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Title: Further discussion on the Underdeveloped and Backward Areas and Regions (Special Provisions for Accelerated Development) Bill, 2009 Moved by Shri Baijayant Panda on 17.07.2009 (Bill Withdrawn).

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we shall take up item No.56.

I have to inform the hon. Members that on the last occasion, on 31.07.2009, before the House was adjourned, the hon. Minister, Shri V. Narayanasamy had started his speech by way of intervention in the debate on the Bill. After the speech of the hon. Minister, hon. Member in-charge has to exercise high reply to reply. Out of 4 hours 30 minutes allotted for discussion of the Bill, 4 hours 27 minutes have already been taken. Thus, almost exhausting the time allotted for discussion. We may extend the time for discussion of the Bill till Member in-charge exercise his right to reply. I hope the House agrees to it.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Madam.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to reply to the very important debate. More than 15 hon. Members participated in the discussion including the hon. Member from Orissa, Shri Baijayant Panda, who moved the Bill – The Underdeveloped and Backward Areas and Regions (Special Provisions for Accelerated Development Bill, 2009.

It is a very important subject. The hon. Member and we are also very much concerned about the backward region in the country. It is about the facilities to be provided, the amenities to be provided in the backward region and also in the under-developed areas where education, health indicators, drinking water problem, the problem of employment, especially unemployment, which is mounting in the rural areas, irrigation facilities, etc. There are various problems which the hon. Member has mentioned while raising the issue. Not only the hon. Member, there are about 14 Members, apart from him, cutting across party lines, they raised the issue of developing the backward region and special attention has to be paid by the Government of India for those regions, which have been under-developed.

The hon. Member gave various suggestions. In the Bill, he has mentioned constitution of an Under-Developed and Backward Areas and Regions Development Authority, which has to be chaired by the hon. Prime Minister. He has also mentioned the work that has to be performed by the Authority, especially in the field of railways, road, communication, industrial development, irrigation facilities, agriculture and agro-based industries, construction and preserving the water bodies and in the field of agriculture and poultry farming, piggery, livestock, dairy products, cottage and village industries, Public Distribution System, family welfare.

The subject which the hon. Member has raised, it is not only the Central Government, the role has to be played both by the Central Government and the State Government for overall development of the backward region and the under-developed region. The Central Government is only a funding agency. On the one side, we have the planning process. Planning is done by the respective State Governments, the hon. Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers. By identifying the priority areas for the development of that region, early budget is being prepared and sent to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission allocates 30 per cent of the fund for distribution among the special category States, like the States in the hilly region, border areas and the North-eastern States and 70 per cent of the fund is distributed among the non special category States through various planning processes in the States. While distributing the money a formula is worked out. The States where below poverty line population is more, are given weightage with regard to creating infrastructure like roads, schools, hospitals, irrigation, water supply and child and women welfare. Planning process starts at the Panchayat level. Panchayati Raj institutions have been constituted in all the States. We have been insisting the State Governments to collect the data from the panchayats so that due weightage could be given to even development of the rural areas.

The hon. Member has been critical of some important issues. He has mentioned about the command economy, which is his code word. In his speech he has referred to the freight equalisation scheme, royalty for mining and the railway sector not being given priority by the Government of India. These are the major issues on which the hon. Member showed his concern while speaking on the subject.

I would like to mention that apart from the regular Budget allocation that is being made to various States on the basis of the Budget presented by the individual State Government, we have various other programmes for the under-

developed and backward regions. The Backward Region Grant Fund, which has been constituted by the Government of India, gives special focus to Orissa and Bihar. As far as Bihar is concerned - there are thousands of villages in Bihar where tribal and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population is much - for the supply of electricity and drinking water an allocation of Rs.1000 crore, apart from the Budget allocation and the money provided under the Centrally sponsored scheme, has been made by the Government of India.

As far as Orissa is concerned, it is one of the States rich in minerals. It also has more backward, tribal and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population. We know the living conditions of especially the KBK districts of Orissa. They have been suffering for drinking water. There are no proper approach roads. Tribal people living in the forests can not enter the villages because there is no electricity on the way. When Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, for the development of KBK districts, Rs.250 crore was provided annually by the Government of India. It was continued even by the NDA Government.

### **16.00 hrs.**

It is now being matched with the present scheme of Backward Region Grant Fund and is continued to be given to those regions. This money is being provided for giving life support to the people of that region. Now those three districts have been made into eight districts by the State Government. Even then the money is being provided by the Government of India for the KBK region of Orissa.

Madam, I would like to quote how the funds have been given by the Government of India for Orissa and what is the total amount that has been spent for various schemes which, I think, the hon. Member will appreciate. This is apart from the Budget money and these are centrally-sponsored schemes. Under the National Rural Employment Scheme, in 2008-09, Rs.1100 crore was provided and the expenditure was Rs.678 crore. Only 67.83 per cent was spent by the State Government.

Then coming to Indira Avas Yojana, Rs.315.81 crore was given. In that, the Central Government's share is Rs.251.99 crore. So, 79.79 per cent was the target achieved by the State Government. Then coming to Central Rural Sanitation Programme, Rs.68 crore has been provided by the Government of India. The target achieved was only 67.45 per cent. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission in 2008-09, out of Rs.100 crore which was provided, the central share was Rs.73.63 crore and the target achieved was only 73.63 per cent. Coming to 2009-10, Rs.1000 crore was given under the Employment Guarantee Scheme. The amount spent was only Rs.175.88 crore up to 31<sup>st</sup> August as per our records. Only 17.59 per cent has been spent. Like that, if you look at the total amount provided under the centrally-sponsored schemes by the Government, the spending is not sufficient. It is not up to the mark.

As I said earlier, the Central Government will give the money and the State Government has got the machinery for the purpose of implementation of those schemes. The Central Government only monitors the programmes. State Governments should implement the schemes efficiently. I had an opportunity to go to Orissa which the hon. Member also knows. I visited the KBK districts. I saw the plight of the people there. That area has to be developed. There is no two opinions about it. But even then as an implementing agency, my appeal to the hon. Members would be that apart from the fund provided for various schemes by the Government of India under the Centrally-sponsored schemes, money should reach the targeted people. It has to be ensured whether there is a ruling party Government or the opposition party Government in the States. We should ensure that the targeted groups get the advantages of these schemes. Then alone the schemes would be successful and the targeted groups will get the advantages of the scheme and they will come above poverty line. These 15 to 16 centrally-sponsored schemes are being implemented by the Government of India for the purpose of developing the backward regions, hilly areas, border areas and the people living in the tribal areas as all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe areas.

Then the Tribal Sub Plan is being implemented by the Government of India. The percentage of total tribal population

in the country is about 8.2 per cent. The Tribal Sub Plan is there in about 24 States and some Union Territories. The Government is implementing various schemes for the tribal population as a support for increasing their capacity building. The funds are provided. The Central Government, in the year 2005-06, had formulated the scheme on priority basis and retained only those schemes which helped in income generation for these people. This scheme has been very successful in States like Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tripura, Manipur, Gujarat, Goa, Jammu and Kashmir and Maharashtra. This is targeted only for the tribal population.

As far as Minority Development is concerned, there are about 90 districts which have a Minority dominated population. An amount of Rs. 2750 crore has been allocated in the Eleventh Five Year Plan for their education, health, employment generation, construction of houses and providing drinking water facilities. This money has been allocated for distribution in the minority dominated districts for the purpose of providing basic amenities including education and health for the minority population. There were a lot of representations received from the people belonging to minority communities and the hon. Prime Minister was kind enough to intervene in the matter and announced an additional Rs. 1,000 crore for the minority population apart from whatever has been allocated under the Eleventh Five Year Plan for this purpose in order to bring about improvement in their field of education, employment and also if they were to start business and such other things.

Apart from this there is a very good scheme now which has been announced by the hon. Finance Minister in his Budget speech of 2009-10, namely, the *Pradhanmantri Adarsh Gram Yojana* (PMAGY). It is a pilot scheme. This will be implemented in 44,000 villages across the country where the population of Scheduled Castes is above 50 per cent. As a pilot project the Government is implementing it in some States and for that the Government has initially allotted a sum of Rs. 100 crore and in a phased manner it will be extended to 44,000 villages across the country which will be made model villages. This is being done for the development of the Scheduled Caste population in the country.

The hon. Member was referring to one area of his concern, namely, about the growth and the facilities being provided to the urban areas. He was referring to the point that employment generation in rural areas was very slow and the people were not getting the required facilities. The hon. Member was especially concerned about the fact that States were not being given their due share. The main concern of the hon. Member was about the royalty that accrue to the Government is not duly shared with States. I would like to submit to the hon. Member that the policy in regard to royalty was revised and it was increased to 10 per cent by the Government of India. It was so done because the Central Government found that State Governments should also get their due share and this should satisfy the hon. Member who comes from a mineral rich State like Orissa. It is one of the States which has a power generation capacity of a high order. They had excess power and had shared that with various other States. Under the new policy, the power generating States like Orissa and Jharkhand where there is availability of coal and also where several private

investors are coming for the purpose of investing in the power sector is likely to do well. Those States will become, within a short period, power surplus States and they will be able to get more revenue out of it because the power-generating companies will be paying money to those State Governments.

In the Border Area Development Programme, on which I did not want to mention elaborately....(Interruptions) He says that the hon. Members are satisfied now. But I will be happy if the hon. Member Shri Panda is satisfied because he has been very vocal in raising this issue. I do not want to satisfy Shri Jairam Ramesh alone but other hon. Members as well.

Madam Chairman, about the development of border areas and hill areas development, the Hill Area Development Scheme is a very important scheme. For the people living in hill districts of Assam, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the Government has provided about Rs. 110 crore for all the three States together. The State-wise break-up is like this. It is Rs. 55.57 crore for Assam, Rs. 28.97 crore for Tamil Nadu and Rs. 25.97 crore for West Bengal. These funds have been provided for the development of hill areas.

As regards Western Ghats development which covers about five States, namely, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, a sum of Rs. 1391 core has been provided by the Government of India.

I would tell the hon. Member that the budget allocation for Orissa has been increased in recent years. It was originally Rs. 2200 crore and now it has gone upto Rs. 9000 crore. Roughly about Rs. 7000 crore is provided under the Centrally-sponsored scheme. This is apart from the royalty which the State Government is getting.

Regarding Bharat Nirman, it is a very important scheme. About Rs. 1 lakh crore has been allocated for that purpose by the Government of India which covers housing, electricity supply, water supply, roads, sanitation. Bharat Nirman covers all these areas.

The Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission focuses on developing the urban areas. Urban facilities enjoyed by

certain groups have to be provided to the urban slum dwellers also. They also have to be taken care of. For this purpose, one lakh crore of rupees has been allocated by the Government of India.

Apart from that, one of the novel schemes which have been introduced and has become successful is the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. This year, about Rs. 39,100 crore has been provided for it. The hon. Prime Minister has made it very clear that not only for this scheme but also for any other scheme implemented by the Government of India, fund is not a problem. We want rural people to get strengthened and get employment opportunities. Agricultural workers who get employment for two to three months in a year should not sit idle for the rest of the year. Earlier, 150 districts were covered under this scheme. Then the number was increased to 200 districts. Now, it is implemented throughout the country. The amount paid for seven hours was Rs. 80 which is now increased to Rs. 100. Agricultural workers who are working in the fields are getting this amount. Today, complaints are coming from the farmers that they are not getting labourers for working in the agricultural fields because people get employed under NREGA. So, it is a very successful scheme being implemented throughout the country. Every household will be earning a minimum of Rs. 6000 to Rs. 8000 a year which is an additional income apart from the regular income which the farming community gets in this country.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, as you know, is being implemented in all the States. This scheme is being implemented by the Government of India for providing infrastructure for schools, for children who are studying in the schools, creating playground for the children who are studying there and for appointment of teachers.

The National Rural Health Mission is one of the novel schemes. It is helping the rural people. When I visited Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, under this scheme, I found that medicines for people affected by malaria and filaria are available in the Primary Health Centres. These are the schemes which are being implemented by the Government of India to attack poverty.

I agree with the hon. Member that there is disparity. On the one side, in the urban areas people are getting all the amenities and on the other side, people in rural areas are deprived of these facilities. So, the rural population has to come up very well. The authority which he has mentioned is not going to solve the problems. It is not only I, but also two or three other hon. Members, who said this. They have also said that constitution of this authority alone will not solve the problem. It is the concerted effort on the part of the Government of India, on the part of the State Governments and the local bodies, which will solve the problems. All have to work together. The hon. Members of Parliament have to pay attention towards the implementation of the schemes so that the people who are really in need of those facilities can get them.

I found that several hon. Members, while raising the issues, showed their concern. I agree with them. The Government of India, with its limited and available resources, is distributing the funds to various States. It has been done equitably depending upon the BPL population. Those States where the BPL population is more have been given weightage. Those States where the income ratio is increasing, have been given lesser support by the Government of India. The border areas, the tribal areas and the hilly areas have been the focus of the Government of India. The hon. Member will agree with me on this. Uplifting the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and minorities has been the target of the present Government of India. The UPA I also did it. Now, the UPA II is increasing the allocation for those schemes which the Government is implementing in the whole country.

The hon. Member was in the Rajya Sabha. Now, he has come to the Lok Sabha. I followed him from the Rajya Sabha to the Lok Sabha. Therefore, while considering all these aspects, the Government of India is fully aware of the problem which the rural areas are facing. The Government of India has given a lot of weightage for developing under-developed and backward regions in the country. The hon. Member's concern has been shared by other hon. Members in this House. Whatever possible help or assistance, which has to be given by the Government of India for the development of backward and under-developed areas, has been given by the Government of India. By constituting an authority we cannot do wonders. The authority will be only an advisory body. There are so many implementing agencies. Implementation is the main focus of our planning. Implementation has to be done by all the stakeholders concerned.

Therefore, I would request the hon. Member to consider the submissions which have been made by me. I hope the hon. Member would have been satisfied with my reply and that he would withdraw the Bill. The points which have been made by the hon. Members will be noted. The Action Plans that have been implemented by the Government of India and various State Governments will definitely, step by step, lift the BPL population to above poverty line and all basic amenities will be provided to the people of this country.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Shri Panda, I think you are satisfied with the fool-proof reply of the hon. Minister.

SHRI BAIJAYANT PANDA (KENDRAPARA): Madam, I thank you very much for letting me exercise my right of reply.

At the outset, I would like to state that the hon. Minister's intervention was richly scattered with data, facts and figures, financial numbers and with details of various schemes of the Government of India. It clearly demonstrates his understanding of his subject and his Ministry. By virtue of his having been in charge of the State of Orissa for his Party, he has first-hand exposure and he spoke knowledgeably about many of the problems that we face. While respecting his viewpoints, there are certain issues on which I must respectfully disagree. I will seek your indulgence for a few minutes just to make these points.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: All right.

SHRI BAIJAYANT PANDA : I would like to point out that what I was asking for in proposing to form this Authority can be summed up in two words: to have focused attention on these areas. It is not just about Orissa. I am not just speaking about my State of Orissa. I am speaking about ten areas including the other backward areas like Vidharba and other States.

Is it not a fact, as the hon. Minister himself has acknowledged, that in these States, the poverty level is much higher than the national average? In my State, for instance, the poverty level is double that of the national average. The hon. Minister alluded to the tribal population and the problems that they face. He pointed out that the national population of tribals is 8.2 per cent.

### **16.22 hrs.**

( Shri Inder Singh Namdhari *in the Chair*)

I would also take this opportunity to point out that in my State, it is more than three times of that. One out of every four persons in Orrisa is a tribal person. So, the level of disparity that we have, the percentage of the population that faces this problem is much more accentuated in some of these backward areas. I would also like to point out that there is a national responsibility here. Here, I would like to respectfully disagree with the hon. Minister's statement that the Central Government is only a funding authority and that the State Governments have to implement these things. That is, of course, largely true. But the Central Government also has a responsibility to hand-hold the States and to provide solution because a national solution is not always the best solution for a specific part of the country because one size does not fit all.

I would like to make a reference here that for many years in the national Government, a view was taken that the naxal problem is a State level law and order problem. That kind of an attitude has allowed the problem to grow until it has come to a crisis level. Finally, now, the national Government, the Central Government is compelled to take action on a war footing basis which could have been started about five or six or seven years ago.

Sir, the hon. Minister referred to my references to the command economy, freight equalization and mineral royalties. But these are the facts. It is a fact that we had a command economy. It is a fact that for a certain period of many decades, some parts of the country grew faster than some other parts of the country like Orissa and some of the other States that I am referring to. It is a fact that there were some policies which did not help us. The Freight Equalisation Policy allowed the industry to be incentivised to go elsewhere. The *ad valorem* policy is there. These are the policies that are being gradually corrected as the hon. Minister pointed out. But the fact is that they are being corrected in recent years. For 60 years, these regions had to suffer from these policy deficiencies which were made at a national level. Therefore, the national Government, the Central Government has a responsibility.

As I said, it is in the self-interest of the Central Government and of the rest of the country to want that these backward areas are to be developed faster. There is a responsibility of the Central Government to be more than just a funding agency. Of course, the Central Government is the funding agency. The hon. Minister has pointed out certain examples. For example, he mentioned the Backward Regions Grant Fund. Yes, he is correct in the point that he makes. But I would like to provide another perspective.

Sir, an amount of Rs. 250 crore was being given to KBK districts for several years before the Backward Region Grant Fund Scheme was initiated a few years ago. What did it do? When the Backward Region Grant Fund Scheme was initiated, it was initiated not just for the most under-developed part of the country, which is the KBK area, but for scores of districts throughout the country. So, there are districts also in many more advanced States in the Northern, Western and Southern India which come under the same Backward Region Grant Fund Scheme. The point that we have been making in Orissa and

in some of these other States is that some parts of the country are so far behind like the KBK area that they cannot be equated with districts in Punjab or Karnataka or some other States. There has to be some special attention that has to be given to these areas.

The hon. Minister said that the proposed authority will not solve the problem. I am not saying that the proposed authority is the only solution to the problem. For example, we have the Planning Commission. What does it do? The Planning Commission does not solve all the problems of the country. But we also have other authorities for specified regions. We have the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region for the Northeast. In Orissa itself, we have the Western Orissa Development Council so that the Western part of Orissa also develops as fast as the coastal part. What happens with an authority like that is that it gets the attention of the Prime Minister; it gets the attention of the Sub-Committee of Cabinet Ministers, who then pay focussed attention to these 10 regions which are very far behind the national average so that they can be brought up.

Sir, the hon. Minister gave us some figures about the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. It is a fact that the NREGS applies to the whole country. But again I would like to emphasize here that one size scheme does not fit everybody. I can give an example of our own State. In certain parts of Orissa, the NREGS works rather well, but in other parts of the State, the price levels and the structure of the scheme itself is such that it allows only a certain degree of mechanised intervention and so it comes in the way. Therefore, it does not suit the requirement of that particular region. So, the State Government of Orissa had made a request and the hon. Members of Parliament have made a request to the Central Government to change this scheme accordingly. Now, it is difficult for them to appreciate it here because it is not a national problem. This problem does not prevail in Punjab or in other places where the scheme works better. So, our point is that the scheme, sometimes, needs to be tailored to suit regional problems and regional shortcomings. If it were to get the attention of the Prime Minister and if it were to get the attention of a structure just like the Planning Commission to focus on these 10 least developed parts of the country, then it will be easier for us to solve this problem because the changes or modifications in the policy that we request can be taken up rather well.

Sir, I do not want to take much time of the House. Before concluding, I would like to raise just one more issue. The hon. Minister said that the States have the responsibility to implement the schemes. We do not shirk that responsibility in the States. I would like to make a point that Orissa has long been a very backward State and this level of poverty did not happen overnight. It happened over decades and it happened over centuries. But let us take a look at what has happened in the last decade. In the last decade, if you look, for example, there are certain social indicators like malnutrition. The malnutrition figure throughout the country is reducing very slowly. Malnutrition is reducing in the last six years actually at a rate of only one per cent for the whole country and yet, in the State of Orissa, we have had the maximum reduction of malnutrition. We have had a reduction of 10 per cent. So, it is not that we are not making progress. On the economic front, Orissa has traditionally been laggard. Our economic development has been far behind the national average and yet, for the last four years in a row, Orissa's economic growth rate has been higher than the national average.

So, efforts are being made and we are seeing results, but because States like mine and all these other 10 regions that I am speaking about have suffered not just in recent years, but for many decades and many centuries, it will take time for them to catch up on this trajectory of development. That is why, I think, there is an onus on the Central Government to take greater interest and pay greater attention to these areas.

Sir, the hon. Minister has made a point that the States have been given their due shares. We can argue about the monetary amount of shares under various schemes and the ability to absorb that funding and the need to modify certain schemes to suit local requirements. But I would like to emphasize that I am not just talking about money. I am saying that the States must not only get the Central Government's funding, but they must also get the Central Government's attention. I think, that is the critical factor which is missing. If we can take the planning process closer to the field, if we can take the planning process closer to the problem, it will be better. There are certain decisions that can only be taken at the level of the Cabinet of the Government of India or the Prime Minister of the Government of India and in the normal process for it to filter through the Planning Commission and it be given the due weightage as to various problems in different parts of the country, it takes years to find a solution whereas if an authority like this could sit once a year or twice a year and given attention to the ten most backward regions of the country, solutions could be found much faster and we could have a much faster development than what I have just pointed out where we have turned the corner in places like Orissa, but we still have a long way to go.

In concluding, I would just like to give one more example of how we are suffering from policy differentiation and then I will conclude. The hon. Minister talked about energy and electricity and I know he made a reference to hon. Minister, Shri Jairam Ramesh, who has his concerns about coal based electricity development. But the fact is, States like ours have a

natural resource. The alternatives to coal based development today are far too costly. The funding must come from somewhere. The technology exists for solar, the technology exists for wind power generation, but the cost is much higher than if you were to develop our natural resources.

I would like to bring to the attention of the hon. Minister that, for example, Orissa was the pioneering State in electricity reforms. In the early 1990s, when the late Biju Patnaik was Chief Minister of Orissa, the first electricity reforms happened in India in the State of Orissa and only after that it started happening in other States and today, of course, there have been countrywide electricity reforms.

But what has this done for us? Of course, it has made the system much more transparent, it has got us much more investment, it has separated distribution and transmission from generation, but there is another side to the coin. I will give an example, because of this reform in electricity sector, which took place more than 15 years ago, the transmission and the distribution companies have been privatised. Now, what happens? Later on the Government of India comes up with a scheme which is to give more funds and more focus to rural electrification. So, there is an accelerated rural electrification development programme. Orissa does not get anything from it, Orissa does not benefit from it because the distribution companies have got 51 per cent private sector ownership.

The contradiction is that the Central Government is actually encouraging States all over the country to privatise and to separate the distribution so that the transmission in distribution losses can be reduced. So, what one hand provides, the other hand takes away. If this were to get the attention of the hon. Prime Minister, we are convinced that no Central Government can deny the right that while these rural accelerated electrification development programme funds are being given to other States, certainly it should not be denied to Orissa. So, these are the kind of policy modifications that are required. State Governments keep on making these requests to the Central Government. They sometimes take months and years to get the due attention whereas an authority like this would be meeting once a year or twice a year and would be specifically focussing on these suggestions and would take the authority of the Cabinet of the Government of India to solve these problems so that we could have faster development.

In concluding, I would like to say that the hon. Minister has requested me to withdraw the Bill and I am well aware of the convention of this august House that Private Members' Bills are, in fact, withdrawn. I was hoping that the hon. Minister would give us an assurance that such an authority would be set up. Now, in the absence of such an assurance, I take some heart from his understanding of the problems in Orissa and understanding of the problems of the backward areas, so if not today, at some mere point, we look forward to a solution to these problems and if an authority like this cannot be contemplated, I would seek his personal intervention to ensure that the Prime Minister's Office and the Planning Commission get to deal with our problems on a more urgent basis.

With that, I would like to withdraw the Bill.

I beg to move for leave to withdraw the Bill to provide for the establishment of an autonomous Central authority to ensure rapid, accelerated and overall development of poor, underdeveloped and backward areas and regions of the country which lag behind in matters of development of infrastructure in economic, social, educational, technical and industrial fields and assure their speedy development in a planned manner and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That leave be granted to withdraw the Bill to provide for the establishment of an autonomous Central authority to ensure rapid, accelerated and overall development of poor, underdeveloped and backward areas and regions of the country which lag behind in matters of development of infrastructure in economic, social, educational, technical and industrial fields and assure their speedy development in a planned manner and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI BAIJAYANT PANDA (KENDRAPARA): Sir, I withdraw the Bill.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I thank the hon. Member for withdrawing the Bill.