

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Yes, Sir. Now, we are celebrating the 50th Year of India's Independence. I will be brief because I have to wind up. Unfortunately, I cannot still forget that I had a training as a Chartered Accountant. Can I request the hon. Minister as well as the Government as a whole to give us a Balance Sheet of our country's attainment in the last fifty years ? Can we make a Balance Sheet of our country's attainments ? Can we find out what are the physical assets that we created on the one side and make a value of them ? In fact, when Dr. Raja Chelliah happened to be the Advisor to the Finance Ministry, I had a discussion with him on this issue. I had asked him whether the Government would prepare such a Balance Sheet. It is because we want a transparent system of the holdings of Government. Can we think about it ? Can we really analyse what we have gained, what are the total liabilities and assets of the Government ? The Balance Sheet itself should be a starting point for introducing the Planning - may be for the Tenth Five Year Plan. Then alone we will be able to evaluate one Balance Sheet against the other one in respect of the five-year period. Then only you will be able to find out the attainments of this country.

There is one issue about which the Government shies away from talking because I understand their predicament. We want an investment to come into agriculture in a big way. At the same time, there are friends who want agricultural reforms in which the land now held by a few should be held by many. At the same time, to bring about better investment in agriculture, we also want corporatisation of agriculture. Corporatisation itself will pre-suppose not only fragmentation of land but probably there will be consolidation of the existing land in the hands of one corporate from many . . . (Interruptions) How are we going to reconcile to this demand of agricultural reforms on one side, land reforms on one side and on the other side the need to put in more corporatisation as a part of agricultural process to bring about better investment ? I think this is something which, again, you must be able to tell us. I always feel that there cannot be the models for development. Every country has to find out its own model. India has also to find out its own model. We have to have a model. We must have the model of China. We should be able to compare some social parameters of China with India and then we know about it. Though the population size is probably bigger than India yet regarding social sector development, China is better than what we have attained.

With these words, I conclude.

17.32 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

Bauxite Mining

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House was supposed to take up at 5.30 p.m. the Half-an-Hour discussion by Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat. But, I think, Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat has requested the Speaker for postponement and the Speaker has very kindly agreed to postpone the Half-an-Hour discussion raised by Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat.

After that, Shri K.P. Singh Deo is to raise a discussion on points arising out of the answer given by the Minister of Environment and Forests on 18.3.1997 to Unstarred Question No. 3630 regarding Bauxite Mining.

Shri K.P. Singh Deo to speak now.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal) : Sir, at the outset, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to raise this issue. This Half-an-Hour discussion was required because of the answer given to a very simple Unstarred Question, a very innocuous one. After making efforts for more than three months to get the Parliament Library to in turn get hold of this Report, I succeeded. There were a lot of media reports about people apprehending that the Upper Indravathy Multipurpose River Vally Project would be silted. In 1968, the Bachchawat Committee agreed to the transfer and diversion of water from the Krishna-Godavari Basin. Four Chief Ministers at that time, including Shri Shankar Rao Chavan, Shri Vagal Rao, Mrs. Nandini Satpathy and two other Chief Ministers agreed to it. With the World Bank loan of Rs. 1200 crore, this Irrigation Project came up. In fact, our erstwhile colleague Shri P.K. Deo, right from 1957 to 1980, had been demanding this Project. Shri Morarji Desai went and laid the foundation stone in 1978. For the last thirty years, the Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput, districts, generally known as the KBK districts, have been synonymous with drought, starvation, migration and man-eating tigers. But this year, for the first time, they have got irrigation facility to irrigate up to 30,000 hectares, from The Indravati Project.

Therefore I had just asked a simple question. I wanted to know whether the Engineers India Limited, a public sector undertaking, had done an environmental impact analysis of the Bathalimali Bauxite Mining Project which is

to come up in the catchment of Indiravati Project. But I was denied that information. That information was withheld not only from me but also from the Parliament Library for three months. Therefore, I have raised this Half-and-Hour discussion.

If one goes through the Annual Report of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, he will know about it. I should have thought that my good friend, the hon. Minister, should have been proud of the fact that he is presiding over a Ministry which is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for planning, promotion and coordination of environmental and forestry programmes. And, these tasks have been fulfilled through the Environmental Impact Assessment. That was the question.

In the Environmental Impact Assessment in Chapter IV, my good friend who laid the Report on the Table says:

"The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important tool of management to ensuring optimal use of natural resources for sustainable development. It was introduced in our country initially for River Valley Projects in 1978-79 and then since 1994. The EIA is now mandatory under the Environment Protection Act 1986 for 29 categories of development activities involving investment beyond certain threshold."

Then there are appraisal committees for River Valley Multipurpose hydro-electric projects, mining projects, industrial projects, thermal power projects, infrastructural development, and nuclear power project. Also, there is a system of monitoring.

Sir, I do not know why this Government which takes pride in claiming and preaching that it believes in transparency should have withheld this information from Members of Parliament. In fact, after trying for three months I could go through the reports. The Parliament Library, ultimately, got hold of it. I am very proud of the fact that such a fantastic Report has been given. It is a very competent and professional Report. It has gone into the entire gamut and I should have thought that his Ministry would have been proud to have there Report tabled in Parliament because as a geology student, I can only say that it is an "A-One Report". In fact, it has gone into everything. But why was it withheld? I think, there lies the catch because this Environment Impact Assessment is confined only to 10 kilometres of radius, of Baphalimali Hill just on the fringe of the River Indiravati. It is because this mine is sought to be exploited for export and many other benefits. A lot of multinationals have come in. It is on the fringe of the catchment area of River Indiravati.

MR. CHAIRMAN : May I request the hon. Member to frame specific question on which he requires further elucidation ?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : As the Mover of Motion, if I do not tell you the reasons for raising it, it will not be proper. It is very important. It is a question of our livelihood.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is only for half-an-Hour and you have to leave some time for the Minister to give his reply.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : I know, Sir. I will frame my question.

Every year we have been debating in this House about the drought in Kalahandi, Koraput and Bolangir areas. This project has been given environmental clearance in 1995, not by this Minister. What has been our past experience? The joint Orissa-Andhra Pradesh Machkund Hydel Project was started in 1950. Today only 25 per cent of the estimated power is being generated due to siltation. Hirakud Project in Orissa—completed in 1960, has been silted to 50 per cent from its bed and cannot be dredged due to the uncleared stumps fossilised in water. Rengali on river Brahmini—started in 1973 by Shrimati Indira Gandhi, has not irrigated an inch of land although the head works are completed and the river has been silted heavily up to 28 miles upstream displacing many prosperous villages. Heavy sedimentation is due to mining of iron-ore, manganese, dolomite and limestone in the catchment areas in the upper reaches. The Brahmini river and Mahanadi also come from Madhya Pradesh. Thanks to the efforts of the Government of Orissa, the left and right canals have received funds from the Central Government and the World Bank and I would like to thank the hon. Minister because the Ministry of Environment and Forests after a long delay ultimately gave the environmental and forestry clearance. Today works worth Rs. 1800 crore are going on.

Against this background we are apprehensive because no answer has come. No reply indicates what sort of steps they have taken and what stipulations they have put while giving the environmental clearance. They are not talking anything about the forestry clearance. There are four reserved forests. I know that Rengali project was delayed by one year in the Environment and Forests Ministry because forestry clearance had not come. I took two meetings of the Advisory Committee to clear the Rengali project.

[Shri K.P. Singh Deo]

What are the precautionary, preventive and corrective steps that have been stipulated by the Ministry of Environment and Forests ? This Report of the Engineers India is only a rapid environmental impact assessment. It is not the full detailed Report. It is based on that rapid environmental impact assessment where the Engineers India has also said that there are nine other Central Government organisations which are dealing with various aspects. I do not know who is coordinating them and who is trying to bring all the multifarious activities together. It is not a project of the Ministry of Environment and Forests; it belongs to the Department of Mines. But the nodal Ministry is the Ministry of Environment and Forests. So, I would like to know what are the preventive, deterrent and punitive steps the Government will take or the Ministry of Environment and Forests will take in case these multinationals and foreign capital which have come in, are going to violate the laws.

I have the paper. Since there is a paucity of time, I am not going fully into it. Three hundred and fifty projects in Orissa have been stopped because of the Supreme Court ruling, because they have violated the forestry laws and the environmental laws.

I have a Press clipping in *The Indian Express* dated 21st December, titled "An Uncleared Agenda". I will quote only bits and pieces.

"It is shocking to note that all the five projects examined by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute under the Supreme Court order were found to be wanting in one way or the other. It has once again cast a shadow on the environmental clearance granted to projects by the Ministry of Environment and Forests."

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have to leave some time for the Minister's reply.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : I must give you the meat.

Even when projects are cleared, they are more often than not granted conditional clearance subject to several conditions being met. In her petition to the Supreme Court, Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, former Environment Minister had noted : The novel technique of granting conditional environmental clearance on the basis of preliminary reports, rapid environmental impact assessment and cursory site inspection and the absence of any follow-up action and transparency in

decision making is largely responsible for rapidly degrading environmental situation in the country. In half of the projects the MEF of course refused to take any action against erring project authorities or the State. These projects include not just the infamous Sardar Sarovar and Tehri Dams, but also others like Srisaillam, Telugu-Ganga, Upper Krishna, Jaisamen, Rajghat, Chemara, Baspa, Dulhasti, Bansagar, Dantiwada, Sipu, Koina, Subamarekha, Upper Indravati, Tista, Kopli, plus two hundred others."

This is the track record of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Therefore, we are worried.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think, you are widening the scope of the Question.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : I am not at all widening the scope.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly restrict your question. If you would just allow me, I would read out the rules. The rule says :

"The member who has given notice may make a short statement and . . . may ask a question for the purpose of further elucidating any matter of fact . Thereafter, the Minister shall reply shortly."

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : If you give me one more minute, I would conclude shortly.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken fifteen minutes.

The rule also says :

"Provided that not more than four members who have previously intimated to the Secretary-General may be permitted to ask a question .

And the whole procedure is to take half-an-hour. I will request you to kindly frame your question.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : I am on my last point. I will shortly frame my question, if you will allow me.

My last point is this. The Indravati project has cost Rs.1200 crore; four dams have come up; eight check dams have come up; a distributory has come up; the field channels have come up and it has irrigated 30,000 hectares of land this year. Is it going to be saved from siltation by effectively monitoring the stipulation which has been given by the Ministry of Environment and Forests ?

Or, are they going to take any safeguard as mentioned in the report submitted by Engineers India Limited ?

Would you not give me time ? They have said categorically that siltation will take place in the south-west escarpment, which goes straight into the catchment area of Indravati. Therefore, what are going to be the safeguards: preventive, deterrent and punitive action in future ? I would like to know this because they have not taken any action so far.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will first allow the other two hon. Members to ask a question. The hon. Minister can give a comprehensive reply after that.

Now I call Professor Rasa Singh Rawat.

Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, now ask your question.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : I would like to ask my question after a brief introduction.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Rules do not permit any introduction still you are allowed to ask your question within two minutes.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this question is basically related to bauxite mining due to which hurdle has been put in the completion of Indirawati project and permission had to be taken from the Ministry of Environment and Forest. I would like to state in this regard that many problems are cropping up as a result of enactment of Environment protection and Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and the verdict given by the Supreme Court after that. One of the problems pertains to the black future of workers in mining sector.

I, through you, would like to know about the steps being taken by the Union Govt. to fulfil the assurance given by the former premier Shri H.D. Deve Gowda while inaugurating the conference of the Ministers of the Mines of the states that—[English] "The Govt. would modify the mining Act where necessary for proper exploitation of minerals by the States." [Translation] and the time by which the mining act would be amended. So that the thousands—lakhs of mining workers rendered jobless as a result of verdict of the Supreme Court may be provide jobs. Secondly, I would also like to know about the steps being taken to revive those minus which were the source of

revenue and which have closed down and for the re-employment of the jobless workers.

I would like to say one more thing. Part 'B' of my question relates to the problems created by many projects be if Sardar Sarovar project being constructed over Narmada river, project being constructed in Jalaw in Rajasthan, project under construction in Kutchiarea of Gujarat with a purpose to provide potable water, or the problem arisen as a result of shifting thousands of factories out of the city in the name of pollution or other problems related to it the name of depolluting the environment, protection or development of forests etc. What would be the conditions of people if their feelings are hurt like this and they are left to languish in the problems ? I would like to know about the steps likely to be taken by the Govt. in this regard.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chapra) : Sir, three months back we had discussed the conditions of femine in Orissa under Half-an-Hour discussion and in the context of this metter . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : This Half-an-hour Discussion is a limited one.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : I agree with you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is limited to the question of bauxite mining; and please do not enlarge the scope of the Half-an-hour Discussion.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : It is not being enlarged.

Originally, four hon. Members would be allowed. Fortunately, today there are only two Members. So, Some more time may be allowed for us.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There may be two Members or four Members. But the subject is linked to bauxite mining.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : No. Kindly excuse me. It is not related only to bauxite mining, it is also related to the Government clearance to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. It is rather specifically linked only to the points arising out of the answers to Unstarred Question No. 3630 of 18th March 1997.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : If you go into the background, Sir, you will understand it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. Please ask your question now.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Let me deal with the subject first, Sir. Have you seen the background of it ?

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Alright, please speak.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Mr. Chairman, Sir, you interrupted me at the very moment when I started my first sentence. How should I express my views ?

.(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is because you want to enlarge the scope of this discussion.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : No. I was not enlarging. I was just telling those factors which were responsible.

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to state that the location of proposed bauxite factory is on fringe of Indravati river. I have stated time and again regarding environment that big projects an big dams and located at the places where mining work is likely to be undertaken after cutting the mountains. As a result, the sand and silt carried away by the water will be deposited in these dams due to which dams will become shallow. The life expectancy of this Indrawati project has been fixed at 46 years and the term of Babili-malli industry will be reduce to one fourth. Therefore, I would like to request the hon. Minister that our priority should be to fight the famine in Orissa since the entire world is up in arms against famine

.(Interruptions).

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly put your question now.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : It is linked to the whole issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not related to the whole world. Kindly restrict yourself to the topic under discussion and put your question, accordingly.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : My question is same. If the EIA was made and if the Government has given an environmental clearance, has it made specific recommendations, whether the bauxite mining activity which is going to be conducted there, is located on the fringe of that particular Indravati Project and whether that mining activity on that particular hillock is going to cause degradation of

irrigation project there, on which more than Rs. 1200 crore are being spent ?

The fate of that part of Orissa is dependent on the irrigational prospects of that particular channel. What I want to know from the hon. Minister is that, in what perspective and in what situation, the environmental clearance, was given to this project, going against the will of the people?

From the 15th of this month, the BJP, the local legislator of that area and Shri Bhakta Charan Das who is now not present here, are going to have a State-wide agitation against this programme.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Rudy, whether you are threatening the hon. Minister or asking question(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, This is not the way. You are threatening the Minister saying that somebody is to go on a strike etc. You may kindly put your question now. That is not the issue.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : That is the issue, Sir, which is being raised. The whole State is angered about it. There is going to be a public movement against it. I want to know, in what situation it is done.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please ask the question. It is Half-an-hour discussion. You can go to his room and explain the remaining points and suggest him to do whatever you want otherwise, people would resort to strike.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister that in which circumstances, it was give environment clearance while it is likely to cast its impact on irrigation and irrigatfon projects of the State ?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : First of all, I must assure my hon. friend, Shri K.P. Singh Deo, that no information was withheld from him. I have myself gone through this whole questions and have not answered from the notes of the Ministry. I examined it and found that a voluminous report from EIL could not be forwarded to the hon. Member. It was properly answered though it may be deficient. There was no question of withholding any information. That can never happen.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Must submit that Part(b) of the report has been totally withheld. No information has been given on Part(b) of the original question . . . (Interruptions).

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please, elaborate on that point.

[English]

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Yes, I will come to that. As far as the whole question is concerned, it relates to bauxite mining. The report that was subjected to scrutiny by Shri K.P. Singh Deo is from EIL. He has raised questions and so did Shri Rawat and Rudy. I will come to that. Since it is a technical report and it has technical aspects, I must place on record some facts properly and then briefly I will answer all the questions.

Hon. Member Shri. K.P. Singh Deo had desired some information through Unstarred question No. 3630 answered on 18.3.97 about a Bauxite Mining Project in Orissa State. We had given the answer in brief but the hon. Member was not satisfied as he wanted more details. In particular, he wanted the salient features of what he called the 'Survey' carried out by M/s. Engineers Indian Limited and since the answer did not contain any details in this regard, the hon. Member seems to have got the impression that my Ministry has tried to conceal this information. In this connection, I would like to state at the outset that there is absolutely no intention on the part of my Ministry to withhold or evade the information sought for. We are always willing to give any information regarding such matters to hon. Members.

I would like to submit certain facts of the case and also explain the nature of Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA, exercise and highlight the salient features of the study carried out in this project, which would then perhaps satisfy the hon. Member and others in this House.

The Environmental Impact Assessment is a scientific study which examines the environmental consequences of both beneficial and adverse impacts of the project activities on different components of the environment including socio-economic aspects. This exercise involved generation of base-line data, its analysis and interpretation, based on which an Environmental Management Plan is drawn up.

In the instant case, M/s. Engineers India Limited carried out the study on behalf of M/s. Utkal Alumina International Limited. The study report covers a number

of technical aspects and comprises of

1. General description of the project.
2. Geology and mining scheme.
3. Environmental Impact Assessment methodology
4. Prevailing environmental status
5. Identification, predictions and evaluation of impacts of the project on the environment.
6. Environmental Management Plan and
7. Post-project environmental monitoring

It is not easy to compress the technical information, which run into about 140 pages given in the Environmental Impact Assessment report, in reply to the Unstarred question. We have sent a copy of the study report to the Parliament Library on 8th May, 1997. We have also sent a detailed note on 9th May, 1977 to the Lok Sabha Secretariat in which we have made it clear that my Ministry has no objection to a copy of the note being given on the hon. Member. In case, details are still required about the EIA, I can read out some of the salient features. It will not take much time.

I would also like to inform the hon. Member that the environmental impact clearance has been given by the Ministry after the report of M/s. Engineers India Limited has been examined by the Expert Committee for Mining Project. I will narrate later some of the points which have been covered in the clearance letter conveying environmental clearance to the unit.

The project authorities have confirmed the acceptance of these conditions. I will answer your question.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : All the States have written about the effect of recent Supreme Court order which has banned the non-forest activities by widening the scope of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. What do you have to say about that ? We would like to know about it.

18.00 hrs.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : The hon. Member may kindly bear with me. I am on a different question.

The project authorities have confirmed the acceptance of the above conditions. Compliance of the clearance letter is being monitored by the regional office of the Ministry located at Bhubaneswar. A report from our regional office

[Prof. Saifuddin Soz]

has been received. The project is yet to start. I want to assure the hon. Member that all aspects of environment associated with the project have been taken into account while conveying the clearance to the project. At the same time, the socio-economic aspects have also been taken into account. We hope that the project will be set up soon to help in the development of this underdeveloped region of Orissa.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is six O'clock now. Does the House want that the sitting be extended till the completion of the Minister's reply ?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We extend the sitting of the House till the completion of the Minister's reply. The next Member to speak on the Approach Paper to the Ninth Five Year Plan is, Shri Shivraj Patil. He can commence his speech and then continue it later on.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : I will come to safeguards now. The Engineers India Ltd. conducted the Environment Impact Assessment of bauxite mining in the Indravati river basin in 1994. The study report is here and its salient features can be narrated to the hon. Member.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : It is not a study on the Indravati. It is only a ten-kilometre radius of Baphallimall Hill. The Indravati is of more than ten kilometres, away.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : We have taken note of what safeguards were needed and what safeguards are there. I think, the hon. Member's worry at this moment is misplaced.

The salient features of the study were received in 1994. Environmental clearance was issued in September, 1995. Then there was a complaint from Orissa from Maharaja P.K. Deo, ex-Member of Parliament. That complaint was subjected to examination by the Orissa Government. The Orissa Government found that that complaint was not in order.

There is the question development which Shri Rawat has raised. We have to be in the middle. Environment ? 'Yes'; but not at the cost of development. Development ? 'Yes'; but not at the cost of environment.

The complaint was subject to examination in the Ministry. Some questions were raised which the Orissa

Government contested. The broader question which Shri K.P. Singh Deo raised is about the precautions that we have taken. I will deal with it very briefly. Precautions are taken after this report is there. You have an expert Committee, which is not just composed of ordinary people, examining it. It is not just that the Minister takes a decision. He has to be on a sure ground. We have appointed a committee of experts to clear the project. In this clearance, all safeguards have been taken. If you allow me to read only a few, for instance ;

It is noted that the OB (overburden) re-handling activity commences from the sixth year. All possible efforts should be made to advance the re-handling of OB and backfilling the excavated quarries from an earlier time-frame in view of the project location in the catchment of Upper Indravati Project. . . . External OB dumps shall be properly managed and suitably reclaimed to prevent damage to the water bodies and the and downhill. Apart from providing see garland drains, check dams, brush wood dams etc., the slopes of the dumps should be maintained at a maximum of 28 degrees.

It cannot be 30 degree because the experts say that this is required and it was not done theoretically. The experts have to go there, visit there . . . (Interruptions). Then, with regard to the conditions of flora and fauna, the Project authorities should take appropriate community development measures including enhanced agricultural education and medical facilities to the tribal people in the Project area. The Project should provide a minimum of 30 per cent employment for the local people in an effort to improve their socio-economic conditions.

The regarding green belt . . . (Interruptions). I will come to your question. . . . (Interruptions). What has been manipulated ?

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Technical specifications have been manipulated to give the clearance . . . (Interruptions). If the Chair gives the permission . . . (Interruptions). In similar situations, there are any number of projects in the country which have been refused. If the Chair gives the permission, I challenge the situation that there are any number of projects which have not been given clearance on similar situations. Why a special case has been made out in this particular project against environmental actions. . . . (Interruptions). If the Chairman gives me an opportunity, I can furnish 20 instances in which environmental clearances have not been given in similar situations. . . . (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no question of . . .

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members are most welcome.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are always most welcome to go and meet the Minister.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIVE PRATAP RUDY : It is a matter of policy . . .*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are most welcome to meet the Minister.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : The whole case has been bulldozed . . .*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, kindly give the hon. Member an opportunity to come and see you.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Government has manipulated the Report to see that clearance is through . . .*(Interruptions)*.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : I am prepared for a long discussion, but it is not proper, I think in my opinion, to cast aspersion on the Committee itself that they can be motivated in one way or the other, is not correct.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Why not ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please Shri Rudy, you can meet him.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : There is no need to . . .*(Interruptions)*.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Environmental clearance has been given. It is already there in Bhabaneshwar. Industry has not yet started. Therefore, there is no question of any worry in the minds of the hon. Members. I can only assure you . . .*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : We just want this new Government to apply their mind.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Rudy, not so many interruptions.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : No interruptions, now.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Rudy, please sit down.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Sir K.P. Singh Deo has finally raised the question about the precautions that we have taken. We have taken all precautions. I am saying that this is a committee of experts. If you want me to tell the names. I can. You yourself know.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : You only recommended the precautions. Who is going to see that those precautions are being taken ? That is what we are interested to know.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Expert Committee.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : We wanted to know the stipulations which you have put and who is going to enforce them. It is not being enforced in 200 cases.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : This industry has not come up. It will come up some day. . . .*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : This is an assurance that it will be enforced . . .*(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : It is already there . . .*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Thank you very much . . .*(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : The whole nation is aware. Mr. Chairman, our monitoring unit is there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, I think that the hon. Member is justifiably worried that the precautions that you have notified should be implemented. Is there any agency to see that those precautions will be followed on the ground because it is also within my knowledge that the orders issued by the Ministry are being violated and mining is going on unchecked ? There is nobody to check it. So, that is what I think he is worried about. Is there a machinery for implementing those precautions ?

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Let me tell you, and through you, the whole nation must know that so far as environment laws are concerned, we have very comprehensive laws

[Prof. Saifuddin Soz]

comparable to any country in the world. Recently, we have become totally transparent through an Environment Appellate Authority. We have as Chairman Mr. Justice Venkatachelliabh. He has kindly agreed to be the Chairman of the Committee. The Environment Appellate Authority is such that its procedure has been determined in a manner that it will not only stay in Delhi, but it will go to any part of India to offer comfort to the people who have any grievances . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Are we encouraging judicial activism ? . . . (Interruptions).

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Our Monitoring Unit is already in Bhubaneswar now. Their duty is to inform whether the conditions that have been stipulated are violated or not. I do not think that this concern should be carried quite a distance further because I have assured the hon. Member that no information was withheld from . . . (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN : Assurance by the Minister is adequate safeguard.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, I am very satisfied with his assurance. He has said that precautions will be taken and will be enforced. But it is not correct to say that nothing was withheld. Only on the 8th May, this Report came to the Parliament. The Parliament Library has been trying from the month of November. Already five months have elapsed.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Sir, I will tell you what we have done according to norms. We have not withheld anything. Whatever I am saying is going on record. The whole Report will be sent to you. So, I have answered your question as per tradition. Since you wanted more information, we have supplied you with more information.

Now, I will come to the question raised by Prof. Rawat. He said that mining should not be stopped. I feel, sometimes, concerned about it. It is because mining is the livelihood of some people. Environment is important. So, I would like to tell that if we close down mines, then

somebody will lose his livelihood. Therefore, my Ministry has become alert on this. We shall very much consider the genuine suggestions from environmentalists. Environment is very important but at the same time we shall not stop development. It is because some of the agencies in foreign countries have started doling out advice to us. We are alert on this. We have land behind us. We have to have development. So, I am in the middle. Therefore, I would like to say that environment not at the cost of development, and development not at the cost of environment. This is the answer.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : When is the Government going to amend the Mining Act ? An assurance was given by the former Prime Minister to the State Ministers that they were going to amend the Mining Act.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Rawat, you can meet the hon. Minister later.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Sir, I have heard his suggestion. But I cannot act on an *ad hoc* basis. I will have to consider it. I will invite him. Let him sit with me. I will certainly consider his suggestion.

18.11 hrs.

MOTION RE: APPROACH PAPER TO THE NINTH
FIVE YEAR PLAN—Contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, I would request Shri Shivraj V. Patil, hon. Member from Latur to speak.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is good that you have given me an opportunity to speak today and tomorrow also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may continue tomorrow. The House stands adjourned to reassemble tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

18.12 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on
Tuesday, May 13, 1997/Vaisakha 23, 1919 (Saka)*