

ments from a firm, namely M/s. M A.N. of West Germany, and which were delivered much after the scheduled dates of delivery, to NLC. The cost in foreign exchange is about Rs. 21 crores. But this equipment ultimately failed and fell down, killing a large number of people; and NLC could not get any kind of compensation whatsoever.

It is now learnt that the management of NLC is making all efforts to award another contract for supply of more sophisticated equipments costing about Rs. 125 crores to this firm again (M.A.N. of West Germany) despite the fact that the Technical consultant for the project did not even approve the firm's participation in the same tender. Serious lapses are not only there, but the firm is technically incompetent to manufacture or build up such equipments for the Second Mine Expansion Project.

In the larger interest of the country and of the State exchequer, I wish to caution Government against the efforts of the NLC to award another contract to this M.A.N. of West Germany.

(vi) Need for repairing and developing Buckingham Canal

SHRI P. PENCHALLIAH (Nellore) : Buckingham Canal is one of the oldest canals in the country. It is 418 Kms. long and flows through Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. This Canal, which had been completed in the year 1897 had been the main source of transportation for the people of this region, and various commodities.

The 1966 cyclone destroyed the entire economy of this region, and also destroyed this Canal. There were many breaches. The entire Canal was damaged. Layers of sand deposited in the Canal reduced the depth, affecting the movement of boats. Now, the whole of transport through this Canal is on the verge of collapse. Now boats are able to move for a few Kms. here and there. As a result of it, the pressure on road transport system increases considerably. A team of experts from Federal Republic of West Germany has visited India, and inspected the Buckingham Canal in the year 1985. Has

the report of the experts on their inspection been received? What is the reaction of the Government of the Federal Republic of West Germany?

If this Canal is repaired and developed, it will serve the needs of the people in this region, in many ways. It will boost local trade and give a fillip to transportation,

Hence I request the Central Government to repair and develop this Canal as early as possible.

(vii) Need to adopt effective measures to check pollution caused by tobacco dust in Etah, Mainpuri and Farukhabad districts of U.P.

SHRI MOHD. MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN (Etah) : In Uttar Pradesh the Districts of Etah, Farukhabad and Mainpuri are known for best quality of tobacco production which is also the main cash crop in these districts. Tobacco business is mainly in the hands of private traders who engage labourers for crushing and processing tobacco leaves which is mostly done in the open. Tobacco leaves are beaten with small wooden planks while its roots are grinded with centigators. As no scientific method is applied in the whole process, huge quantity of tobacco dust produced is inhaled by the workers and the whole environment gets heavily polluted causing serious health hazards. Chest ailments, cough and T.B. are common among the workers. The working sheds and godowns are mostly located in the thickly populated areas in the towns and cities causing health problems. Environmental pollution with tobacco dust in major parts of these districts has assumed alarming proportion and there is urgent need to consider the problem with all seriousness.

Therefore, through you Sir and this August House I would request the Minister for Environment and Forests to kindly take up the question with the State Government of Uttar Pradesh emphasising the urgent need for taking suitable effective measures to protect the workers from tobacco dust and to check environmental pollution besides shifting the working sheds and godowns outside the town and Nagar Palika areas.