

**Multi-Purpose river valley projects
on Kosi, Kamla and Bagmati river**

*248. **SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA:** Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the details of the estimated cost, flood control, irrigation and power-generation potentialities of the proposed multi-purpose river valley projects at Barakhashetra, Shishapani and Noonther on Kosi, Kamla and Bagmati rivers respectively?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): Details of these projects located in Nepal have not yet been settled.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Sir, I never expected such an answer from a Union Minister particularly from someone like Shri Shukla. May I know if the Central Government sent a proposal for a multi-purpose project to the Nepalese Government in 1981? Were Secretary level discussions held between the two countries in 1988, seven years after the proposal was sent? Earlier a proposal for the Sheeshapani project on river Kamla was prepared on similar lines. The Central Government had plans for a project on river Bagmati in Ramnagar but the Nepalese Government included that land as part of the national highway. Due to this the plan cannot be implemented and Nepal will also be deprived of benefits. In a situation like this, such a reply creates bitterness between the two countries, loss of precious money ..

(Interruptions)....

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to your question.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: You know what the reply is. I want to refresh his memory.

MR. SPEAKER: Not like this.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: You are aware of the current position of

the projects. Are you going to initiate any discussion at the political level?

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: Sir, the information given by me is true. For a long time we have been making efforts to reach an agreement on all rivers which flow into Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from Nepal. Two agreements signed before 1962 are still valid. After that a lot of difficulties arose. At times it was a technical hitch and at other times there were political hindrances. In 1977-78 our hon. Prime Minister visited Nepal. That led to some progress. And later on whenever any political leader went there or any of their political leaders came to our country, some progress was made. But some or the other obstacle came in the way. I think these obstacles are being created deliberately to put both India and Nepal at a disadvantage. This point has been repeated many times. Many Commissions and sub-commissions were set up as Shri Bhogendra Jha knows. These commissions have been meeting annually between 1980 and 1988. One particular point to be noted by hon. Members is that all these dams are to be built on Nepalese territory. The source of all these rivers is in Nepal and we cannot take any action without Nepal's support. Since this matter involves the territory of both countries, their support is necessary. I need not go into the details of the problems involved. The hon. Member knows that a lot of effort was made from India's side. Perhaps the over-eagerness on India's part made the Nepalese people suspect that it was India which had more to gain than Nepal. If we can make the Nepalese people rid themselves of their wrong notions, we can move forward with these projects.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Sir, this is mine as well as other Members' problem but you should not say this. The question was that the projects...*(Interruptions)...*

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your question. No commentary, please.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Sir, the question is regarding the estimated cost and the benefit expected to accrue from the flood control cum irrigation cum power generation project? You are ignoring that. My first question was whether there is any substance in the complaint made by Nepal. There are rumours in Nepal that secret orders were given to block the embankment constructed for the Kamla till Murchaiya. In this situation both India and Nepal are at a disadvantage. Sir, Nepal's complaint is not baseless. I think this deserves a discussion at the political level but there is no time to do that now. I can give an example to substantiate the complaint made by Nepal.

MR. SPEAKER: Now this is turning into a speech.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Will there be a discussion at the political level or not? Secondly, what will be the benefits of the multipurpose project? Kindly reply to the main question.

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: Sir, only when there is agreement on certain basic issues like the amount of water to be used, the sharing of the power and the area of land required can we estimate the cost... (Interruptions)... the two countries are not able to arrive at a consensus because there is difference of opinion regarding the basis for estimating the cost and profit. Nothing can be done unless there is agreement on basic issues.

Regarding the secret order mentioned by the hon. Member, no such orders were issued from our side. Everything was done after taking both countries into confidence.

In reply to the third question I would like to say that efforts are on

to find a political solution to this problem.

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Sir, Saharsa and Nirmali lie on the Indo-Nepal border. May I know from the hon. Minister whether Nepal clearly asked India during the Indo-Nepal talks to give it the cost of power generation with which it is ready to construct the dam.

SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA: A number of points were raised by Nepal. Later on they changed their stand. I shall look into what the hon. Member has said regarding this matter. If both the countries can reach an agreement we shall make efforts to implement it immediately.

[English]

Electronic Telephone Exchange at Jalpaiguri

*249. SHRI JITENDRA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to replace the manually operated telephone exchange at Jalpaiguri town in West Bengal by a modern electronic exchange with indigenous equipments of ILT 2048 by the end of 1991;

(b) if so, the progress made so far in this regard; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be operative?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Manually operated exchange at Jalpaiguri is planned to be replaced by a modern electronic exchange with indigenous equipment of ILT-2048 during 1991-92.

(b) The exchange building has been constructed. Out-door plant is being upgraded. Instructions have been issued for supply of the equipment on top priority.