with the Bangladesh Minister, as a political stunt?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: Whatever I have said, I have said like this, viz. that the Janata Party has totally overlooked national interests, and that is why the Calcutta Port is bleeding to-day. They have never cared for the preservation of the Calcutta Port. We have to look into that aspect when the time comes; and that can only be done, with 40,000 cusecs of water.

श्री कृष्ण प्रताप सिंह : सब से पहले मैं मंत्री महादय को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ कि जनता पार्टी के द्वारा कलकत्ता बन्दरगाह के हितों को ताक पर रख कर जो समझौता किया गया था उसको वह नहीं मान रहे हैं और आगे वह हमेशा कलकत्ता बन्दरगाह के हितों को ध्यान में रखेंगे। बंगला देश के नेता हमेशा इस बात का प्रयास कर रहे हैं कि नेपाल को भी इस में शामिल किया जाए। क्या सरकार आश्वासन देगी कि नेपाल को इस में शामिल करने के किसी भी प्रयास को सफल नहीं होने दिया जाएगा ?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: As I have said at the very outset, this is a bilateral agreement, and we stand by that.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: The Minister just says that he is eager to uphold the national interests. He has said that 40,000 cusecs of water is necessary for the Calcutta Port in lean months. This is a short term agreement. After the expiry of this period of 3 years, will the Minister or Government assure that Government of India will supply 40,000 cusecs of water in lean months to the Calcutta Port?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: No categorical statement. It is an understanding between two sovereign Governments. In the provisions of the agreement, it has been written that in the event of this long-term Plan not succeeding, the agreement does not come to an end automatically. The provision is like this, viz. that the Joint River Commission will refer the matter to the respective Governments. This is the state of affairs. Then obviously, the respective governments will give a decision this way or that way. Then we will be guided by that. At the present moment, Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell anything to the House on this issue.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: In view of the fact that there will be a review of this agreement in November 1st 1980, whether the Central Government will stick to 44,000 cusecs of water in that review itself.

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied to that.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: It is clear that Calcutta Port needs 40,000 cusecs of water. After the agreement, only 10-12,000 cusecs of water has been made available. In view of this, whether the government proposes to ensure 40,000 cusecs of water which is the minimum requirement by reviewing the agreement in November 1980 and 1982 also if the review does not yield that result.

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied to that question.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: whether he considers that it is not possible to ensure the minimum requirement of water under the existing agreement, if so, whether he considers to have a discussion at the political level with the Government of Bangladesh to abrogate the decision itself.

MR. SPEAKER: That is what they have explained.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied to that.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: He has not replied to that.

MR. SPEAKER: He has replied to replied to that.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: The difficulty of the other side is that they are overlooking one basic fact. The Congress Government under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi never pursued an opportunistic policy in the international arena. We have come to an understanding, good or bad. This understanding was arrived at by the Janata Party and we just cannot tear it off as a scrap paper. Naturally, when the time comes, we will certainly consider that aspect.

(Interruptions)\*\*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*\*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Whether the Minister is aware of the fact that Karim Ganj town which is a border town of Bangladesh is threaten-

ned with erosion because of the construction of a dam by Bangladesh on the other side of the river.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI: That does not arise out of this question.

#### Construction of Nawada Dam on Tapti River in M.P.

\*103. SHRI SHIV KUMAR SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether a survey for the construction of Nawada Dam on Tapti River in Madhya Pradesh has since been completed;

(b) if so, when the construction of the dam will be taken in hand and the time by which it is expected to be completed; and

(c) the time by which irrigation facilities will be provided to the farmers and the expected area to be brought under irrigation?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). This is a joint scheme of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The Project Report is still under preparation with the two State Governments. After the project is accepted by the Planning Commission the work thereon will start. In the absence of the project report it is not possible at this stage to indicate the time by which the project work would be completed. On completion, the project is expected to irrigate 59,849 ha. in Maharashtra and 40,691 ha. in Madhya Pradesh.

श्री शिव कुमार सिंह ठाकुर: मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सही है कि नवम्बर 1979 में मध्यप्रदेश के चीफ मिनिस्टर श्री सकलेश महाराष्ट्र के चीफ मिनिस्टर श्री शरद पवार और जनता पार्टी के अध्यक्ष श्री कुशमाऊ ठाकरे से जो कि चुनाव में मेरे राइटवेल फेडीटेट थे उन्होंने मिलाकर इस योजना का भूमि पूजन किया है और इस योजना का पत्थर वहाँ पर गाड़ा है, क्या यह सही बात है ?

क्या स्टेट गवर्नमेंट से प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट भी सरकार द्वारा मंगवाई गई है ।