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14.08 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF
URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Situation arising out of Regional Imbalance in
the Development of North Bengal Region**

**due to plan process of Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Plans
and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto**

Title : Attention of the Minister of State, Ministry of Planning called by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmusi towards regional imbalance in the Development of North Bengal Region.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Situation arising out of regional imbalance in the development of North Bengal region due to plan process of Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Plans and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."
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THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): Hon. Member, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has raised a matter regarding the situation arising out of the regional imbalance in the development of North Bengal region due to Plan process of 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Plan periods. It may be stated that the hon. Member had also tabled a Calling Attention Motion on 15th May, 2002, the subject matter being "situation arising out of reported regional imbalance in various parts of the country including North Bengal and West Bengal". The issue regarding the perceived backwardness of the North Bengal region was adequately covered in the discussion.

The hon. Member has also been raising matters under Rule 377 regarding the situation arising out of regional imbalance in northern part of the State of West Bengal.

Similar concern has also been raised by the hon. Member about the overall economic development of the North Bengal region on a number of occasions by raising Matters under Rule 377, Zero Hour Motions, letters to the Prime Minister, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and his anxiety for the development of the area and its people is well appreciated.

The hon. Member often raised the issues of regional imbalance and lack of infrastructure development like road network, health, rural electrification, industry, education and construction of overbridges on railway crossings, etc. in the North Bengal area as also relating to the socio-economic and cultural development of backward communities like Rajbangshis of the North Bengal.

While raising these issues, the hon. Member has dwelt on the perceived imbalance in the development of North Bengal region as compared to the other areas of the State and the country.

The issues raised by the hon. Member from time to time, have been examined in the Planning Commission. However, the planning and development of areas and allocation of funds for the purpose are primarily the responsibility of the Government of West Bengal as they come under the purview of the State Government. In spite of this, it may be stated that the Central Government also supplements the efforts of the State Government through appropriate Central sector schemes in respect of the issues like flood control, road network, health, rural electrification, industry, etc. for supplementing the efforts of the State Government ensuring balanced regional development. It may be seen that almost all the matters raised by the hon. Member fall within the overall responsibility of the State Government. Inter-sectoral allocation of Plan funds is entirely the prerogative of the State Government concerned. However, Central Government allocates funds for selected area development programmes such as the Border Area Development Programme (BADP), Hill Areas Development Programme (HADP), Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY), etc. Further, Central assistance has been provided through appropriate Centrally-Sponsored Schemes to take up flood protection and riverbank erosion measures.

The attention of the Chief Minister of West Bengal has been drawn to the issues raised by the hon. Member

requesting for appropriate action to be taken at the level of the State Government.

It may also be mentioned that the State Government have also constituted a body, namely, North Bengal Development Council with the objective of formulating schemes for the development of North Bengal region.

Besides, keeping in mind the repeated requests for development of North Bengal, made by the hon. Member, as a special case, it was decided that a Study should be conducted in respect of the North Bengal region in order to understand and address the issues involved therein. A Study, named "Research Study on the Comparative Backwardness of North Bengal Region" was assigned to the Institute of Applied Manpower Research, an autonomous institution under the Planning Commission in September, 2001. The Report has since been submitted and accepted. The Report says that "while the disparity between the North Bengal districts and the rest of the State is sharp when we consider outcome variables such as State Domestic Product, the disparity in input variables such as social infrastructure are not that sharp. This would then call for better convergence between development agencies such as District Rural Development Agency, financial institutions, and *Panchayati raj* institutions.

The district of Jalpaiguri has been included under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana and Central assistance of Rs.15 crore per annum is being allocated for three years for all round development of the district.

It may be appreciated from the foregoing that the problems of the region have received due consideration from time to time and efforts are being made to tackle the problems of floods, river bank erosion, and equitable development of the area.

Sir, if I may add, the hon. Finance Minister in the Interim Budget speech has stated:

"Tea is an important agro-processing industry, employing a large number of our citizens in North Bengal, Assam, the North-East and some of the Southern States. Currently, this industry is beset by many problems. I had, therefore, tasked the Indian Banks Association to prepare a revival package. This has now been finalised. Special Tea Term Loan, repayable in five years, with a moratorium of one year, shall be provided. In case of small tea growers, banks have agreed to extend fresh working capital limits up to Rs.2 lakh, at an interest rate of 9 per cent only.

In addition, steps will be undertaken to examine the feasibility of a debt amelioration scheme in the tea sector, too."

Sir, yesterday, the hon. Finance Minister also stated that a direct subsidy of Rs.8 per kilogram to promote domestic production and to make tea prices competitive in markets abroad has also been thought of. Apart from this, the *Uttarbanga Unnyan Parishad* which is a State committee has been set up by the State of West Bengal. The border area plan allocation has also been made from time to time.

Sir, I would now give the figures. A sum of Rs. 108.02 crore was released under the Border Area Development Programme, West Bengal in the Eighth Plan. A sum of Rs. 140.02 crore was released under the Ninth Plan and a sum of Rs. 72.93 crore, uptill now in the Tenth Plan has been released.

Sir, I submit that it is a matter of concern for all of us, including the Union Government, to see that the North Bengal area is properly developed and the disparities are removed. With these words, I conclude my statement.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am really very shocked to hear the statement of the hon. Minister. The issues of North Bengal, as he has admitted, have been referred to the Planning Commission and the hon. Prime Minister time and again.

Sir, I would like to mention about three agitations here. One agitation, the name of which has now found a place in the dictionary, namely, the Naxalite Movement took birth in a place called Naxalbari in North Bengal and now it has spread to various other parts of the country as well. The meaning of it is agitation of extreme violent nature by the people who are victims of a situation of backwardness and under-development of a region.

The second agitation was the GNLFF agitation in the district of Darjeeling in North Bengal. This agitation was handled jointly by the late Rajiv Gandhi and the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Jyoti Basu. A special provision was made to accommodate them through the Gorkha Hill Council which was headed by Shri Subhash Gheising.

The third agitation that is now on is that of the Kamtapuri movement. It has got two wings. One unit of this movement, known as the KLO, went for armed agitation and their activists have been detained by the Bhutan Government and have been taken into custody. The other unit has chosen to protest through the democratic path and is contesting elections. All these are in North Bengal.

Sir, I have brought this matter to the notice of the hon. Home Minister. One should understand the sensitivity of the region. It may not be like it is in the State of Jammu and Kashmir but this region is bordered by countries like Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. If this particular region is left un-nurtured in this fashion, then I do not know as to where we are trying to lead this region to in the future days to come.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, when I raised this issue on 15th May, 2002, the then Minister of the same Ministry, who is now the distinguished Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Smt. Vasundhara Raje, said, and I quote:

"The university of North Bengal has prepared a socio-economic perspective plan for North Bengal for 2001-2010 which is under the active consideration of the *Parishad*. The Government has proposed to allocate an amount of Rs. 112.53 crore in the Tenth Five Year Plan to this *Parishad*."

She further quoted, and I quote:

"In the applied and manpower research autonomous institution under the Planning Commission in September, 2001 a study was made to bring inter-district disparities in different dimensions of the development under the following heads: physical resources, human resources and physical infrastructure. A study has been envisaged as a strength whereas opportunities and threat analysed by the district of North Bengal *vis a vis* future development initiative."

Furthermore, she said, which the hon. Minister for Planning avoided mentioning, and I quote:

"It is pertinent to mention the State Development Report of the State of West Bengal in this regard. A Core Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri S.P. Gupta, Member, Planning Commission."

Sir, a lot of rivers flow from the Himalayan and the Terai range, including the Manasarovar. These rivers flow over North Bengal and bring floods to the region. Now, according to the Planning Commission, floods mean floods that occur under the Ganga Flood Control Commission. But the river Ganges does not flow over North Bengal. The main rivers of North Bengal are Mahananda, Teesta, Torsa and Kaljini. I have been arguing and pleading for the constitution of the Mahananda Flood Commission with equal emphasis that has been given to the Ganga Flood Commission to save North Bengal.

When a river like Mahananda comes from Bihar, it destroys the whole of North Bengal. Till today, the Planning Commission did not give any cognizance to it inspite of several hundreds petitions and representations about floods.

Secondly, it is no use always to put the blame on the State Government. Plan allocations are made on priority basis which I do agree. Now the Minister says that the Government of West Bengal has formulated a Development Council. Do you know their budget? The Development Council had put their budget as Rs. 43 crore per year but slashed it to Rs. 22 crore suddenly as there was no money. In the Tenth Five Year Plan, there was a proposal of Rs. 115 crore which the *Parishad* would get. I am told that the *Parishad* is not getting even Rs. 50 crore. The problem of floods is gigantic.

The hon. Minister is from West Bengal. He knows about the resources there. Best quality of timber, best quality of dolomite, best tea and jute are the available resources of North Bengal. The entire country's jute comes from North Bengal and the best quality comes from a part of Assam. The hon. Minister said something about tea growers. I thank him for that. But he did not say anything on jute. I am told that, after the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, this Government is going to close down the Jute Corporation of India and the jute growers of the entire North Bengal will cry in the streets. That was one of the potential physical resources.

Regarding the infrastructure, the hon. Minister may check up from the Planning Commission record and if I am wrong, he may correct me. From the Second Plan to the Fifth Plan, the only development fillip which came was one engineering college, one university and one medical college, and that is the end of it. During this period of Second Plan to the Fifth Plan, the New Jalpaiguri Railway Complex came up. Beyond the Fifth Plan, no tangible infrastructure development took place. I cried before Shri Arun Jaitley and Shri Jaswant Singh, to increase the revenue of the Government, to have an export corridor with Bangladesh through Radhikapur. It requires only Rs. 20 crores and by that Rs. 20 crores infrastructure, hundreds and thousands of youngsters will get jobs and there will be business and economic activities. When they have nothing, what will they do? They will wait and then join either a movement with arms or naxalites. They will go to the extremist direction of Kamtapuri or KLO or they will teach the Constitution of India by adopting a different method which was done in GNLFF Movement. Try to understand this point.

When Nepal King thrashed out the naxalites, where did they go? They hid in North Bengal. When Bhutan King

flushed out the extremists, where did they hide? It was in North Bengal. And the local population got agitated. They had been asking for special consideration. But you said that you appointed a Core Committee. What is the outcome of that Core Committee and S.P. Gupta's Report? Did the Core Committee say that priority will be given?

Sir, in this House, I moved a Private Members' Bill to amend the Constitution of India to include North Bengal under article 371 of the Constitution. Why? After the merger of Maharashtra and Saurashtra was over, Panditji visualised that Kutch was the sufferer. Vidarbha was the sufferer. Vidarbha, Kutch and Bastar were all taken under article 371 and the Governor himself intervened for Plan allocation and justified their imbalance.

My dear good friend, Shri Tapan Sikdar hails from North Bengal. He knows how do we stay at the time of floods. When partition took place and India was divided, it was divided in such a way that kitchen was in Bangladesh and bed room was in India, the courtyard was in Bangladesh and the temple was in India. Division came in this way. There were floods of refugees in one part. In the other part where Bihar and Bengal merger took place, a part of Bihar got included in North Bengal and the Urdu speaking people, the Muslims, were concentrated in one place. Do you know the largest Muslim populated place called Talpukur and do you know that it does not have a college and a higher secondary level school for education of women? This severe plight is there. Therefore, I have been urging you to either bring it under article 371 or appoint a Special Task Force to remove the imbalance. How can you stop the imbalance? Can the Minister deny whatever I am saying?

The naxalite movement grew only on this ground. Now, it has got a name throughout the country. Who built the naxalite movement? It was built by the villagers and the youngsters. Then it came to the city. Now, the Kamtapuri people are telling me, "See, we have not taken to guns. We believe in democracy. But who will listen?". Will the Government form a small Committee, in consultation with the State Government – do not bypass the State Government – to listen to their views on language, culture and development and respond to them? In future, I tell you, the way in which things are moving in North Bengal, it will be a headache to the country.

Sir, there is a place called Malda. The hon. Minister knows that if the tributary of Ganga, Fulhwar, which runs from Bihar, attacks North Malda, nobody can save it. Till today the Government has not formulated any comprehensive plan for the flood management there. Within ten years Malda town will be affected. Such is the course of change of Ganges from Rajmari. Farakka Barrage is a big threat now. It is the costliest barrage. These are the issues which should be looked into. When I cry, when I write or when I raise these issues, I am not doing that for any individual. I raise it as an alarm for the future. You please try to listen.

I would like to conclude with few queries. Will the Minister persuade the Finance Minister – even though the Interim Budget is over – to include jute also in his package for the jute growers and to declare that JCI should not be closed? Will the Minister constitute a Committee, in consultation with the State Government, to listen to the grievance of the Rajbongshi ethnic group? When Santhali language got recognised on the other day, Rajbongshis cried as to why their language should not be recognised. When Maithili dialect, which is from Hindi, could be recognised as a language by the Constitution, why can Rajbongshi dialect not be considered by the Constitution?

Their leader in the freedom struggle – you cannot believe – is considered to be the head of their society. He is no more. He is not alive. But his message gave the confidence to them to fight the Britishers. Today, they are landless and homeless. They have nothing. They are only saying that at least their language and culture should be preserved. Nothing is being done. The answer is take them into custody and beat them hollow.

Shri Amar Roy Pradhan, who is a Member of this House from Coochbehar knows what is happening there. Shri Joachim Baxla, a Member of the RSP from Alipurduars, also knows what is happening there. Of course, Shri Tapan Sikdar, knows this as he hails from Malda.

Therefore, I plead to the Ministry of Planning that it should take these issues casually. When I raise this matter in West Bengal, the State Government says that I should go to Delhi; when I raise this issue here, the Central Government says that I should contact the State Government. I am shuffling between Delhi and West Bengal and this situation is very disastrous to the future.

My next suggestion is that the Government should set up a Committee to understand their grievances and give a Report later. If any legislation is required, bring that legislation in the next Lok Sabha. I would like to know whether the Government can consider bringing it under article 371, like Vidarbha, Bastar and Kutch to give special emphasis for the development initiatives by the Governor himself under his own discretion. My last point is this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Is this your fourth point?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : It is my last point.

The Minister mentioned about BADP. Yes, funds have been sanctioned under the BADP. Traditionally it goes to the border areas. In North Bengal, the BADP support is very marginal. I can give one instance. The Minister can check

it up. If I am wrong, I say and I can file an affidavit before the Election Commission to the effect that I will not contest elections.

In a border area called Burra in Kadirganj in the Karandiganj P.S., lands of Indian cultivators have been encroached upon by the CPWD without encroaching the 'no man's land'. Bangladeshis are coming and taking all our harvest. Our cultivators are permitted to go for only three hours or four hours in a day with the permission of the BSF to cultivate part of their land and to come back like prisoners when the sun is set. I went to check it up. Tears rolled from my eyes. I am also an Indian. What punishment we are giving to our own people! It was done because of the foolishness of the CPWD and the BSF.

The cultivators of Kadirganj and Burrah, under the Karandighi P.S., are crying for one thing. They are saying "we are Indians and the Bangladeshis are taking our harvest." What can they do? These are the issues that are cropping up. Of course, the Darjeeling people's cry is that the Gorkha Hill Council Development Plan should be directly controlled by the Union Government and the Planning Commission. That is their ego. At least, they have not asked for a separate State. Therefore, with all humility, I would like to address this issue to you to do the needful. Neither the S.P. Gupta Committee Report comprises anything nor the Research and Manpower Panel's Report has still got any financial support from the Planning Commission. If you do not do anything and when the flames will be there because of this, like the second Naxalite upsurge in North Bengal, even the CRPF or the Army or the public men cannot manage it. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to respond to the problem in a positive manner without shifting the responsibility to the State. The State also should not shift the responsibility to the Centre.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): Can I intervene for two minutes?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let him reply.

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR (MANGALORE): He may be given a chance....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I appreciate the concern expressed by Shri Dasmunsi. Frankly speaking, I also share some of them. We need not feel all that helplessness because steps have been taken. I will try to meet the points raised by him very shortly.

So far as flood control is concerned, the river Ganga enters Malda district of West Bengal from Rajmahal in Bihar and flows into Bangladesh near Jallangi Bazar in Murshidabad district. Heavy erosion along the left bank of the river Ganga in Malda district and along the right bank of Murshidabad district of West Bengal has been occurring due to the meandering nature of the river which has been active in different reaches at different periods of time depending upon the changing morphology. Erosion has also been reported at places in Nadia district and also along the banks of rivers Mahananda, Nagar and other tributaries in Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur districts.

As regards the problem of erosion, the Planning Commission, in 1996, had constituted an Expert Committee called the Keskar Committee which had suggested various short-term and long-term measures to be taken up by the State Government as well as by the Farakka Barrage Project Authority. The State Government have started execution of works recommended by the Expert Committee since 1997-98 and an expenditure of about Rs.78.57 crore has been incurred in this regard.

The Government of India have recently set up another Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chairman, GFCC (Vashishta Committee)....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : May I just intervene for a minute? The hon. Minister belongs to Nadia district. Mr. Minister, will you admit that in spite of that, the erosion has not been managed?

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: Yes, I can answer this. The position is this. Every time, we ask the Central Government to provide funds, funds are provided. But then they are not accounted for. I remember that when the hon. Prime Minister was there during the last elections, a point was raised. It was stated that the Central Government was not providing funds for dealing with the flood situation. It transpired that in the previous year about Rs.60 crore had been provided but not accounted for. When the utilisation certificate comes, then only further funds can be released. Every year, crores of rupees are released but they are not accounted for. It is for the State Government to implement the schemes. It is for them to take measures to control the floods. The Central Government does provide funds. It is not that funds are not being provided. Funds are being provided but they are not accounted for. That is the problem. Shri Dasmunsi knows much better than I do because he has been in politics much longer than I have been. He knows about it.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (BARRACKPORE): That is not the fact. Funds are not provided adequately.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: I am giving the facts and figures. If you want, I will provide you the figures.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Many a time, it was discussed.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: As I was saying, so far as the flood management is concerned, a Centrally-Sponsored Scheme for taking up critical flood control and anti-erosion schemes in Brahmaputra and Barak Valley - in the North Eastern States, including Sikkim and North Bengal – with an outlay of Rs.166.68 crore has been taken up by the Central Government. The Teesta Canal Project was approved by the Planning Commission in the year 1975 with an outlay of Rs.69.72 crore. The Project was taken up for implementation in May, 1976...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : What is the fate of it? The Project is yet to see the light of the day.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: That has been started.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Of course, that has been started. It will be like the *Bhagirathi*. It will be like the Ganges to bring water...(Interruptions) Twenty years have passed...(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: You cannot blame the Central Government for that.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I am not blaming the Central Government. I am only giving the facts.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: That is what I am saying. If we persuade the State Government to take appropriate steps, that would help us. For instance, you have written two letters.

I have answered them and I have forwarded copies of those letters to the hon. Chief Minister of West Bengal to kindly see that appropriate steps are taken for development of these areas.

In the Ninth Plan, the Ministry of Water Resources started a Centrally-sponsored scheme called Critical Anti-Erosion Works in Ganga basin States with a funding pattern of 75 per cent and 25 per cent as Central and State shares for implementing flood control works. Then, in August, 1998, the Planning Commission released Rs. 30 crore as ACA to the Government of West Bengal to undertake some critical works in Malda and Murshidabad districts. The State Government has since utilised these funds. For the Annual Plan of 2003-04, the Planning Commission approved Rs. 30 crore as ACA. The State Government has allocated Rs. 20 crore out of this ACA for flood and erosion control work in the River Ganga.

Sir, I respectfully submit that so far as the Central Government is concerned, it is fully aware of its responsibilities. We are taking whatever steps are possible and the ultimate results lie in the hands of the State Government who have to implement the schemes and to appropriately utilise the funds which are being provided for flood control and other measures.

So far as the S.P. Gupta Committee is concerned, they have submitted a report, but it is under the consideration of the Government.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : What does that report state? Can you pass on the report to us?

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: It can be made available. It is not a secret report. But so far as the report is concerned, the Government is yet to act upon it. It is being considered by the Government.

So far as the Rajbongshis are concerned, on the last day of the 13th Lok Sabha, I cannot possibly even give an assurance to the hon. Member on the other side because it is a serious matter. It has to be considered by the Government before any decision is taken, but I can say this much that the point is well taken and it should be considered. Beyond that, I cannot say anything more.

So far as invocation of article 371 is concerned, that is also not for me, at this stage on the last day of the Session, to make any commitment.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : It is the last day for us. You are in office. The Government is a continuous process.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: Shri Dasmunsi, you know very well that no policy decisions can be taken by the caretaker Government. So, you will appreciate that.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : There is no term as 'caretaker Government' in the Constitution of India, so far as the Union Government is concerned. He is a very distinguished lawyer of the country. I salute him. But there is no term as 'caretaker Government' with regard to Union Government. You have a right to even bring an Ordinance after tomorrow.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: Sir, as I said, the points are well taken and I am sure that the measures that have been taken by the Central Government are adequate to meet the situation. We should persuade the State Government to take appropriate measures to look after these problems.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I fully share the feelings expressed by Shri Dasmunsi and also the Minister. This has been a very much neglected region, but not necessarily neglected because of any intention, but because of circumstances. I have served in that area for several years and I know that the biggest problem is the feeling of isolation suffered by the people. They feel that they do not belong to West Bengal and the people of Kolkata take no interest in them. Some time last year, the Government of India and the Government of China have agreed to the opening of the ancient trade route up to Tibet through Nathu La, Gangtok and Siliguri. We should cash in on it and then try to expedite the opening of it very soon. If that can happen, then naturally this route will become the main supply route to the Tibet region. Even in 1954, when the hydro-electricity plant in Lhasa was set up, the machinery came to the Calcutta Port and then went on the mule track. If this route can be opened, then there will be a lot of development in the North Bengal and I would strongly urge the Government to follow this.

Regarding Rajbongshis, I fully share the feeling expressed by Shri Dasmunsi that their language should be recognised and they should be given some cultural recognition also.

SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE: So far as the cultural aspect and their language are concerned, these have been taken into consideration in my statement. As I already said, the point is well taken. We also share the concerns of all the Members of Parliament from West Bengal that this area should be developed.

One other thing I would like to say is that in the Tenth Plan, there is Volume-III. It is devoted entirely to the States because not only do we have

imbalance among the different States but also within the States themselves. In different districts, there are different rates of growth. So, to take care of that, special attention has been given so that the grievances of the States are taken into consideration. A volume has been devoted to look after the interests of the various States.