

constructed. Amount of Rs. 80 lakh has already been spent. However, the work in this regard has been discontinued at the instance of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of forests and Environment. I would urge upon the Minister of Water resources to construct the dam so that the water for irrigation in Vidisha district may be utilized.

17.02hrs.

[English]

ANNOUNCEMENT BY SPEAKER -Cont

Postponment of Half an Hour Discussion

MR. SPEAKER : I have to make an announcement please. I have to inform the House that the Minister of Power has requested that Half-an-Hour Discussion about the reservation for Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking after privatisation listed for today may be postponed because he is not well; and the Member who wanted to raise this also has agreed to the postponement.

The discussion is accordingly postponed and it will be taken up after some time.

STATEMENT BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF INDIA EXPRESSING HIS OPINION ON

17.03 hrs.

[English]

- (i) Scope and extent of disciplinary authority of the Election Commission in respect of officer and staff deployed for election work ;and
- (ii) Scope and extent of authority in the matters of deployment of forces to maintain law and order to ensure free and fair elections, keeping in view

the constitutional and legal position that maintenance of law and order is primarily the State subject.

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF INDIA (SHRIMILON KUMAR BANNEJEE): Hon. Speaker and Members of the House.

Pursuant to the request made by the hon. Speaker to furnish my opinion on two specific points. I have taken the liberty of making a statement. which, I believe, is based on some precedents with regard to these points. Thereafter subject to whatever decision the hon. Speaker may take, clarifications may be asked for.

with the permission of the Chair, my I read the statement. It is an honour and privilege to address this august assembly. I have been asked to give my opinion on two issues that have been referred to me by this House. I have been asked to give my opinion, firstly, as regards the scope and extent of disciplinary authority of the Election Commission in respect of officers and staff deployed for election work and, secondly, about the scope and extent of authority in the matter of deployment of forces to maintain law and order to ensure free and fair elections, keeping in view the constitutional and legal position that maintenance of law and order is primarily a State subject.

Before taking up the first issue on the scope and extent of the disciplinary authority of the Election Commission, it seems necessary to indicate what sort of role the founding fathers of our Constitution expected the Election Commission to play. Dr. K.M. Munshi had this to say in the Constituent Assembly about the Election Commission. I quote:

17.05 hrs.

"We must remember one thing, that after all an Election Depart-