

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 9, 1999/Phalgun 18, 1920 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of one of our former colleagues, Shri George Joseph Mundackal.

Shri Mundackal was a Member of Seventh and Eighth Lok Sabhas representing Muvattupuzha Parliamentary Constituency of Kerala from 1980 to 1989.

An able parliamentarian, Shri Mundackal was a Member of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House from 1982 to 1985, Committee on Estimates in 1987 and 1988 and Committee on Public Undertakings in 1989 and 1990. He took keen interest in the proceedings of the House and lost no opportunity to highlight the problems faced by the poor and the downtrodden.

A veteran freedom fighter, Shri Mundackal actively participated in the freedom movement.

An agriculturist by profession, Shri Mundackal was a well known political and social worker. He was associated with various organizations in different capacities. He took keen interest in agriculture and agricultural research. He was a member of the Indian Coconut Council and was also Visiting Farm Professor of Kerala Agricultural University.

Shri Mundackal passed away on 2nd March, 1999 at Kothamangalam, Kerala at the age of 68.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

11.02 hrs.

(The Members then stood in silence for a short while.)

11.03 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Satellite Cities

*182. DR. ⁺ASHOK PATEL:
SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN:

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any plan to develop new satellite cities around the metropolitan cities to reduce the population pressure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said plan is likely to be included in the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the salient features thereof?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) A scheme for new Township Development was posed to the Planning Commission for an allocation of Rs. 100 crores as seed money in the Ninth Plan.

(b) The Scheme aims at developing 100 Model New Townships during the Ninth and Tenth Plans to decongest metropolitan/large cities and create satellite towns as engines of economic growth.

(c) The Scheme has not yet been cleared by the Planning Commission due to paucity of funds. Therefore, at present no such scheme is in operation.

(d) does not arise.

[*Translation*]

DR. ASHOK PATEL (Fatehpur): Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you that he has mentioned in part-C of his reply that the Planning Commission has not approved this scheme far due to paucity of funds. Keeping in view the importance of this scheme I would like to know from the Government that the funds allocated for the schemes, which lapses due to non-utilisation and the amount received from other sources why not the same are allocated for this scheme and what is the problem to get this scheme approved?

[*English*]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I can only assure the hon. Member and the entire House that the Government will exert all its skill to see that the Planning Commission finds fund or we will explore alternative sources of fund and see that this scheme comes into operation some day in the very near future, but I cannot say really when. We are convinced that this scheme alone will relieve the dangerous congestion which is taking place in the urban areas.

[*Translation*]

DR. ASHOK PATEL: Mr. Speaker Sir, keeping in view this important scheme, will the hon. Minister urge upon the Planning Commission again to get this scheme approved.

[*English*]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Yes, Sir. I have already given an assurance that we will do our best. We will not only persuade the Planning Commission but we are seeking alternative sources of funds and perhaps I will succeed. In that event, the scheme will be brought into operation as early as possible.

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN (Amroha): Mr. Speaker Sir, as the hon. Minister has first informed that around 100 crore rupees were required and as the funds were not allocated by the Planning Commission, no work was undertaken in the entire National Capital Region (N.C.R.) on account of which we the members of Parliament who are elected from the surrounding areas of the capital of the country, Delhi have to face a lot of problems. As there are neither good schools and good roads nor good hospitals due to which one of my men is engaged in

getting the patients admitted of my constituencies in hospitals and this is not only my individual case, this is the problem with all the hon Member who are elected from the surrounding areas of the capital. There are no facilities, neither there are trains nor there are good bus services. There are single track roads and no good planning has been done.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chauhan, Please ask your supplementary.

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN: Sir, I had written a letter to the hon. Minister requesting him to call on a meeting of the hon. Members belonging to the satellite towns to discuss the problems of these towns and to solve them and not to depend merely on the officers for the development of these towns. If the representatives of the people are called on then, we the Members, at least would be able to contribute some funds though the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme and help out the goal to some extents.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Is it a suggestion or a supplementary?

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN: Mr. Speaker Sir, the matter is a serious one. 50 percent people would not have potable water and power in near future. The areas surrounding the capital are not being developed.

[*English*]

I would like to know whether the Minister has any plan to call the Members of Parliament of the adjoining satellite towns and take our suggestions also so that something could be done to develop these satellite towns.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I am in constant touch with all the Members of Parliament who take interest in this subject. But, Sir, the hon. Member is very very ill informed. He thinks that it is a problem of some hundred crore. If it was the problem of a hundred crore of rupees, I would have gone round the country begging and borrowing and would have produced this hundred crore. It is not a question of hundred crore, thousand crore or

lakh crore but it is a question of Rs. 150 lakh crore which needed for this scheme. Do you think that five or six Members of Parliament can join and produce Rs. 150 lakh crore?....(Interruptions)

SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN: We can at least plan it....(Interruptions) We are only requesting you to call a meeting of the Members of Parliament to solve this issue....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Hon. Members should have at least some ideal of the magnitude of the problem.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Mr. Speaker Sir, the scheme is to be implemented in a phased manner. So much funds, as are being told by the hon. Minister, are not required immediately. We can manage it in a phased manner....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I invite every Member of Parliament, whoever is interested, for a meeting. We will sit together and discuss ways to find some solution to the problem.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: This question has generated a number of ideas and I think the House is well agitated about it. The hon. Minister knows the answer. Whatever we may plan or do, until and unless we solve the root cause of this problem, that is the population explosion, it cannot be solved. We had discussed it earlier also. You might remember that we had discussed about the housing problem. Almost two crore of population is added every year to this country. How long can we continue with this? This is a national problem which is of interest to all of us.

We have never attempted to do something positive for our country. Until and unless this Government or this House as a whole decides to manage this population explosion, nothing will come out. You had promised me that you will call a meeting of all the parties to discuss this very acute problem. So, I request you to answer it in a positive manner as to when you are going to do this. Let us all—all the political parties—sit together and do something positive which may usher in a new era for this country. Otherwise, we cannot solve any problem whether it is housing or satellite towns or anything else. Hundreds and crores of people are getting unemployed in villages. Where will they go? They will come here,

create slums and create problems for us. Apart from this, there will be a lot of criminal activities. You know the problem. You have to solve it by a positive answer.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Sir, there is not a single word which has fallen from the hon. Member with which I can disagree. I wholeheartedly agree with everything that he has said. Whatever we do for economic development or for de-congestion or whatever other economic steps that we are taking, they are all doomed to failure until and unless we solve this fundamental and basic problem. I am always reminded of:

[Translation]

"Tej Hawa ne Mujhse Poocha Ki Reit par kya Likhte Rahte Ho."

[English]

We are all writing on the sand all the time and nothing is going to happen. I am prepared to call a meeting as soon as you like. But first make up your mind that all the political parties will have the moral courage to support this. Last time, in your speech you spoke about population control. In the same speech you talked of repeal of Urban Land Ceiling Act. But yesterday, your whole party walked out and did not support me....(Interruptions).

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH: (Begusarai): Mr. Speaker, it is not the proper reply....(Interruptions) Please give the reply....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Sir, this is the problem....(Interruptions) . I am trying to establish some rapport for future action.

Sir, I assure my friend that we are going to call a meeting of this kind. It will be done earlier than my friend expects.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA: Sir, long ago Dr. B.C. Roy thought of satellite cities in and around Calcutta named Kalyani as also the Salt Lake now known as Bidhan Nagar. Now, the present Government have started thinking of a satellite city by the side of Eastern metropolitan bye-pass of Calcutta named Rajarhat. I am asking the hon. Minister whether there is any specific plan for the city of Calcutta and what is the plan for

developing the already existing satellite cities like Kalyani and Salt Lake so that population explosion in Calcutta could be tackled? I also want to know whether anything is there in the Ninth Plan regarding this subject, i.e., population explosion of the city of Calcutta and satellite Towns as solution.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Sir, the scheme which has been submitted to the Planning Commission and which has not yet been okayed by it, is a scheme which covers all the metropolitan and big cities in India. It includes Calcutta, Mumbai and the capital city of Delhi. It includes every city. But the problem still remains that we are not able to find funds. The funds required are a mind-boggling figure which I have just now mentioned. As soon as it becomes available be assured that Calcutta will not be left out because Calcutta is an important city about whose welfare we are specially concerned.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, Shri Panja's question was very specific. The question was that the Government of West Bengal has formulated a plan for a satellite city in Rajarhat.

It is named as New Calcutta. I understand that this proposal has already come to the Central Government and Government of India has received that proposal. May I know from the Minister the action which the Government has taken in regard to the specific proposal sent by the Government of West Bengal to develop New Calcutta in Rajarhat? This is a very specific question. So I want a very specific reply from the Minister.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: The question is very specific and hence, it calls for a specific answer. But a question of this kind also calls for a specific notice...*(Interruptions)* I am not equipped with the answer but I promise that I will write to the hon. Member tomorrow itself.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Sir, the Minister is an eminent lawyer and so, he can rule out everything without telling the real answer. The written answer which he has given says:

"A scheme for new township development was posed to the Planning Commission for an allocation of Rs. 100 crore as seed money in the Ninth Plan."

But now he says that it is Rs. 150 lakh crore. Is the amount of Rs. 150 lakh crore going to be generated out of this Rs. 100 crore or what is the real plan about it? How far is the Government of India coming into the picture

while starting satellite towns? What is the overall plan of yours? Let me also know the brief plan which is there in the mind of the hon. Minister. You may take the House into confidence while replying.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Let me tell you the broad features of the scheme. The broad features of the scheme are that there should be a planned development of new townships around metropolitan large cities adopting innovative public-private partnership. Experience has shown that self-contained township at a reasonable distance from large cities—about 40-60 kilometers is the distance that we estimate—with fast track and efficient public transport could be the solution to the deteriorating civic situation. In fact, I have told the Planning Commission that it should be a six-lane road available so that people can, with minimum amount of wastage of time, travel to their places of work and they should have access to places of employment in metropolitan cities. Accordingly, in the Ninth Plan, a provision of seed money for development of new township, as engines of economic growth and for decongesting the existing cities, was conceived. Now, Rs. 100 crore is the seed money. Seed money is not that money which you put into the ground and out of that Rs. 100 crore, Rs. 150 lakh crore will spring out. That would be too absurd an idea to be attributed to me. This Rs. 100 crore of seed money is for detailed project report and a plan to be prepared. It is an engineering feat with 100 townships all over the country and 100 projects have to be prepared for which proper survey has to be done and all kinds of resources have to be found out. You also know the kind of labour involved in it. An amount of Rs. 100 crore is required as seed money for this purpose. So, we say that Rs. 100 crore of seed money is only for preparing project report and to execute the project, the cost would be Rs. 150 lakh crore. That is the amount which would be required. Be sure that I am looking for funds and by chance, if I do succeed, you will have the scheme going much much earlier than you expect.

DR. SAROJA V.: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would invite NRIs to contribute generally to generate this expenditure of Rs. 150 lakh crore to plan and develop new satellite towns in and around metropolitan cities.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: The NRIs were invited as far back as 1992 to invest in infrastructure. The Direct Foreign Investment by the NRIs and companies in which persons of Indian origin have a substantial interest were allowed to come here and invest hundred per cent in these kinds of projects. They were given concessions.

they were told that their profits were immediately reportable and there would be no restrictions except that their capital would be locked in for a period of about three years. But, unfortunately, the response to this Scheme has not been very heartwarming. From 1993 to 1999, all that we had got was a sum of Rs. 550 crore...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Why are they reluctant to come?

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: They were reluctant probably because of poor publicity. Second, invariably they had pointed out three problems in this country and these three problems are the following. Wherever I had gone, I had come across this. Last month, I was away for twenty days. I had toured Canada, the United States of America and Europe. I talked to the NRIs and all these companies which are interested. They had pointed out three big stumbling blocks in the way. One is that they are bewildered by the plethora and the complexity of our laws. Second, they are bewildered by the complexity of our procedures in getting any plans passed and even having their projects approved. And, third, they have been complaining very seriously about the kind of treatment which is meted out to them at our immigration counters, the insolence and almost unresponsive attitude of the people with whom they have to intermingle or interact in India. We have been assuring them that all these three roadblocks have been substantially removed and we would be prepared to give them a red carpet treatment. After my tour for twenty days, the NRIs have already come here. The construction companies are here. I am sitting and negotiating with them. I am trying to work out of the projects. One single NRI has come here now with rupees thousand crore in his pocket. He says that he wants to invest. I am trying to find out on which project to put him. The point to be noted is that only Rs. 550 crore has come during the last five years. Due to my trip for twenty days and assurances to the NRIs, I have succeeded in getting a number of NRIs who are already sitting in my office. I am trying to negotiate with them. I am doing my best.

Rehabilitation Programme for Scavengers

*184. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE:
SHRI BUTA SINGH:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation made in the Budget estimates for supporting the programmes meant for liberation and rehabilitation of Scavengers during 1998-99;

(b) the amount utilized out of this amount so far;

(c) whether the remaining amount has been surrendered back to the Ministry of Finance;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) A sum of Rs. 90.00 crores was provided in Budget Estimates for the year 1998-99 in respect of this Scheme.

(b) An sum of Rs. 5.90 crores have been utilised.

(c) Of total allocation of Rs. 90.00 crores, an amount of Rs. 35.00 crores has been reappropriated to the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Post Metric Scholarships for SC/ST. However under the Revised Estimates for 1998-99 the allocation under this Scheme has been fixed at Rs. 20.00 crores out of which no money has been surrendered.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The State Governments are periodically advised to spend the unspent balances available with them under the said Scheme.

[Translation]

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE: Mr. Speaker Sir, Mr. Minister has stated that a provision of Rs. 90 crore has been made in the 1998-99 Budget. Only Rs. 5.90 crore has been utilised out of it. Rs. 35 crore out of Rs. 90 crore has been utilised for post matric scholarship and for liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers. Through you, I would like to ask from the Government that when a provision for Rs. 500 crore can be made for the animals and for cowsheds etc. then why a total sum of Rs. 90 crore cannot be spent on the scheme meant for the liberation and liberation of scavengers. Approximately only Rs. 6 crore out of it has been spent...*(Interruptions)*