

[Translation]

(vi) **Need to clear the proposed Punpun Dargha Project in Bihar**

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, India is a land of the farmers and agriculture is the main occupation, but the Government's indifferent policy towards agriculture is making it unremunerative day-by-day. It is particularly so in Bihar where only 18 per cent of agricultural land is under irrigation and due to the undue delay in according approval to projects, the estimated cost of the projects escalates 3 or 4 times. This increases the financial burden of the State Government and agricultural production suffers. For example, the Punpun Dargha Project was sent to the Central Government by the Government of Bihar for approval in 1980. It is still pending with the Central Water Commission. Had approval been granted at that time, the aforesaid scheme would have been implemented and the State would have been saved of the financial burden. Now the estimated cost of the project has increased four times.

I would like to demand from the Government that the Punpun Dargha project should be immediately cleared so that it may be successful.

(vii) **Need to ensure remunerative price to onion growers**

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKARMAHALE (Malegaon) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a decline in the price of onion since the beginning of this year. The price has slumped to Rs.40 to Rs.50 per quintal from Rs.200 to Rs.250 per quintal in the beginning of the year. If the prices of onion continue to decline, the onion growers will suffer losses. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister on this subject and would request him that NAFED should purchase onion at

reasonable prices and give 80 per cent of the price to the onion growers. If need be, onion should be exported. A committee should be set up to look into all aspects of this problem and to suggest measures to resolve it.

(viii) **Need to expedite construction of dams over the Kosi river for overall development of North Bihar**

[English]

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani) : The Government of India sent a preliminary report for a multi-purpose high dam over river Kosi at Barakhshetra to His Majesty's Government, Nepal in 1981, who got the same examined by Japanese experts. It is learnt that the Japanese experts okayed the Indian project, apart from suggesting smaller projects for valleys upstream. The Government had assured the House in 1982 that the matter would be taken up with the H.M.G. at the political level.

It is not known as to what steps have been, or are being taken to expedite construction of this dam which is in the mutual interest of both India and Nepal.

Meanwhile, devastating floods, occasional droughts, chronic power famine and massive danger to road and rail communications in North Bihar and *tera*/region of Nepal are proving a stumbling block in their development. The remedy lies in multi-purpose dams over rivers Kosi at Barakhshetra, over Kamla and Shishapani and over Bagmati at Nanther. But the Government of Bihar does seem to be interested only in eastern embankments in the plains which go on increasing the ravages of floods, drought, damages to communications system etc. but not in any durable solution through multi-purpose dams.

I do urge upon the Union Government to expedite construction of the above dams.