

Shri Hathi: That also will be considered after the investigation report is received.

BETTERMENT LEVY

*251. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Planning be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has asked the Bihar Government that definite undertaking would have to be given by the Bihar Government in regard to the betterment levy and the rates before the Kosi Project was sanctioned; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government of Bihar?

The Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power (Shri Nanda): (a) The levy of betterment contribution as a method of financing large irrigation projects has been accepted as a policy by the Planning Commission and the Government of India. This would apply to the Kosi Project when it is sanctioned.

(b) The principle of imposing such a levy has been accepted by the Bihar Government.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know what will be the approximate rate of betterment levy per acre?

Shri Nanda: That has not yet been considered.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know the exact position where the Kosi Project stands today?

Shri Nanda: That is, of course, not a question directly connected; but I may inform the hon. member that plans have now been finalised by the Planning Commission and by the Ministry of Irrigation and Power and a scheme has been forwarded to the Bihar Government for their consent and their approval.

Shri S. N. Das: What is the latest scheme? Is it that a separate place has been chosen for constructing the bund at Hanumannagar?

Shri Nanda: Till the Bihar Government has had a look into the scheme I think it would be premature to disclose details.

Shri K. K. Basu: Will the betterment levy be collected immediately on the execution of the scheme or after the cultivators get the benefits of the project?

Shri Nanda: The practice varies with different states.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know whether such undertakings were demanded while sanctioning other projects also?

Shri Nanda: This is a principle which has been in force for a large number of years.

I.J.M.A. MISSION

*252. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government so far to meet the recommendation of the I.J.M.A. Mission to Australia in order to push our export to that country; and

(b) whether our export of jute goods to Australia during the last six months has declined or improved?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):

(a) I would refer to my answers on the 14th August 1953 to supplementaries to question No. 480 by Shri M. M. Das.

(b) A statement showing the export of jute goods to Australia during the period from May to October, 1953 as also for the corresponding period of the last year is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 16.]

There has been an improvement of nearly 50 per cent. in exports during the relevant period of the current year.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know, Sir, the main reasons for fall in Australian demand for our jute goods?