

Central): Sir, on receipt of report about the degradation and misutilisation of beaches in the Coastal States by building and other activity, the Government of India at the insistence of the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi had conveyed its desire that beaches be kept clear of all activities and all kinds of artificial developments at least 500 metres from the high-tide water mark.

In spite of the above policy, Videsh Sanchar Bhavan is being constructed on the sea-shore plot at Prabhadevi, Dadar, Bombay. The plot was a playground and hence sports lovers of the locality are also agitating for the last four months against such construction. Decrease in the number of playgrounds is also a matter of concern in Bombay city.

I urge upon the Communications Ministry to reconsider the proposal of constructing Sanchar Bhavan on that plot and to shift to some other interior plot in the locality.

(iii) Demand for early clearance to the pending irrigation projects of Maharashtra

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Kopergaon): Government of Maharashtra have submitted 25 major and 48 medium irrigation projects to the Central Water Commission for clearance of the Central Government, some of which are pending as far back as 28.1.74.

The State's Irrigation Department pursues the matter with Central Water Commission for early clearance as and when opportunity comes. The matter has also been discussed with the Union Minister for Water Resources and also at the Secretary level.

For the clearance of the projects the Central Government has appointed a Study Group. In the Report of the Study Group, it is proposed that the joint meeting of the offi-

cers of Ministry of Water Resources/Central Water Commission and the State Government should be held for early clearance of projects. In the Report of the Study Group, the proposed time limit for the clearance of major and minor projects is 24 months and 12 months respectively.

I humbly request the Government to take necessary steps to get early clearance, so that Maharashtra does not face the drought situation in future or Union Government should allow the State Governments to sanction the irrigation projects up to Rs. 20 crores.

12.22 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

(iv) Demand for central assistance to Teesta Barrage project

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK (Darjeeling): Sir, the Teesta Barrage Project is one of the biggest irrigation projects in India and is a project of national importance. It has an irrigation potential of 9.19 lakh hectares and its subsidiary Teesta Canal Falls Hydel Power Project is expected to generate 67.5 MW power which may open the possibility of setting up of a number of small scale and medium industries and provide employment to a large number of unemployed youths in the districts of Darjeeling and West Dinajpur and other districts of North Bengal. The original concept of the Project was cleared by the Planning Commission in 1973 and subsequently modified in 1976. Updated modified cost estimate of First Sub-State of Phase-I works out to Rs. 510 crores. The entire expenditure has so far been borne by the West Bengal Government excepting a Central Assistance of Rs. 5 crores and Advance Plan Assistance of Rs. 15 crores in 1986-87 and Rs. 10 crores in 1987-88. This being a project of national importance, Union Government should provide Central