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Title : Power shortage in the country.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA (GUNA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. The country today is facing one of its worst power crises ever. An Assocham survey has recently revealed that States like Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat have power deficits of close to 8 to 27 per cent. The power availability in a State like Madhya Pradesh is a 2,300 million-unit against a requirement of 3,050 million units, a deficit of close to 27 per cent. Maharashtra, one of the most industrialised States in the country today, has one of the worst power crises with a deficit touching 20 per cent, with almost six to seven hours of load shedding a day. The Northern region of our country comprising of nine States today have a deficit of close to 3,765 megawatts as opposed to 1,600 megawatts in April 2004. This shortage is unprecedented and needs urgent steps to resolve the crisis. The private sector should be given incentives to invest not only in generation but also in transmission and distribution.

Our hydro power resources need to be harnessed. There is a talk just now of an agreement with the Bhutanese Government. The Tala project can provide close to 1050 megawatts to India of which 150 megawatts is being commissioned. Today we have a requirement of 200,000 megawatts in our country. Our generation is only 100,000 megawatts. It is going to cost an additional amount of eight lakh crores of rupees. We need to harness capability and find out where our comparative advantage lies. If Bhutan and Nepal can produce hydro power cheaper, we need to allow them to produce and supply to India while we concentrate our resources on transmission and distribution.

The World Bank has characterised India as a "Build, Neglect and Rebuild Model". We build public assets, then we do not spend on replacement of those investments and then we have to rebuild those public assets. This is indeed a very stark criticism of our country's public utilities, whether it is power or water. That is why I raised the issue of water last week. Thanks to you Mr. Speaker.

I think our country needs to concentrate on debates of these issues of power and water. Therefore, I would urge that the Private Public Partnership system needs to be revived. I would also urge that to increase revenue mobilisation in schemes like Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana, where a franchise is developed in every village so that the money that has to be harnessed from that sub-station and that transformer is earned by the person in that very village, thereby raising accountability and transparency. This needs to be furthered.

I would like the Minister of Power to shed light on this issue. The Governments, not only the State Governments but also the Central Government, need to take steps to urgently look at the power conservation. It is very important to create awareness in civil society about conserving power to make sure that these precious resources, about which we debate very little in the Parliament, are conserved. We need to look at the solutions.

Finally, we need to talk not only about conservation but also about the prudent and judicious use of these resources. One aspect is conservation, but the other aspect, and the more important aspect is, the prudent and judicious use of these resources. For that awareness needs to be created.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a matter to be mentioned only after the Question Hour. I would welcome notices on this. I have been trying to encourage Members on this issue. If I am not misunderstood I want more young Members to take part and take more interest on these issues.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Half-an-hour discussion may be allowed on this issue.