

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have not allowed you. You are crossing all limits. Shri Sanat Mehta.

SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Sir, a very serious development has taken place for the life and death of Gujarat and Rajasthan because of the decision of the Supreme Court on Sardar Sarovar Dam. An interlocutory application was filed in the on-going hearing of the case in the Supreme Court as per the agreement arrived at in the meeting of the Chief Ministers of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan which was convened by the Prime Minister on 15-7-1996 and 16-7-1996 at New Delhi to discuss the issue. For the project Rs. 5,000 crore has been spent and an agreement was arrived at in the presence of the Prime Minister. When the interlocutory application was given, the Supreme Court has said that they were not permitting to raise the height of the dam. If this kind of intervention by the Supreme Court is tolerated even after the decision of the Inter-State River Tribunal, a Pandora's box will be opened and there will be no final decision for any inter-State river dispute.

In these circumstances, I appeal to the Government of India to take cognisance of this and see that the agreement arrived at by the Chief Ministers in the presence of the Prime Minister is implemented. The barricades created by the Supreme Court are anyhow to be removed. This is my plea. Otherwise, Gujarat will have no way, except to resort to peaceful means which Mahatma Gandhi had shown.

13.09½ hrs.

RE : SARDAR SAROVAR PROJECT

[Translation]

SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI (Amreli) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Sardar Sarovar Project which has brought green revolution in Gujarat is not only beneficial for the Gujarat State but for the whole country. This project was lying pending for years together with the tribunal and after 25 years, a decision about its height was taken which cannot be reviewed further. Even then efforts have been made time and again to make political interference in this important project. During the last August the Chief Ministers of all the concerned four States met in presence of the hon. Prime Minister and took a decision to start work on this project. An agreement was signed to start work but in the meanwhile Madhya Pradesh Government filed a case in the Supreme Court. Gujarat Government as well as the Union Government could not put up their case properly in the court. Supreme Court has no right to make interference in the decision of the tribunal but it has been done in the matter of Gujarat Project. It is not correct and beyond the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The Union

Government should interfere in this matter because the State Government had been unsuccessful in it. Before becoming Chief Minister he had gone to Khajuraho with his Members... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please do not raise that point.

SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI : Vaghela Government has not done anything in this regard. Therefore, the Central Government should interfere in it to do justice with the public of Gujarat.

SHRI KASHI RAM RANA (Surat) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I support Shri Dileep Sanghani's viewpoint on Sardar Sarovar Project. Today Savrastra, northern Gujarat and Kutch are facing problem of drinking water and fields are not getting water for irrigation due to non-implementation of this project. All the four concerned Chief Ministers and hon. Prime Minister took part in the Meeting convened on this proposed 455 feet high Sardar Sarovar Project. In this meeting it was decided that there was no objection to anyone to take up work on this project upto the height of 110 meters. A consensus was sought to complete the construction work upto 85 meters as monsoon was due in the coming 2 or 3 months. The construction work has come to a halt for the last three years. This work is being interfered time and again by the Narmada Bachao Andolan, Congress Government of Madhya Pradesh or the Union Government. Therefore the construction work of this project has come to a standstill. I demand that what has been decided by all the four concerned Chief Ministers in the presence of hon. Prime Minister should be executed. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh visited Gujarat and gave an assurance that he would give his concurrence as rehabilitation work was going on. Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowda also assured the public of Gujarat for not interfering into this matter. But almost all the Governments created hindrances in implementation of this project. Therefore, I and all my colleagues request you that work related to this project should be started at earliest which has been pending for the last three years. So far Rs. 600 crore have been spend on it but the people of Gujarat who are pining their hopes for water have not been benefited by it. The work on this project should be started as soon as possible. The Chief Ministers of all the concerned states have decided if even then hurdles are being created. This is a national problem and not related to Gujarat only. This project will facilitate several states. So I would like to say that this project should not be interfered by anyone, whether it is Madhya Pradesh Government, Narmada Bachao Andolan or any environmentalist. This project was finalised by Narmada Tribunal in 1978, therefore it should be implemented. The proposed height of this project was decided upto 455 feet and I demand that a construction

upto 110 meter should be taken up. I would like to say that Chief Ministers of the concerned States and hon. Prime Minister should consult the Supreme Court on this matter.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, as just now, you have heard the viewpoint of three MPs from Gujarat and I hope that you may be apprised of the sentiments of the members now. One more member is elected from there. It is not a party matter but this issue relates to whole Gujarat and the country. A recent judgment of Supreme Court has created problem which should be solved by the Union Government. One way out to this problem is that Union Government should go to court for review of this judgment. The Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers were involved in the decision taken by the tribunal and any effort to change this decision will have serious repercussions. This fact should clearly be presented before the Supreme Court but probably it has not been done. The Union Government can make an appeal to Supreme Court for its review to solve this problem.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this matter does not pertain to Gujarat only. Such an impression should not be created that only Members from Gujarat are concerned over it. Kutch is a backward and neglected area which will be benefited most by this project. It is a border area and people of this area should not get an impression that hurdles are being created in their developmental work then it may have serious repercussions. I visited the Narmada Sagar dam twice last year. Engineers have work hard on this project. The issue regarding height of the dam can be debated. It will be beneficial for generating power and providing irrigation facilities for a large area if work on this project is taken up further. I fully support the views of the leader of opposition that the Government should request the Supreme Court to reconsider this issue because along with the economic loss it will also create a sense of alienation among people of Gujarat and the adjoining areas which are proposed to be benefited by it. I hope that the Supreme Court will also reconsider this issue in view of the sentiments of the people.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this issue should be taken up before the Supreme Court by the Government. I do not consider it as an issue pertaining to Kutchh or Gujarat only. A huge amount has been invested and power was to be generated. Kutchh area is facing acute shortage of water and there is no need to elaborate this point. The main question is the consequences and impact of Supreme Court's decision on other big projects if it again considers and response the inter-state issue which was earlier resolved and gives some new piece of advises to the States. There are several issues pertaining to Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh,

Karnataka, Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan where these issue have been resolved by concerned Chief Ministers and representatives of the Government of India, and these have been re-opened by the Supreme Court. It can create a big problem before the country. Therefore, I would like to say that this issue should be taken to Supreme Court for a permanent solution of the problem.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV (Madhepura) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I agree with the viewpoints of hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri Chandra Shekhar and Shri Sharad Pawar but I would like to say that our country has huge water resources. We have high mountains and fast flowing streams. This inter-state issue should not only debated among the concerned Chief Ministers but it should be debated seriously by all the political parties. This matter does not pertain to Gujarat and Maharashtra only but other States also where such disputes exist, and as a result of which our huge wealth is being wasted for so many years. This issue should be taken up seriously. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I request you to take initiatives in this regard.

Rivers do not belong to any particular area or town but these are our national wealth. Though this subject is included in concurrent list but we get water and electricity from rivers. It is such an important national resource which is required to give a serious thought about for its proper and optimum utilization. This dispute may arise time and again so its ultimate solution should be found. We produce crude oil upto fifty percent of our requirement and coal reserves are limited. Water resource can be valuable for us in 21st century and we should enact law for its proper utilization. We may make amendments in the Constitution if it is required so.

This is not a inter-state dispute. The problem of damage of layer of ozon has emerged in America. We do not have environmental problem to that extent, even then this matter is raised here time and again. Except the big cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Madras where maximum number of vehicles ply on roads, environmental problem is not grave in India, and that can also be controlled if a ban is imposed on plying of vehicles on Saturdays and Sundays. Some of the politicians keep and opposing the plans of constructing dam for getting political mileage out of it. I do agree that rapid growth of population has created the problem of pollution but there are also other more important issues that child Labour and pollution. Some people are playing politics with our natural resources and development of the country. It is essential to chalk out a plan for optimum utilization of natural resources and rehabilitation of the affected persons should be taken up accordingly. Poverty is our main problem and a large number of people are living in utter poverty. With proper

[Shri Sharad Yadav]

utilization of river water, crores of people will be benefited. There are examples that availability of water resources has brought drastic changes in those areas.

We have rivers like Ganges, Brahmaputra, Narmada etc. but for the last 50 years we have not made their proper utilization. I thank the late Pratap Singh Kaironji for building Bhakra Nangal dam which has increased our agricultural production. Some people say that Himalaya is earthquake prone area but I would like to say that such decisions should be taken in the interests of majority of beneficiaries as we have to feed a population of 90 crore. Some strange developments are taking place in this country.

I would like to say that our country can make progress only with proper utilization of water. We have natural resources in abundance and in place of their proper utilization we are raising disputes. I request all the environmentalists to consider this matter sympathetically.

So far the issue of child labour is concerned, I would like to say that some works like weaving Dwaries can be learnt easily in childhood. I do agree the children engaged in hotels and other places can be labelled as child labour I raised this issue with Agniveshji. We already have very few opportunities of employment and some persons who are earning their livelihood in this manner why he was trying to deprive them of their jobs...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, today an important issue has been raised here. I request you to issue instructions for a comprehensive debate on it. We want to express our views on water resources which is our national wealth.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this issue should be taken up seriously and law can be amended if required. In place of appearing the States disputing on issues of river waters optimum and proper utilization of water resources should be given priority. This House can help us in doing so. I request all the political parties to maintain the dignity of this House.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Alright Yadavji.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I would not take long time. As Shri Chandra Shekharji has said, we cannot run away from the courts. Therefore, the Government of India should take all expeditious steps to bring the views, not only of the Government but also of the House before the Court. Subject to correction, I have seen I believe that 31st March has been fixed for final disposal. Therefore, before that date, the Government should make its position very clear. This is one of the items, as the *Karyakari Sabhapati* of Janata Dal has rightly said, that there should be certain issues on national agenda. This is one issue which

should be in our national agenda. There are some issues which should cut across party lines. I believe this issue of water resource is one of the matters which should be properly harnessed. This is giving rise to avoidable tension between States and States and people and people in our own country. Therefore, these are matters which, we believe, should be settled as soon as possible. This very important resource should be properly harnessed and utilised. Sooner this doubt is resolved, the better it is. We hope the judiciary will also take note of the different viewpoints and will come to an early decision so that it will benefit the country as a whole.

SHRI KASHI RAM RANA : On this, we want some response from the Government.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : I can only say that the Government has already taken note of this suggestion that has been given by the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Chandra Shekhar and other leaders like Shri Sharad Pawar, Shri Sharad Yadav. I will convey it to the Prime Minister today and whatever legally is possible, that will be conveyed to the appropriate courts.

And on the other proposal which has been given by Shri Sharad Yadav, there should be a debate on water resources, a national debate should be there. If we accept that, it should be discussed thoroughly at the time when we take up the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Water Resources Ministry and sufficient time should be given to it. I hope, in the Business Advisory Committee, we can consider it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Haradhan Roy to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already called him.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahemdabad) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would not like to go into details of this subject but give an information to this House. Central Government is a party in this matter and thus this judgment is against the government. Therefore I would like to say that the Government should take an initiative in this matter.

[English]

You are a party in the Supreme Court. Therefore, please follow it up...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please allow him to speak. I have already allowed him to speak. Please cooperate.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That issue is closed now. Let him speak now.

[Translation]

SHRI VISHVESHWAR BHAGAT (Balaghat) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, these issues should be considered in the matters of Madhya Pradesh...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I am concluding in one line only. We the people of Madhya Pradesh doing anything detrimental to the interests of Gujarat. People of Madhya Pradesh do not want to give less water to Gujarat but the water capacity of river Narmada in Madhya Pradesh should be taken into consideration...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Let the hon. Member speak. Please cooperate with me.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, interests of Madhya Pradesh are not being protected. We also have a right to speak on this issue... *(Interruptions)* Sir, a number of villages will submerge due to the construction of this dam. Therefore we should also be given an opportunity to express our grievances...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have called him. I am sorry to say that this is not good. Please allow him to speak.

*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will allow everyone to speak on this issue if you cooperate with me.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, at the very outset of the budget session, Hon'ble Minister of coal has issued a statement in the newspapers, outside the House that National coal industry is proposed to be privatised. There is resentment amongst the coal mine workers over this issue. They are prepared to take any step against this move. Secondly, earlier the coal mines were run by private owners. They carried on the work in the most illegal and unscientific manner which gave rise to the problem of subsidence of land throughout the area-in the city, the villages and the fields. Coal lying underneath the ground is aflame due to which several people have been rendered homeless and their property is being destroyed. Many have lost their lives also. The lives of all those people are in danger. In view of all such

problems, the Government nationalised this mine in 1972-73, however the lives of 15 lakh tribal people residing in the area are in danger. There is a danger to their lands. Several people have been killed there. After taking over the mine, the Government has not taken on any responsibility for the rehabilitation of those tribals, their livelihood and for ensuring the safety of their land. The Government maintains that it will not take on any responsibility for the damage caused by private mine owners. The Government is not doing anything at all. Similarly after the mine is handed over to the private party, it may also later on refuse to take on any responsibility for what has happened under the regime of the Government.

Secondly, what measures are being taken for those who have been rendered homeless, whose property has been destroyed and for the workers employed in that mine who are covered under National wage Agreement. The labourers are highly concerned about this issue. There is a resentment among them. This is a very serious matter indeed. Hence I would like to know as to what action is being taken in this regard. The case of Eastern coalfields Limited has been referred to BIFR in order to close it down by showing losses. BCCL has also been referred to BIFR. On one hand, the Government proposes to close down these mines and on the other hand, the mines which are operational are posing threat to the lives of the villagers. Their problems remain unresolved and in case this step is taken, approximately 15 lakh people will be affected.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Government's decision to open the coal mines to the private sector and also to the multinational companies is a retrograde step.

The coal industry was nationalised in 1972 and then again in 1973. We had the experience of private mining in our country prior to 1972. The coal mines were in the hands of private companies and because they undertook unscientific mining and plundered the precious wealth of our country, in 1972, the Government of India first nationalised the coking coal mines. Then, afterwards, the non-coking coal mines were nationalised in 1973.

If the private companies, including multinational companies are allowed to extract coal, then, as it happened prior to 1972-73, our assets, the coal mines will be plundered by those private mining companies and multinational companies.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government not to take such action. If any decision has been taken to open the coal industry to the private companies and the multina