

Committee certainly takes the social and economical structure into account and then comes to the conclusion.

New Environment Policy

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***169. SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK:**
SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated new environment policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

Protection of the Environment has always been a major concern and has been built into all programmes, projects and policies taken up so far. This has to be a continuing process. As part of this process, we have to seek integration of environmental and economic aspects in development planning; lay stress on the preventive aspects in pollution abatement; promote technological inputs for reducing industrial pollutants and increase reliance upon public cooperation in securing a clean environment. Keeping these considerations in view draft policy Statement for abatement of Pollution and on National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on environment and development are being prepared which will deal with

— Promotion of pollution control

with emphasis on prevention of pollution

- Promotion of sustainable development
- Sustainable and equitable use of national resources
- Protection of the fragile and sensitive eco-system and
- Conservation of biological diversity.

SHRI MUKUL WASNIK: Sir, in the reply given by the hon. Minister, it has been stated that the new policy will lay stress on preventive aspects in pollution abatement. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the new Policy will provide subsidies to industrial units for incorporating pollution free devices? Secondly, whether the hon. Minister will lay before the House the new policy during the current Session?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, the new policy is aimed at providing economic incentives. There is a loan which has been negotiated with the World Bank, which is being administered by the financial institutions. We shall give to small and medium industries 50 per cent grant and 50 per cent loan for making them viable for installing effluent disposal and other pollution control equipment. For large industry, it shall be on soft terms. It shall be my endeavour to lay the new Policy on the Table of the House as and when it is finalised.

SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK: Sir, my second Supplementary is; may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is aware that in Madras earlier this year, an international training programme on environmental assessment and monitoring was held and it was urged that the Government should adopt the notion of Gross

Ecological Product to calculate the loss of quality of life due to environmental degradation and, if so, the reaction of the Government?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, I do not specifically recall this Seminar but this information I shall give to the Member separately.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, I would like to ask the Minister that as the implementing agencies of this new environment policy will have to be the States of the Union, what is being done to ensure consensus on policy and coordination in implementation?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, attempts are being made to strengthen the State Pollution Control Boards. Just last week this House has passed the Water Pollution Cess (Amendment) Bill which, in fact, is to strengthen the State Pollution Control Boards, to give them greater resources so that they can have a bigger and a better infrastructure. The new policy we have circulated to all Ministries. We have got comments from prominent experts on this. Still in the meetings we are consulting a large number of people. There is constant interaction with the State Pollution Control Boards. Just last week I held a National Conference of State Environment Secretaries and Chairman of the State Pollution Control Boards. It is as a result of the inputs being provided by experts, which also includes experts from the States, that we are formulating this policy.

SHRI MANORANJAN BAHKTA: Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister that there are certain ecological conditions prevailing in some of the island territories. I would like to know that while formulating the environment policy, will he consider the carrying capacity of such Island territories.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, the Island Development Authority was set up with an integrated perception on development in the islands. Certainly one of the points which my Ministry is insisting on is the aspect of carrying capacity. It is only on the basis of the carrying capacity that the projects and other aspects will be looked at.

MR. SPEAKER: Your reply is in positive.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir this questions pertains to Environment Ministry, but I was looking for an opportunity to ask a question about the environment of this House. This House has become more provocative. I would like to ask you, but I am not involving you?

MR. SPEAKER: You are not allowed to do so. I will not allow you.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: I would like to ask you a question.

MR. SPEAKER: You are to ask a question from the Ministry and not from me.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, through you and with your kind permission I would like to ask.....

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a question of kindness, it is your right. You ask your question.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: This House has been converted into a Film-studio. What I want to say is that the quantum of debates has already gone down in state Assemblies and here in this House you have introduced direct telecast system.

MR. SPEAKER: What are you asking is being watched by the entire country. You are

asking a different question which does not arise out of the original question.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: You may expunge it. But I rise to oppose it. I would like to submit.....

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question. The question is on the environment in the country.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, this question is not in that context. I seek your apology..... I would sit down. As regards this experiment, I would like to ask with your permission...

MR. SPEAKER: It is not so.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: It is under rules and regulations. In this context.....

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KALKA DAS: Sir, Delhi is the third most polluted city in the World. The main cause of pollution is the factories in residential areas, old.....

MR. SPEAKER: The question pertains to the National Environment policy, you should ask question on it.

SHRI KALKA DAS: Delhi is the capital of the country and it is the fourth most polluted city of the World. Factories located in residential areas, old vehicles, and depletion of forests are among the main causes

of pollution. I would like to know the scheme chalked out by the Government to check pollution in Delhi and the measures taken by the Government in this regard and by what time it is likely to come under control.

[*English*]

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, as per some estimates, Delhi is the fourth most polluted city in the world. Vehicular pollution accounts for at least 55 per cent of the pollutant load in Delhi. The balance is of other pollutants like industrial pollutants etc. Several steps are being taken with regard to the vehicular pollution. I have held meetings. There is a committee being formed. There are training camps. There is a question of technology. It is not merely a question of doing away or having our inspectors with a meter. It is a question of technology. We need unleaded petrol, we need catalytic converters, we need better technical performing engine. This is on line. Certain standards have been set which are to be met by 31st March, 1992. This matter is receiving our attention.

SHRI E. AHAMED: The Government will be taking numerous measures to control the pollution. But there are proposals to set up nuclear power plants in various parts of the country for the generation of electricity. And there is also stiff opposition to such proposals. May I know from the hon. Minister about the policy of this Government with respect to the granting of the sanction to set up nuclear power plants as proposed by some State Governments?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: The setting up of nuclear plants is a highly technical matter. It is done with inter-action with the Department of Atomic Energy who have all the knowledge and with whom the scientific inputs are available. Due consideration is given to this. Nothing is done without proper examination and proper consideration.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Hon. Speaker, Sir, hon. Minister has admitted in his reply to the question that 55% of environmental pollution is being caused by Vehicular traffic. I would like to submit that people are migrating from rural to urban areas and this is adding to the vehicular traffic and to the problem of pollution. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any expert advice or report has been sought or any attempt has been made to stop migration by creating more job opportunities in rural areas?

MR. SPEAKER: It is a question regarding National policy.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The population in the cities would increase. It would be doubled. The population of Delhi and Calcutta has increased.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a relevant question.

[English]

DR. DEBI PRODAS PAL: The Government is anxious to remove environmental pollution. Even the United Nations is thinking of how to remove the environmental pollution in terms of armed conflict. May I ask the hon. Minister as to what the Government is thinking to do, if the environment is polluted due to political pollution, particularly in the city of Delhi?

MR. SPEAKER: This is disallowed. This is misusing the time of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Deforestation is one of the major causes of pollution. The problem of environment is

becoming bad to worse because of depletion of forests. Through you, I would like to know from the Government if it has any programme to provide employment to the people who are living near the forests as these people are mainly responsible for felling of trees due to their starvation condition? Does Government have any programme to plant trees, other than Eucalyptus and Acacia trees, having life span of twenty five to thirty years? Sir I would like to know from the Government whether Government has any scheme to check pollution?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Will you protect the interests of these tribes also while formulating your environmental policy.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, it is a very valid question by the Member. A new policy has been framed which takes into account community participation. It is very relevant today and the involvement of people in the villages, of the panchayats or whatever it be, community involvement in plantation is being considered. There are several proposals from States in this regard and we are looking into this policy. This policy is being followed at the moment.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has informed that the environment policy is yet to be formulated. I would, therefore, like to ask two simple clarifications that in the absence of an articulated environment policy, on what basis is the Government working? Is it working on the basis of an ad-hoc non-policy? And if it is working on an ad-hoc non-policy, how is it administering as an important Ministry, the Ministry of Environment?

MR. SPEAKER: It is a new policy.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Yes, I know,

Sir. So, I would like to know on what basis is it working because there is no old policy.

MR. SPEAKER: He is talking about the new policy.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I know sir. But there is no articulated policy. (*Interruptions*). Secondly this is a more important aspect, my colleague has already earlier enquired about it. For the implementation of any policy particularly the environment policy, the cooperation of the State Governments is vital. No policy relating to environment can possibly be implemented unless the State Governments are party to the formulation of the policy. I would, therefore, wish to ask the hon. Minister what process has he conducted to consult the various State Governments in the formulation of the new environment policy.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, I entirely agree with the hon. Member that the cooperation—not only cooperation but active cooperation—of the States is important in the implementation of the environmental policy, there is no doubt about it. In the new policy which is being planned, which is being formulated, interaction with the States is taking place and it is in the process. I have not said that it is being completed or that I am on the verge of finalising it. We have interacted with a large number of people, we have been through the process with the various Ministries in the Central Government. We are taking to the State Governments also and it is still continuing, it has not stopped as yet. Before we do finalise it, he would have consulted the State Governments also.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Consult Parliament also.

SHRIMATI BIBHU KUMARI DEVI: Sir, is the hon. Minister aware that many tribals have been dispossessed of their lands by

the Central Forest Act of 1980? In Tripura we have the P.F. Act in operation as well as the Forest Act. The tribals living in the P.F. areas have been dispossessed. There is no tree-growing on these lands and these lands have been cultivated by tribals for many years. Therefore, the Land Revenue Department of the State and the Forest Department are working with great disadvantage and all the time contradictory to one another. Is the hon. Minister aware of this fact that tribals have been dispossessed of the land?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, it is not only a question of Tripura. There have been reports that tribals under irregular and illegal possession of forest land prior to the Forest Act coming in was there, and some of these were classified as encroachers, they have been removed from there. We are looking into this matter.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, is it in the perception of the Government of India that the approach to environment that is there in the developed countries is different from that in the underdeveloped countries?

Does the responsibility for keeping environment improving devolve only on the underdeveloped countries imposed by the developed countries of the world?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: I would like to assure the hon. Member that none of the developed countries will be able to impose on us any of their procedures or methods. We have our own environment policy. It will be framed consistent with our national policies and national goals.

MR. SPEAKER: Question Hour is over.
