

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Guha, I have asked you to proceed with the Calling Attention.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Madam Chairman, some of us want to seek certain clarifications from the Home Minister after his reply. Will you kindly inform us whether the Home Minister will resume his reply after the Calling Attention is over today or on Friday... (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not know how much time will be taken on the Calling Attention, and whether the House will agree to sit late thereafter. Let the Calling Attention be finished first. I am not in a position to enlighten you just now.

Prof. Samar Guha.

17.30 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(ii) REPORTED DETERIORATION IN POWER SUPPLY IN GREATER CALCUTTA

PROF. SAMAR GUHA (Contd):
Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Energy to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Reported deterioration in power supply in Greater Calcutta and other parts of West Bengal and the difficulties being faced by the people as a result thereof."

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the power supply situation in Greater Calcutta and different parts of the State of West Bengal is showing signs of improvement after a spell of sudden deterioration during

the last week of March, when the load shedding was to the extent of 230 MW. But this trend has now been arrested and the load shedding is in the range of 140 MW. Even this is a matter of concern to us.

The power requirements of the State of West Bengal are being met from generation from thermal power stations at C.E.S.C., Bandel, Santaldih, Durgapur Project Ltd., Gowripur, with hydro stations making a meagre contribution to the system. If there had been enough hydro capacity in the system, it could have helped a good deal to take care of the peaking requirement where at present there is acute shortage. The peak load and energy requirements of West Bengal is about 950 MW and 16 million units per day. But the system is not able to meet this as a large number of units are on forced outages and enough power is not being generated from other stations.

As per the West Bengal Energy Control Order of 1974 the demand of greater Calcutta has been assessed at 580 MW, but the availability has been only of the order of 480 to 520 MW. There are four agencies involved in the supply of power to Greater Calcutta, viz., Calcutta Electric Supply Company, West Bengal State Electricity Board, Durgapur Projects Ltd., and Damodar Valley Corporation. While the generation in the Damodar Valley Corporation has picked up and are now generating to the extent of 700 MW, the generation at other stations supplying power to Calcutta is not what it ought to be. Even though in the month of February 1979 and most of the period in the month of March, there was a load shedding of 125 to 135 MW the power supply situation worsened towards the end of March when a large number of units went on outages. In the Santaldih power station alone where 300 MW of capacity has been created, all the three units were down thereby causing a major upset in the supply schedule for the system as a whole.

but I am happy to inform the House that atleast one unit at Santaldih has come back and is generating about 85 MW which will provide some relief.

If the power situation in West Bengal has to be improved, the solution lies in (i) better operations and maintenance of the existing power stations; (ii) early completion of the on going projects at Kolaghat, Bandel, Durgapur Project Ltd., and Santaldih; (iii) improvement in the co-ordinated operation of the system within the State and within the region.

The Government of West Bengal is fully alive to all these problems and all possible measures are being taken by the Chief Minister of West Bengal to improve the situation and ensure better power supply. We on our part will spare no efforts to give whatever assistance that is needed to bring about improvement in the power situation in West Bengal.

With improvement in the integrated operation of the system in the Eastern region, which we expect will take place, and prompt action being taken to bring back the units on outages, I can confidently hope that the power situation will improve in the coming months. Apart from this a number of units—one at Bandel of 210 MW, one at Santaldih of 120 MW, five gas-turbines of 20 MW each and one at Durgapur under DVC of 210 MW—will be commissioned and this additional capacity will bring about a marked change in the power availability in the State of West Bengal.

It will not be out of place to mention here that during the last two years alone, we have added to the tune of 5000 MW to the installed capacity in the country as a whole and there has been an increase of 12 per cent in the overall generation during the last year. The power supply situation in most of the States is by and large satisfactory.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Madam, the Minister has replied that they have added 5000 MW of energy in recent times; but I would draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that it has not contributed even a little in resolving the misery that West Bengal is facing for the last two years—or even more.

I do not know whether this statement has been prepared by Mr. Jyoti Bosu or his secretariat, and only brushed up by the hon. Minister. Otherwise, how can he say that "West Bengal is showing signs of improvement after a spell of sudden deterioration during the last week of March..."? I do not know whether the hon. Minister reads newspapers or not. I do not know whether he reads even "The Hindu", what to speak of newspapers from West Bengal, like Amrit Bazar Patrika. Even "The Hindu" is giving quite a lot of publicity to the power crisis in West Bengal. Even if he reads "The Hindu", he will agree that there is no question of the situation improving. The situation is deteriorating, and deteriorating very fast. Every West Bengal newspaper publishes 3 or 4 or 5 columns of news about this. The situation is so bad. You can call it power shortage or load-shedding. Almost the entire life of West Bengal—its industrial production, its commerce, its education and even its agriculture and every aspect of life—is reaching the point of near-chaos. Even Mr. Jyoti Bosu himself has admitted that the situation can be described only as some kind of a havoc that has been created in West Bengal. But you are giving a good certificate to them. Not only that. You are saying.

"The Government of West Bengal is fully alive to all these problems and all possible measures are being taken by the Chief Minister of West Bengal to improve the situation and ensure better power supply."

[Prof. Samar Guha]

I can understand that at least to the Power Minister of West Bengal, you have supplied certain power. I hope he will utilize it, at least with a sense of humility. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has delegated all powers to Mr. Murshid, who is now jocularly being called as Mr. 'more shed', as the man who has contributed to 'more shedding' of power. If he is alive to the problem...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Madam Chairman, what are you doing? Is there something wrong with you, or with me?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I take strong exception to the way you are speaking.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: If the Chair is partisan, I have to say that. Whenever I stand up, you always do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry I will not have this. This is very wrong. Does Mr. Guha withdraw his words? Mr. Guha, do you wish to withdraw your words?

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Yes.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): I have got a point of order. In the Business Advisory Committee, it has been decided not once but time and again that 45 minutes would be given for a calling attention motion; never mind how many speakers are there. Now, we are two. Therefore, we should be having 24 1/2 minutes and out of that, we will make a gift of 5 minutes per ahead.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, I have heard you. I am not aware of any rule where 45 minutes are allowed.

The Speaker has allowed only half an hour, that is, from 5.30 to 6 p.m. You have started it from 5.30 and I want you to finish it by 6 p.m.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: West Bengal is suffering from a crisis unheard of, unthought of and it is going to paralyse the whole life of West Bengal. You are sometimes very gracious and I hope you will be gracious this time also and try to accommodate us. For the last two years, the situation is going from bad to worse. If you live in Calcutta for a day, you will understand what is happening there. The installed capacity is about 1100 MW and the actual demand for it is about 916 MW. You see what figures you have given here. The shortfall is only 120 MW. Even the West Bengal Government is admitting that almost every day, there is a shortfall. Even the Press notes say that there is a shortfall of about 160—170 MW every day; and non-officially, it is 200—250 MW every day. That is why, I say how you have given these figures. I do not know whose figures are these; whether they are correct. You have said how to improve the situation, better operation and maintenance of the existing power station. I want to know why for the last two years better operations were not there, better maintenance was not there. Is it not a fact that when your central team visited Calcutta, even the Chairman of the Electricity Board did not cooperate with your central team? They might have drawn the attention of the West Bengal Government to the fact that what was required was essentially a coordination between the different units regarding operation and management. If there is any power shedding, there should be some kind of a rationale behind it that at this time there should be power shedding so that people could understand it and start their own programme accordingly, industrial programme and other programme. That was not done. But you have not mentioned one import-

ant thing. Is it not a fact that there are inter-trade unions rivalry? Is it also not a fact that some of the labour workers assaulted some of the engineers? Is it also not a fact that there have been a number of sabotages, a number of arsons? It is also not a fact that there have been leakages? Is it also not a fact that the workers are not working due to inter-union rivalry? Is it also not a fact that one of the Directors himself advised Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu and named 7 trade union leaders and asked him to deal with them politically and try to control them; and if he did it, then many of the problems will be resolved? Why have you not mentioned that? This is one of the biggest problems there that trade union rivalry is there with the result that all kinds of sabotages and other things are being created there. What steps you have taken to advise the West Bengal Government to enforce discipline among these units? I want to know from you whether you have advised the West Bengal Government to declare all the units as essential services so that this kind of sabotage, this kind of mismanagement will not be there. There has been no maintenance of boilers for years; there has been no maintenance of spare parts for years. These reasons are mostly due to mismanagement by the Managers. Therefore, I want to know from you whether you will advise the West Bengal Government to declare these power plants as essential services and take rigorous measures over there for avoiding all these things. I want to know whether you have mentioned about the Central Government giving money for purchasing 5 gas turbines. It is reported that Mr. Mursheed has gone to London to get them from M/s. John Brown & Co. Did you enquire whether this John Brown Company offered the lowest tender? You had given Rs. 20 crores to purchase these. Mr. Mushran while coming back went out to Middle-eastern countries. You have given the money. Why did he go there?

Is it for finding out, for purchasing gas turbines? Why he visited all those countries. I also want to know whether you will advise the West Bengal Government to take the assistance of the Centre in the sense that you would send a central team to supervise the operation as also the installation, to see that quickly the gas turbines and other new projects are installed also; the constraints that you have mentioned there about management, about maintenance, about coordination, about labour problems, to resolve all these problems. whether you will ask the West Bengal government to take the help of the Central team and whether you will be prepared to send a central team.

Lastly, I want to know. There is a lot of question about national grid supplying electricity. Will you try to find some surplus electricity from surplus states to supply the needed electricity to West Bengal to somehow get over the present crisis. I want to ask one last question. The situation in West Bengal, particularly in Calcutta has developed so seriously; it is a crisis so big that unless you take serious note, even the whole life of West Bengal, the industry, commerce, engineering production, education, agriculture, every aspect of life is going to collapse in West Bengal due to the power crisis.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:

The hon. Member has correctly diagnosed the ills that are there in West Bengal State Electricity Board. The installed capacity in West Bengal is 1349 MW as on date. The whole problem is this. In the last few years a number of schemes have been sanctioned but they have not been completed in West Bengal. For instance, even today the sanctioned units are to the tune of 1400 MW and in the course of the next few years, the installed capacity will be doubled in West Bengal. But unfortunate-

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ly in some of the stations, which had been sanctioned long back, work has not progressed so well on them and they have not been commissioned on time. For instance, in places like Durgapur, Bandel and also in Santaldih, a number of units were sanctioned but they have not been completed; they should have been completed in the year 1977-78. If those schemes had been completed the power scarcity in Calcutta would not have arisen; because of that only there is this problem. For instance, in Durgapur, you have got 285 MW installed capacity; unfortunately they generate only 40-50 MW.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: They are not doing even that, now.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: You have analysed it yourself. The problem is that there is no proper maintenance. There are different agencies which are generating power in West Bengal State unlike in other states. The DPL is one agency; West Bengal Electricity Board is another agency. These two agencies are generating power; there is lack of coordination and lack of proper maintenance. That is why you find all these problems in West Bengal State Electricity Board. In spite of all these things we are trying to supply some power from the DVC also; we try to take some power from Orissa and supply to West Bengal but in Orissa the supply position is not very comfortable. At times they supplied even 50-60 MW; but now they are able to supply only 10-15 MW. In fact I was in Calcutta and I had discussions with them also two or three days ago.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: U. P. can supply to a certain extent.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Even in U. P. the power supply position is not very comfortable to spare some power. If they can supply,

then we can take it to Bihar and from there we can give to Bengal.

AN HON. MEMBER: Bihar is in short supply.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Through Bihar, I said.

But the problem is—the Central Electricity Authority constantly are trying to advise the State Electricity Board and also the State Government as to what steps they should take to improve the power position in West Bengal.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Are they taking your advice?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Under the existing Constitution we can advise. You cannot expect the Central Government to step in and take over the generation. It is not possible. We are trying to help them in all possible manner to step up their generation. We can only advise.

That is what I can say about power generation in West Bengal. But we expect with the addition of some more units in the current year, by December, the power position in West Bengal will improve and also in Calcutta it will improve.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrackpore): By that time, people will die.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Do not worry, nobody will be allowed to die for want of power. In fact the Central Government always went in to assist all the State Governments.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is too much of noise in the House going on.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: We have gone to the extent of importing spare parts. So we have done our best. That is all about that.

About Gas Turbine, it is only a temporary measure. It cannot be a permanent measure because the cost of generation will be very high. The Central Government has sanctioned Gas Turbines and global tenders were invited. It is only based on that and the Central Government only gave the clearance for foreign exchange. It is the responsibility of the State Government to invite global tender and also import them and what they have done....

(Interruptions)

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Do you check that it goes to the lowest tenderer?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, you are to speak afterwards. Why are you wasting time of the House? Mr. Ramachandran, please conclude.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: The additional capacity will also be installed in the course of this year and I expect that the power position in West Bengal will improve very shortly.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu.

Mr. Samar Guha, I am not allowing you. I am not allowing you.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: My questions have not been replied to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Minister may please note that the Chair has not allowed. (Interruptions).

Please take your seat, Mr. Ramachandran.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: This is very unfair. We want to hear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will speak after Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu.

Whosoever is called by the Chair will speak and nobody else will speak.

(Interruptions)

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: I am on a point of order. I had raised certain points which the Minister was trying to reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu. (Interruptions).

No, no, Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu.

Mr. Guha, you are incorrigible Mr. Guha, Will you please take your seat?

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: I will also say, please....

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no, when the Chair stands nobody else stands.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: I can also say, no, no, no, I cannot sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Guha, please sit down. Do you not understand that I have to take the sense of the House now? Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

Mr. Saugata Roy, will you take your seat? I have to take the sense of the House now. Will you please take your seat? It is a very strange situation. You are gesticulating the Chair. It is not right. Will you please take seat and hear me?

Now what is the wish of the House. It is six O'Clock. Do you wish to extend the time of the House till this is finished?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandran, you will reply now after Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu has spoken.

M. Jyotirmoy Bosu.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given my ruling. I am not going to change it. (Interruptions). I shall not have a dialogue going on. Mr. Guha spoke and the Minister replied. Now Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu will speak and the

Minister will reply. I will not allow Mr. Saugata Roy or anybody else to intervene.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: My calling attention notice was differently worded and I would like that to go on record. My notice read:

"Reported immediate possibility of supply of electric power to power-starved West Bengal from Sikkim."

Anyhow, the first member's calling attention notice was admitted and it has been listed. I have no complaint against that.

In fact, the present situation is the outcome of about 30 years of mismanagement, mishandling, installation of sub-standard plant and machinery for substantial monetary consideration. Today the Left Front Government has to face the music and the people have to pay the penalty for this sky-high misdeeds of the erstwhile Congress regime. Before they got the last kick from the people, they injected 12000 anti-social elements into the State Electricity Boards, who are constantly sabotaging the functioning and efforts of power production. For everything a State Government is wholly dependent on the Centre—for coal, importation of machinery, fuel, oil, and finance and various other things. Yet, the State Government has to face the music of the people.

If I give the figures, it is very interesting. Installed capacity/availability and peak load demand for electricity in West Bengal (As on 31st March, 1977)

	MW.
Installed Capacity	1,740
Availability	1,047
Peak Load Demand	1,132

How faulty is the planning! It is evident from the above that there is for the year 1976-77, a power deficit measured by the gap between the total peak load demand and the total availability. This deficit seems to be a result, among other factors, of an incomplete planning in the past. You will see how the installed capacity and *per capita* consumption of electricity in West Bengal are coming down. In 1965-66, the *per capita* consumption for Gujarat was 83 KWH. In 1975-76 it rose to 180. For Maharashtra, from 106 in 1965-66 it rose to 178 in 1975-76. For Karnataka, from 55 in 1965-66 it rose to 142 in 1975-76. For Tamilnadu, from 89 in 1965-66 it rose to 142 in 1975-76. But for West Bengal, from 114 in 1965-66 it came down to 110 in 1975-76. Let us see the installed capacity. For Gujarat, from 650.6 MW in 1965-66 it rose to 1361.4 MW in 1975-76, i.e., it has doubled. Whilst in other States, it has almost become double, in the case of West Bengal, it has remained constant—there is only a slight increase. There was total neglect regarding maintenance and overhauling of turbo-generators of major power stations. This is a horrible thing. The due and actual dates of overhauling of the turbo-generators of the major power stations in West Bengal:

Power Station	Unit	Due in	Done during
1. Bandel	I	May, 1975	Not done upto January, 1976.
	II	January, 1974	Not done upto January, 1976.
	III	May, 1972	23rd October, 1974 to 5th April 1975.
	IV	January, 1975	Not done upto January.
2. Santaldih	I	January, 1975	Not done upto September, 1975.
3. Jaldhaka	III	November, 1973	Not done upto August, 1975.

These delays in maintenance are considered to be one of the reasons behind the low utilisation of the installed capacity as indicated by the low percentage of net generation to the corresponding installed capacity. Such percentages for the power stations under the West Bengal State Electricity Board are shown for the years 1969-70 to 1974-75 in the table I just read out.

Now, percentage of net generation by West Bengal State Electricity Board to installed capacity.

1970-71	38.4
1971-72	38.0
1972-73	41.8
1973-74	38.4
1974-75	36.6

Madam, Chairman, it is very interesting to note the addition of installed capacity during the Plan periods.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not go into that. Please ask your question.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I do not want to create a scene. I want to cooperate with the Chair. If you are going to be influenced by the gentleman sitting on your left, then I surrender to you. I announce my unconditional surrender to you.

Madam Chairman, in the First Plan, there was no addition to the installed capacity in terms of megawatts. Second Plan—no addition; Third Plan only 537 mw; Three annual plans (1968-69) 180 only; Fourth Plan—130 and four years of the Fifth Plan—45 mw.

Now, rates of growth of installed capacity in terms of percentage:

First Plan—nil; Second Plan—nil
Third Plan—14.8; Three Annual
Plan—3.85.

Fourth Plan—2.1 and Four years
of the Fifth Plan—1 per cent.

This is the position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you please ask your question?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: This Government has been in power for hardly two years and you will realise if you take yourself out of the politics, that no Government is able to undo the misdeeds of last 32 years in such a short time.

Madam, now I want to pose this question to the hon. Minister for reply and comments. This is what the State Government has stated:

"We have proposed for inclusion in the current Plan several new projects including three more units at Kolaghat each of 210 MW capacity. Unfortunately, the Union Government has not agreed to this proposal, on the ground that the eastern region as a whole is likely to be surplus in power at the end of the current Plan period and that any shortage in West Bengal can be met by importing power from other States."

We do not at all agree with the assessment of the Union Government regarding the power requirements of either this State or the eastern region as a whole, and propose to persist in our efforts to get the three additional units at Kolaghat included in the current Plan. We would similarly urge upon the Union Government that the proposed superthermal plant at Farakka, with a planned capacity of 1,100 MW be advanced and completed by 1983."

I would like to have the reaction, comments and assurances on this on the floor of the House.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Most of the points made by the hon. Member, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, do not require my reply, excepting the last one question, because those points mostly relate to the past performance of the West Bengal Government. I do not know whether I should now comment on them.

Regarding the extension of the Kolaghat power station, I would like to inform the House that we have already sanctioned three units in Kolaghat in 1972-73 and they should have been

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commissioned by this time. So far they have not been commissioned. So, merely sanctioning additional schemes will not solve the problem. The problem would be solved only when the nearly 1,450 MW of additional capacity which has been already sanctioned is commissioned on time. But, unfortunately, so far effective steps have not been taken to commission these on-going schemes.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: By whom?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: By the State Government of West Bengal.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: That is because you put obstacles in the way...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. You have had your say.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: With regard to additional units, I would like to inform the hon. Member that if there is necessity for adding more units in West Bengal, definitely

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Do not malign the State Government. It is very unfortunate.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: I am not maligning it. I only say that if there is necessity for additional capacity to be sanctioned.... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not go on making running commentaries.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Government will not stand in the way of sanctioning these additional projects, if necessary; but you must have enough resources and you must complete the on-going schemes; then if you ask for additional capacity, definitely the Central Government will take into consideration all the aspects and deal with it accordingly. There is no difficulty at all.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What about the Farakka barrage?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: It has already been sanctioned.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I say "advance it".

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: As it is, the first unit will go on stream in the year 1984-85. I wish Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu and the State Government had expedited the on-going schemes. In that case, they should have been completed by 1977.

Shri Samar Guha raised the question of labour problem and inter-union rivalry which is there in West Bengal as a whole. I am in constant touch with the Chief Minister to solve this problem, and we definitely expect things to improve in the coming few months.

Then, sending a Central Team to West Bengal is not difficult, because we are already sending them; every month our representatives go there, discuss the problem with the State Government and try to advise them as to what should be done. If necessary, I am prepared to send a team of experts from the CEA to assist the West Bengal Government. There is no difficulty there. All this could be done. But the point is that there is today already enough installed capacity and sanctioned capacity. So, if prompt steps are taken to expedite the sanctioned schemes and fully utilize the existing capacity there should be no problem of power shortage in the State.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till Eleven O'Clock on Friday, the 6th April.

11.15 am.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, April, 6, 1979/Chairman 18, 1901 (Saks).