

14.59 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : URGENT PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC STAGNATION OF WEST BENGAL—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House will now take up further discussion of the following Resolution moved by Shri Indrajit Gupta on the 11th August, 1972 :

"This House demands that the Government should fulfil, without delay or dilution, its commitments and responsibilities towards solutions of West Bengal's urgent problems of economic stagnation".

Shri B. K. Daschowdhary may now resume his speech. He has already taken 17 minutes. I think he will now utter his concluding sentence.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Kindly give me five minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : There are other speakers also, and we do not have much time left.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Ever since the country embarked upon this planned economy

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Member has started as if he is making a new speech.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : No ; since my last speech was about fifteen days ago, naturally, I have to recollect to the House what I was saying. I shall try to finish my speech as early as possible.

Ever since the country embarked on economic planning or planned development through the Five Year Plans, we have seen that the professed policies of the Five Year Plans have been belied in many ways both in practice and in their practical applications. As a result of this, what has happened ? The gap between the rich and the poor regions has widened, and the regional imbalances have widened. The eastern region of India is rich in natural resources, but the States in the region have been placed in such a position that their importance has been going down from year to year.

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As I said on the last occasion, for all these reasons, the eastern States, particularly West Bengal, have declined in the industrial and economic spheres. Certain policies of the Government of India are absolutely and solely responsible for this, thus causing a huge drainage of wealth from the eastern States, particularly West Bengal, to others.

In this connection, mention must be made of the pricing policy concerning agricultural commodities. To cut the point short, the four major States in the eastern region, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa and to a certain extent, Tripura also, have jute as one of their principal produce which is exported and earns foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 300 crores. On the pricing of this commodity depends very much the economic prosperity of these States. Their economy is very much linked up with the price of this commodity.

If we take the table as set out in the *Economic Survey* for the current year, we find that the price of cotton and that of jute has varied to such an extent that it has very adversely affected the economy of West Bengal, and other eastern States. Taking the index number based on the 1961-62 (base 100), the price of raw cotton in 1965 was 190.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am told three Ministers wish to intervene. Then there are important members from other parties. Then the Mover has to reply.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : I will finish in two minutes. As against that, the price of raw jute was 160. But coming to 1970-71, the price of raw cotton has gone up to 239 while that of raw jute has gone down to 118. This is what we find. What happens ? For the last 25 years, all these eastern States, of which the principal loser is West Bengal, have lost Rs. 3,000 crores through the low price of jute alone.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If he cannot organise his speech within the time allocated, I cannot help.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : This is my last sentence.

Considering all these things, the increase in freight rates for the commodities which have

to be taken from the western region to the eastern States for their industrial development, I mean, industrial raw materials, and also taking into account the unfavourable pricing policy, I would make this appeal to Government. Taking certain *ad hoc* measures cannot by themselves resuscitate the economy of West Bengal and other eastern States. The entire policy has to be changed. Then there is the question about the equalisation of iron and steel prices. All these have to be considered. The Government of India must review the pricing policy as set out in the directives of the Economic Survey. Unless certain basic policies are changed in order to resuscitate the economy of the eastern region, there will be no improvement in the economic condition of West Bengal.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore) : I have a small submission. I will take only five minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Your party has participated already.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA : I know. I do not claim it, but I have submitted one amendment—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Very well. You may point out that amendment at the appropriate time. I am told that some of the Ministers want to intervene. I do not have the names of any Minister.

THE MINISTER OF PLANNING (SHRI D. P. DHAR) : It would depend on the time that is available. How much time would be available ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I can indicate to you the time that we have in our hands. We had 38 minutes, out of which Mr. Daschowdhury has taken six minutes. So, we have 32 minutes to conclude the debate. We can stretch it a little more.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta-North-East) : Why can't we go on with this debate till the end of the day ? Shrimati Maya Ray can also move her resolution, and we can take it over to the next day. That is the usual practice which we follow whenever an important resolution comes up.

SHRI. D P. DHAR : May I make a submission ? Perhaps 32 minutes could be stretched to 35 minutes. But out of that, we have to leave at least 15 minutes for the mover of the resolution, I suppose. That would leave about 20 minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will regulate it. It is true that, as Prof. Mukerjee has said, very often we do not keep very strictly to the time-scheduled. We very often stretch it to further than what has been allotted. We can do what he said in view of the importance of the subject. At 5.30, we are to take up another business, absolutely. And there is another resolution coming up. What is the sense of the House ? Shall we extend this debate by one hour ?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER . Very well. So, Prof Mukerjee, would you like to make your observations ?

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this resolution is not a humdrum recommendation to Government but, as the very wording suggests, it is a warning. I feel that there is no need to go over the details of the malady afflicting West Bengal for many years now. Howsoever the Centre denies the accusations of indifference to the solution of West Bengal's problems, and whatever consolation it may derive from the inaptitude and worse of successive State Governments in West Bengal, run most of the time by the Congress party and for short, troubled interludes by uneasily juxtaposed leftists, the fact remains that West Bengal is in unrelieved distress and Calcutta, a city described even by those who malign it, as "magnificent," even as it is a "monstrous" conglomeration, is in shambles. If things therefore do not change drastically and very soon, this country is in for such trouble as Delhi's vainglorious rulers perhaps cannot envisage.

West Bengal has inherited three decades at least of tension and trouble. The second world war, when Calcutta was almost in the front rank ; the famine of 1943 ; then the communal disturbances which continued for such a length of time ; then the partition and then the refugees streaming in over and over again at recurrent intervals ; and then we saw last

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

year, in 1971, 10 million evacuees appearing in the city of Calcutta. The tensions of these three decades have come to an acute boiling-point. We find the Prime Minister and all her colleagues giving assurances to West Bengal from time to time about so many things and yet, as Mr. Inderjit Gupta pointed out with ample details, Farakka, in spite of Dr. Rao's reassurance from time to time, threatens to be a fake unless not only is there a clarification of the situation by the statement in the House but action which shows that something really and truly is going to happen to save the Calcutta port and the economy not only of West Bengal but of the entire hinterland of Calcutta which covers at least six of our Indian States. Once the most highly industrialised State, West Bengal suffers most of all today for lack of rural electrification, and West Bengal now is gripped in a power crisis which does not look as if it can be solved within a measurable distance of time.

Even the second bridge over the Hoogly, which had been so long a time in gestation, is facing new hurdles which should have been taken care of a long time ago. I am told that in regard to the Howrah side of the second bridge new hurdles have arisen which can hardly be surmounted. In regard to transport, the dropping of the circular railway scheme and the substitution thereof by the somewhat kite-flying but rather fascinating project of an under-ground railway give us some hopes regarding the future. But I am not very sure as to how far genuine progress is going to take place in quite enough time.

In spite of the massive investment, a gain, the virtual failure of the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority scheme to make a real impact because of lack of pre-planning and sheer administrative stupidity has augmented the difficulties of the people of that region. The people of the country side in West Bengal, who live largely in the Bronze Age even now, are cruelly ignored, there is lack of implementation of land reforms and, as Shri Gupta pointed out in a documented form, our jute growers are cheated, so that the bones of the Indian Jute Mills Association who figure in such things as the Goenka poster's scandal can go on flourishing the best way they can.

Unemployment is the most acute and massive in West Bengal compared to the rest of the country. Our State Ministers in West Bengal compete with each other in making forecasts about one hundred thousand or half a million people getting jobs in the near future. They go about making forecasts about what is going to happen. But this kind of "pie in the sky when you die", this kind of an assurance would help nobody at all; this is cruel carrot-dangling before the people of our country, and unless some actual results follow in quick enough time things are going to be precarious. But in West Bengal the most repressive policies are also initiated whenever the people's discontent find expression in movements and in struggles. But that is not the way in which a situation like this can be remedied.

Here, therefore, in West Bengal we have a vicious circle which has got to be broken. It is not a question of West Bengal or of Calcutta; it is the quintessence of the human condition that we see in the whole of India. When you go to the Calcutta airport, for example—my friend, the Minister of Tourism is here—the new air terminal, the international terminal, remains a sort of relic, a sort of potential antiquity to be protected by Prof. Nurul Hasan and his department and that sort of thing while the old, dilapidated domestic airport is unlighted and unequipped and in a condition which on no civilised computation can be called adequate.

We know how the officers of his department—and this is in books written by foreign tourists—for years now have discouraged people, foreign tourists in particular, from going to the Calcutta region, because they want to take care of the health of the foreign tourists more, which is supposed to be in danger if they went to such a disturbed area as Calcutta. The airport in Calcutta today is something of a symbol of the kind of deterioration to which the whole area has been subject, and if that area which is for the north-eastern part of our country, for the six or seven of our States, absolutely vital and cardinal to its economic, social and cultural life, if that area goes down, then God help the rest of India. That is why in West Bengal the grapes of wrath are being stored. They can be grapes of beauty, but where is the vision and Statesmanship necessary?

You see from time to time how the people's discontent breaks out in forms that we do not relish. It should not be imagined that because of the sweet and soothing words sometimes purveyed to West Bengal by the Prime Minister and some other people in her entourage, because of these sweet and soothing words the people of West Bengal would continue to accept the kind of condition to which they have been condemned by more than twenty years of mismanagement, consistent, persistent mismanagement which goes on for all these years. That is why the tension of three decades and the indifference and absolute incapacity of the administration, Central as well as State, running for more than 25 years now, has left my part of the country in a shambles. Something has got to be done about it, because it is from that part of the country—it is in the east that the sun rises. It is from that part of the country that you find every movement has been initiated, and it is from that part of the country you will find again a new radical movement emerging unless these problems are tackled. They might be living in an atmosphere of euphoria. They always refer to what happened in the last two elections. Don't go on singing those songs which are outmoded and which need no longer be sung. Do something here and now. Don't merely dangle a carrot before the people of West Bengal. I know my people feel very strongly. At the moment, they are ready to give some time to the Government to do something about it. But the Government must produce results. The results have not been produced in the last decade or so. And that is why so many problems highlighted by Mr. Inderjit Gupta, Farakka matter, the second bridge, the jute prices, the unemployment problem and so many other things which have been mentioned have become so very acute.

That is why I say that the grapes of wrath stored in West Bengal have shown what kind of thing can happen, what kind of temper our people can be in. That temper will be revived by our people. They will try to throw out the shackles of administration which cannot deliver the goods. We are ready to give them some time; we are ready to see that they produce some results. But they have to produce results. If they do not produce results, things might happen in West Bengal, not only in West Bengal but in the rest of the country which will shake the complacency of the people in a manner which I do not wish to

contemplate in any specific detail at the moment.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my colleague the Minister for Planning will be intervening in a more extensive and substantial manner. But because this question of Dum Dum airport and aviation has been raised by several speakers, including the mover of the Resolution, Shri Indrajit Gupta, he has asked me to intervene briefly for five minutes in order to explain the position with regard to aviation.

May I say at the outset that any sort of charge that the Government of India is in any way neglecting aviation in Calcutta is extremely unfair and unwarranted. In fact, I remember, when I took over this Ministry in 1967, the construction of the Calcutta terminal building at that time had already been going on for 4-5 years. It was going at a snail's pace. I remember, a question was raised by somebody as to whether, in view of the peculiar situation in Calcutta, we should really continue with that in a big way or whether we should simply crawl along. But we took a definite decision that the work must be completed as early as possible and must be speeded up. So, a lot of money was spent on it. At a cost of over Rs. 2 crores, the terminal building was completed in 1969. The control tower at a cost of Rs. 0.5 crores is under completion. In addition to that, an Airport hotel at a cost of Rs. 1.2 crores was also sanctioned by my Ministry and is now under construction. Therefore, the first thing that I would like to say is, had there been any sort of desire whatsoever on the part of the Government of India to neglect Calcutta, not only would a new project of Airport hotel not have been sanctioned but the terminal building would not have been finished so quickly. As far as we are concerned, we have got the best terminal building in India and the best facilities in Calcutta.

With regard to traffic, the international airlines function on the basis of bilateral agreements and, in those bilateral agreements, it is quite clear that it is the commercial judgement of the airlines concerned which will finally decide whether they are going to operate. There is nothing we as the Government can do to force any particular airline to go anywhere. It has indeed been a matter

[Dr. Karan Singh]

of considerable distress to us, as I have said on several occasions in this House, that several international airlines have pulled out of Calcutta. The reasons for this are many. Certainly, the fact that political conditions were disturbed for many years may have adversely affected the traffic potential. I do not think that airlines would pull out if they still can make money. There must have been something about the traffic potential that caused them to pull out. However, we have gone out of our way to try and encourage tourists to come to Calcutta.

I was rather hurt when my esteemed friend, Prof. H. N. Mukerjee, referred to some incident about four or five years ago where some official in the Department of Tourism somewhere in India was reported by some obscure tourist as having said, "You should not go to Calcutta. It is bad for your health". Whatever may have been at particular incident, I myself have gone out of my way—I have travelled all over the world; I was in Europe early this year—in every single press conference, to reiterate that Calcutta and the whole of West Bengal would welcome tourists. I issued special instructions to the Government of India Tourist offices in the country and to the Air India offices that we should make a special publicity for Calcutta. So, there is really no reason, whatsoever, for our esteemed friends to continue to nurture this sort of grievance which is entirely without foundation. Air India, from the 3rd November, is going to operate a new service, originating from Calcutta, going to London and terminating in Calcutta, because there was a justifiable feeling that they could not go directly, they had to go to Bombay or Delhi in order to get the ticket. I had intervened in the matter, and Air India will be operating that new service from 3rd November.

With regard to Jumbos, it is true that Jumbos are being operated for the time being on the high density routes between Delhi, Bombay and New York, but as soon as the Jumbos operate to the east, i.e., to Tokyo, as soon as that becomes commercially feasible and we have enough planes, certainly Calcutta will also be serviced by Jumbos.

I will just give one example of the way in which—if I may say so with very great

respect—some of our friends from Bengal tend to mis-read and mis-interpret events just because they have this inborn feeling that they are not being given a fair deal. My hon. friend, Shri Indrajit Gupta, said that Calcutta has got category II-ILO whereas Bombay and Delhi have category I. It so happens that category II-ILO is infinitely superior to Category I. Category I is the first stage and category II-ILO is a much better stage. In fact, Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi have Category II. Just because somebody hears it is Category II, they assume that Category I is better than Category II and therefore, they make a grievance out of it.

I would, therefore, very respectfully urge on my hon friends on the other side of the House to give up this idea that the Government of India in any of its department—and I can certainly speak for the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation—will do anything to adversely affect the interests of Calcutta. Calcutta, and West Bengal, is a vital part of our nation and it is as much the duty of all of us, from whichever part of the country we may come from, to see that these interests are not adversely affected, that they are safeguarded. That, Sir, is what we intend to do.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai): I do not want to deal with the whole problems that West Bengal is facing today. I only want to draw your attention, and the attention of the Government, to only one aspect, namely, the discriminatory policy of the Government, how it is contributing to the economy of West Bengal. I come to the policy of recruitment in regard to our armed forces. In regard to West Bengal, the same stepmotherly attitude, the condemnatory attitude, the discriminatory attitude, that was followed by the British rulers against Bengal and the Bengalis, the same policy is being followed even today, although the first C-in-C of our national Army, Gen. Cariappa said on 15th August 1950 :

"Every Indian, whether he comes from east or south or west or north or centre can make a good soldier provided he has certain essential qualities that are required in a soldier and has good officers to command him and is equipped well."

It is a historical fact that during the Moghul days it was Bengal which had contributed to the Moghul army during the period

of East India Company it was Bengal which had contributed to the British army—it was the Bengal army that was the main-stay of the British; they recruited only from Bengal and Bihar. But after 1857 rebellion, we know what happened to the fate of the Bengalis; they were declared as non-material race. That policy is still being followed by our Government, I will just give you the figure. This is the figure given by our Defence Minister in reply to a question on April 7 last: the State-wise record—I will not go into the past but to only 1970-71—Assam 1038, Bihar—2300, Orissa—523, West Bengal—1114, Punjab—7353, Haryana—3780, UP—7460 and Rajasthan—3557, Himachal Pradesh—1180 and Kashmir—1375. That means that less than 2% is recruited from West Bengal and more than 60% from a few favoured northern States of Haryana, Punjab, UP and Kashmir. Even out of these 1114 of West Bengal, most of the recruits are Gurkhas and from the non-Bengalis who are also domiciled in Bengal, and naturally, if you take that into account, then the actual number of Bengalis recruited will come to less than 500.

I want to draw your attention that it is not a question of—I should say—only injuring the pride of the Bengalis but it is affecting the growth of West Bengal in the industrial sector, and agricultural sector and the economical potential also. I would like to give you a quotation to show that the same policy is being pursued. Mr. Casey, a former Governor of Bengal, wrote a book called '*Personal Experiences*'. There he says:

“One of the many differences between Bengal and a province like Punjab came to light to-day when I was told that the equivalent of £ 20,000,000 (Rs. 27 crores at the then exchange rate) comes into the Punjab each year by way of pay and pension for serving and retired members of the fighting forces. It must have an appreciable effect on the prosperity of the Punjab. Practically, nothing comes into Bengal from this source, as practically no Bengalis serve in the fighting services”.

Another book, I quote from, is '*Agony of West Bengal*' written by a reputed journalist, Mr. Ranjit Roy Choudhary which I would request the Minister to go through if the Government want to really know the problems of West Bengal. He says:

“In the 1950 jawans in the armed forces sent to Punjab and Haryana more than Rs. 50 crores representing savings of their pay and allowances every year. To-day (1971) I am told on good authority the only annual savings of the Jawans from the Punjab and Haryana exceed Rs. 200 crores a year. This money does not lie idle but is invested in agriculture and industry in Punjab and Haryana”.

As I have said, if we take even Casey's figures, it is 20 million pounds every year, and now in 1970-71 Rs. 200 crores every year poured into Punjab and Haryana. Naturally, as I said already, it has an effect on the economy of those States. It is being invested and it has an impact there on the industry, agriculture and other spheres also.

I would also draw your attention to another point. That is about the policy of employment of ex-defence personnel by the Government. As it has been stated in the Defence Ministry's report this year also, that 10% of the vacancies in Class III categories of the Central services are reserved for ex-Servicemen and 20% of the Class IV categories are also reserved for ex-servicemen. According to a judgement given by the Supreme Court, this quantum can be revised upto 50%. What does it mean? What will be its effect? You will have in those categories more than 60% recruits from only just a specialist sector and a small sector for whom this quantum in services is going to be reserved. The result of that particularly in the case of Bengali people and also the people of Orissa and Assam will be that their percentage in the Central Services which is almost every year decreasing will dwindle further. It will have this effect. Not only that, I would draw your attention to another thing. West Bengal every year pays Rs. 600 crores to our national revenue and we spend for the defence on an average Rs. 1300 crores. That means roughly 33% of our national revenue is spent for our defence purposes. West Bengal's contribution is Rs. 200 crores to the defence purposes. What is the benefit that she derives? That hardly comes to one per cent. There was a general theory that Bangalees are good for the air force or the navy, having engineering capacity, having capacity of handling technical equipments etc. but that they are not fit for the ground forces. I just want to quote a sentence from a book, *The Himalayan Blunder* by Brigadier J. P. Dalvi, White

[Shri Samar Guha]

describing the Thagla ridge battles of October 10, 1962, with the Chinese, he says :

"Jamadar Bose's platoon was left with 10 men after holding three Chinese attacks. He too charged with his Bayonet. I hope that the conduct and gallantry of Jamadar Biswas and Jamadar Bose and their men will forever still the voice of those who delighted in denigrating the martial prowess of our Bengali brethren. They fought with great elan and determination".

During the last war, we were looking for the Bengali people in the Armed force for geo-political reasons, that is, those who knew the geography of the area, who knew the language of the area, who knew the social and other characteristics of the area. This imbalance in our recruitment policy should go. This discrimination between so called martial and non-martial people should go. The Government on many occasions says that the class character, communal character and other characteristics of the British will be abolished. But that policy has not been implemented. Necessary employment potential should be generated and distributed over this region so that it can be indirectly used as capital invested in industrial and agricultural growth, and this policy of discrimination should go. I want to quote from the official account of the Defence organisation after independence. This is a publication of the Government of India. It says :

"The theory of martial and non-martial classes was completely exploded during the 2nd world war. Soon after 15-8-47, the Government of India decided as a matter of policy that all communal and class compositions should be eliminated from the Indian army and that all Indian nationals should have equal opportunities of service in it."

It just remained same as an imperial commitment, a British commitment. It was not possible to implement it in the case of army corps. in the case of our defence services.

"The system of class composition of the Army has not been introduced in the Navy and Air Force.....".

Another American scholar who has stayed

here for a long time to have his doctorate degree has written in a book called *The Indian Army—its contribution to the development of the Nation*, says :

"The system of recruitment coincides with the predisposition of many military men who believe in some variation of the martial race theory."

I want to conclude by saying that this policy of recruitment to the Army, Navy and the Air Force does not only affect the pride of the young men of Bengal but it is also indirectly affecting the potentiality of industrial and agricultural development and also the employment position in West Bengal. If Government want to do something, then I would only make another request to them. The massive influx of the middle class population from East Bengal, has added to the middle class of West Bengal. During the pre-Partition days, East Bengal had the highest concentration of middle class people in the whole of India ; out of them, 90 per cent have now migrated to West Bengal, and this middle class consists of people who are very idealistic, very patriotic and very visionary ; these middle class people are now providing the fuse to the explosive situation in West Bengal. If Government do not properly tackle this fuse, the whole situation in West Bengal may turn into a real explosion. The explosive situation may turn into a real explosion.

Therefore, I would request that in regard to the policy of recruitment to the Armed Forces, the tackling particularly of the sensitive and idealistic middle class Bengalis should be given top priority in the matter of dealing with the problems of West Bengal.

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : The hon. Minister of Planning will reply to the various points that have been made, and, therefore, I shall confine myself to some of the points which Shri Indrajit Gupta had made. He had put some straight questions to me, and I would try to answer these questions.

Regarding the discharge of water from the Farakka barrage, I submit that I have already laid a long statement about it on the Table of the House. Shri Indrajit Gupta had wanted to know who were the persons who

were consulted at the time it was sanctioned and how the operation programme was drawn up. At that time, Mr. Man Singh, a very distinguished Chief Engineer of West Bengal, and Mr. Majumdar, another very distinguished Chief Engineer of West Bengal had gone into the matter together, and they two discussed and said that about 20,000 cusecs of water would be enough to keep the port of Calcutta healthy. That was the impression at that time, and even in 1952-57. Then we consulted Pro. Hensen. He was the first man who suggested that 20,000 cusecs would not be sufficient, but we should have 40,000 cusecs, and he has given an operation schedule. What we have adopted in the sanctioned estimate is exactly a copy of that operation schedule. We thought it better to have the bigger one. That was how it happened. That was how the operation schedule was for 40,000 cusecs for ten months and 20,000 cusecs for the period from March to mid-May. A copy of the English text signed by him as also the German text is with me, and if the hon. Member wants to see it, I shall be very happy to show it to him.

Shri B. K. Daschowdhary had said that the Estimates Committee had stated that it should be 40,000 cusecs and so on. What the Estimate Committee has done is that they have only given a description of the project, and they have only said that the project after completion will enable diversion of 40,000 cusecs of water from the Ganga to the Bhagirathi. That is exactly what we are also saying. Everyone, therefore, wants that it should be 40,000 cusecs. The only question was about the 20,000 cusecs for about two months. The Estimates Committee has said nothing about this particular aspect.

Then, Shri Indrajit Gupta had asked why Ganga-Brahmaputra Commission had not been consulted about this. The Ganga-Brahmaputra Commission has been set up purely to discuss the question of flood control projects of an inter-State nature; that is to say, if a flood control project is constructed in one State, it may affect the other State, and in those cases, this Commission would come into the picture. So, this commission was not set up for any irrigation or other projects, but it was set up purely for flood control projects, and it was in that capacity that it was functioning, and that was why this question was not taken up with them.

Shri Indrajit Gupta had also referred to the size of the locks at Jangipur being reduced. In fact, the fact of the matter is that it is the other way round. Under the original estimate, there was no lock at all. The whole thing developed on the basis of what happened between Jangipur and the mouth of the Bhagirathi, where it takes off from the Padma, and it was that region which was silting up. In that reach, there was flow of water only for three months.

The rest of the months it is completely dry. So we thought it was no use to put in a lock there and take the boats only for three months from Bhagirathi to Ganga. On the other hand, we thought it was much better to have a big lock and bigger arrangements for all the time so that they will go through the feeder canal and get into the Ganga. That was why in the original estimate, Jangipura lock was not provided. But at my instance, after examination of the whole question, we got the advice that even for these three months we might put in the lock just for transfer of country boats. That is how it has come. And it is also not small; it is 234 ft. long and 42 ft. wide and it will function for three months. For the rest of the period, the boats go through the feeder canal and get into the Ganga or Padma, as it may be called.

The hon. member referred to the Ganga-Brahmaputra link and so on. We have not forgotten it. We are fully alive to the problem and the possibilities of the problem. Ganga is one of our magnificent rivers carrying 400 million acre feet of water. Unfortunately, this water does not come all through the year. There is a lean period of two months. Our requirement will be 2-3 million acre feet in these months. It is a very small quantity. For that, linkage with Brahmaputra will be very valuable. But we cannot go into it unless the matter is discussed and settled with Bangla Desh, our very good friend and neighbour. Unless we discuss this matter with and get clearance, we cannot talk too much about it. Apart from that, there are possibilities of underground water through tubewells and so many other methods. We have to meet the demands of the various projects in those two lean months. As I said, it is a very small quantity of 2-3 million acre feet. I think it is quite possible by taking up some projects to tackle this problem. We have thought of this idea, but we are not mentioning too much about these for obvious reasons.

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

I am sure hon. members will not have the feeling that we have overlooked this. We are determined to see that the port of Calcutta is kept completely functional and as beautiful as possible. The statement that was laid on the Table represents a practical proposition. Everybody has accepted it. As soon as the results of the prototype are known, we shall proceed further. As I said, it is not very difficult to fill up this gap of water.

Then the hon. member said that the irrigation percentage in West Bengal is very low. It is not quite correct: The percentage is 31.4. For Andhra Pradesh, it is 34, for UP it is between 34 and 35. At the same time, I am fully alive to it. We have got extremely valuable underground sources of water. The cultivated area in West Bengal is 16½ million acres. Therefore, for the 45 million people there, we must have intensive cultivation. To that end, we should see that the irrigation must be expanded at least twice, 60 to 70 per cent, as we have in Punjab. That is what I want to submit. It is not that Bengal has been neglected or ignored.

Shri Gupta referred to the DVC. I do not know who is responsible for the rumour. I have not seen any reports in the papers about it.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Alipore) : This is a chance for him to deny the rumour.

SHRI K. L. RAO : There is absolutely no such idea at all. We have not even thought of it. The point is this. In the DVC, there are a number of dams. We have not acquired land fully in the Maithor and Panchet area to work to full capacity. Those areas must be acquired. So I appointed a committee of engineers to go into this. They wanted those areas to be acquired. Similarly, the Bihar Government has asked for irrigation in Gaya and Hazaribagh. So we appointed another committee who recommended likewise. I sent the reports of both committees to both the Chief Ministers and asked them to discuss the matter. That is all that has happened. Both the Chief Ministers met at Delhi and had a very amicable discussion. I was just a witness. We wanted that the concerned Chief Ministers should discuss and settle it. They set up a working group. As

soon as the working group gives its proposals,—it was given three months' time—we can discuss the whole thing, and I am sure they will arrive at an amicable settlement. Delays should not happen. Otherwise, I do not understand why there should be waste of money. That is how it is going about. The hon. Member can rest assured that we want to strengthen the D. V. C. That is why we have sanctioned more power units. The Chandrapura unit has been sanctioned. We want to develop more and more power to the greatest extent possible.

Then the other questions are rural electrification and shortage of power. I would submit in this connection, as I submitted before, that the installed capacity in West Bengal is about 1700 mw. The load is about 1100 mw, and 1700 mw. is more than ample to serve a load of 1100 mw. Unfortunately, there is shedding and other troubles: there is too much of load on the DVC and constant shedding is cropping up. If you have another 50 mw there would be no shortage at all. But unfortunately it is not there and so in the case of power, we cannot do anything except to depend upon the new projects. That is what we are doing. Now, the Santhaldih and Chandrapura units are coming up very shortly in the course of this year. When these projects are completed, we are going to put in the transmission lines over to Calcutta, I think, in the course of a year. Also, we are trying to connect Orissa. There is going to be an extra, surplus power in Belimela, and we are going to connect all that with Calcutta. So, in the course of one year it may be possible for us to get over the present acute shortage of power; rather the difficulties; I would not call it shortage, but difficulties in regard to power.

The other day, I was saying that the Planning Commission has recently sanctioned the Bandel extension and Dhalkola station and so on. More will be sanctioned. There is no limit. So, the hon. Member can rest assured that we are fully alive to this. In 1978-79, the power requirements of West Bengal will be much more, say, 2,500 mw and so all these power projects will be taken care of.

We are also trying to find out the need for equipment. The other day, they wanted some spares for Durgapur project, and we are trying to airlift them. We are spending about

Rs. 3 lakhs for that. We know the situation there.

About rural electrification, it is true that the position in West Bengal has been very bad. But nowadays, we are taking up to 10 per cent and there is greater activity. The Rural Electrification Corporation is spending about Rs 15 crores on West Bengal, which is the second largest amount given for all the various States. This is the second largest amount it has given, next only to Uttar Pradesh which has the largest population. This is the second biggest sanction that was given. They in fact have gone out of the way in sanctioning the transmission lines also. A scheme costing a crore of rupees has been sanctioned for the transmission lines, which generally is not done for every States. We feel sad that out of 38,000 villages that we have got in West Bengal, only 4,000 are electrified at present : it is bad. Therefore, we want to improve it.

What I want to submit is that West Bengal is not being neglected. On the other hand, it is being given every kind of attention and every effort is being made by all the departments. I would only join my senior colleague, the hon. Minister of Tourism, and appeal to the hon. Members, "Do not have any feeling that West Bengal is being neglected." There is nothing like that. We are all one. West Bengal is a precious part of our country and it is perhaps more precious than other parts. It has produced the biggest sons of India and has contributed much, of which we are proud. So, while making speeches, do not have any feeling that it is being treated in any different way.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Dinen Bhattacharyya, your amendment is time-barred, but you may make some observations.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore) : Sir, I wanted to move one amendment. Though it could not be formally moved, I want to mention here that in the resolution of Shri Inderjit Gupta, after the words "economic stagnation" I wanted to add "and the deteriorating law and order situation".

My point is that apart from the economic stagnation, the deteriorating law and order situation also must be looked into in all circumstances. Here I want to refer to a news

item from yesterday's *Statesman* given by Shri Kalyan Roy, a Rajy Sabha member belonging to the party of Shri Indrajit Gupta, which is running the Government in West Bengal. The news item says that Shri Kalyan Roy during interview with the Labour Minister, Shri Khadilkar mentioned that about 600 workers belonging to his union and working in collieries were being prevented from attending to their work by a section of the INTUC. He further alleged that four AITUC leaders were assaulted in Durgapur by INTUC elements on 1st August.

Then, only last week in another place, in the Writer's Building, the Labour Minister convened a meeting of the representatives of the workers of the Hindustan Steel factory situated in Dum Dum because there were certain disputes between the workers and the management. The workers were represented by the UTUC leader, Shri Fatik Ghosh. In front of the Home Secretary's chamber this leader, accredited leader in the trade union field in West Bengal, he was on the point of being kidnapped with the intention of murder. This has appeared in the papers.

15:52 hrs

[SHRI K. N. TIWARI *in the Chair*]

So, it is not confined only to colliery areas ; law and order problem is there in other areas also. If you go through a newspaper supporting the Government party, *the Economic Times*, it says in banner headlines that the situation prevailing in West Bengal cannot be helpful for production. In Texmaco and Jay Engineering hundreds of workers could not go to work because the goonda elements, with the help and direct connivance of the police, prevented them from going to work.

Whatever steps you may take for economic development, unless the law and order situation is improved, there can be no progress. But the law and order situation in West Bengal is deteriorating day by day. Now there is no rule of law in West Bengal. So, this aspect has to be looked into. I would also appeal to the Congress members to look into this. In fact, even a Congress leader like Shri Lakshmi Kant Ghosh, holding a meeting in a maidan, accused the Congress of working against the interests of a registered trade union. I want to see that this is stopped once and for all. We are for democracy in the trade

[Shri Dinen Bhattacharyya]

union field. If you want to have your organisation in any field, do not try to have it by forcing the workers.

Professor Hiren Mukerjee has referred to how we have been treated. Regarding the circular railway for Calcutta assurances were given not only by the Railway Minister but by other Ministers also. Still nothing came out of it. Shri Inderjit Gupta has referred to the Howrah-Amda and Howrah-Sheratala light railway. I do not know whether the hon. Minister, Shri D. P. Dhar, is in a position to do that, but I want a categorical statement from the government that this railway line will be re-opened. Let him give a clear answer in which year, in which month, it is to be re-opened. We can wait. But let him come forward with a definite answer.

Many things are being said here, in this House, in the newspapers and by the West Bengal Government Ministers. They are daily coming forward with assurances. I do not know. Regarding the re-opening of closed factories, one container factory is there in 24-Praganas, near Naihati, which is now in a chaotic condition, most bankrupt management and most corrupt management. They are still being allowed to loot the property of the factory. The report has been given by a committee that was set up to go into the affairs of that factory. They said that it is a sick factory and it should be taken over directly by the Government. But nothing has yet come out.

Another point that I want to make is that some cotton mills have been taken over. It is very good. I am not just going to make any comment in that respect. But in respect of two mills, one is Rampuria Cotton Mills and the other is Laxminarain Cotton Spinning Mills—Rampuria is a composite mill—in the course of a reply to the question put by Shri Samar Mukerjee, the Government said that the inquiry is over and the steps are being taken to take over these two mills. Now, the West Bengal Government Labour Minister has come forward with a statement that Rs. 2 lakhs will be sanctioned by the West Bengal Government for taking over these two factories. I do not know in which *raj* we are living. Is it Muhammad Tughlak *raj* or is it progressive *raj* of Shrimati Indira Gandhi? Rs. 24 lakhs are still due in respect of provident fund only of the

Rampuria Mill workers. They are now coming forward with great magnanimity that they are re-opening the factory. In the case of the Laxminarain Mill, it is not less than Rs. 10 lakhs due to the workers in respect of provident fund only. Now, the West Bengal Government says that Rs. 20 lakhs will be given on the condition that the Centre gives them permission. The Central Government says that the necessary steps are being taken and the inquiry is being conducted.

I know what they will say. They will ask the West Bengal Government to start a Textile Corporation. I do not know what will happen. But this is the situation. Neither the factories are being re-opened nor they are being taken over. Even if the factories are re-opened, the workers are not being taken there. There are still about 400 factories which are closed.

They say that they will solve the unemployment problem. The very simple thing is, if you re-open these closed factories, more than 1 lakh workers will get employment. So, I would humbly request the Minister to look into this law and order situation and create a situation in which democratic mass organisations of different sections of the people may function and workers may go to their factory jobs without any apprehension of being stabbed or being assaulted by *goonda* elements who are in the pay-rolls of the Congress.

16 hrs.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI (Sholapur): I thank you very much for giving me some time to participate in the discussion on the Resolution before the House. I have gone through the speeches of my hon. friends, Shri Indrajit Gupta, Shri Samar Mukherjee and many other members.

Before I say something about the present conditions, I would like to draw attention to the fact that West Bengal was the highest beneficiary of the planned development, compared to all other States; this can be seen either from the Central schemes or from the financial assistance given by the Centre and it will be known that from the time of the First Five Year Plan, more benefits were given to West Bengal. That might have been due to the personality of Dr. B. C. Roy. During ten years, in his period, many new industries came up in Calcutta and other parts of West Bengal; West Bengal had made very remark-

able progress as far as industrial production was concerned, as far as employment was concerned, as far as irrigation and power were concerned. But, after the expiry of Dr. B. C. Roy, what has happened? Our friend, Mr. Samar Mukherjee, was accusing Chhatra Parishad. What was their party doing at that time when they came to power? They were the first party who instigated the workers, who started gheraos, who started intimidating the employers, and the result was what you see today—stagnation. How many factories were closed down due to their action? I think, at least 5,000 factories were closed down when they were having their Government in West Bengal.

The workers' interests may be protected. It is the duty of the trade unions to look after the interests of workers. But it is also the duty of trade unions to look to production, to give assistance to entrepreneurs and the Government to put up more industries, to help them to increase the production. Why did they have this gherao and threats of murders? Nowhere in the world industry has developed that way.

They alleged that Chhatra Parishad and the Congress were taking law in their own hands. But who started? Why do you accuse Chhatra Parishad or the Congress? This is the result of the action taken by the CPM at that time.

Our country is a developing country. We require production. Our population is very big. See the example of Durgapur, if there had been co-ordination, that unit which is running with 40 per cent efficiency, would have been running more efficiently. May be, there were some management defects. But how many unions are there? Almost everyday there is strike and some departments are closed down. Ultimately, who suffers? It is the country which suffers. Our production of steel has gone down to the barest minimum. Durgapur steel plant had very big losses. Government had to import steel by paying foreign exchange, to meet the country's requirement. If they had co-operated, it was possible to double the capacity of Durgapur and make the country self-sufficient. But they did not want to. But they want to criticise the Government only. They do not want to co-operate as far as production is concerned. They want protect their rights. That

is all right, but they must also look to the production also. But, only by accusing the Government and by blaming the Central Government, the purpose is not going to be served.

I want to say one thing. If they really want that West Bengal should be developed and there is now stagnation and the population is increasing—I very often go to Calcutta and I had been there in Calcutta recently and, Sir, what I saw we are sorry for that—unless the co-operation is there from the Trade Unions and from the friends on the other side, things are not going to improve. It is no use accusing the Government and put the blame on the Government. So, my humble request is that they should try to protect the rights of the workers, but, side by side, they should also see that production increases. In Japan, in Germany and all those countries, you see that there are trade unions also but are they so much non-cooperative as far as production is concerned? Sir, there they make an agreement for one year and there is no trouble for the whole year. Here, to-day one agreement is reached, the next day it is broken and another agreement is required. Then these people have no peace of mind to work. So, unless this condition is not solved, I do not think things can improve.

You have given me time and I thank you very much and I say that the position has deteriorated not because of the Congress—Sir, under the Chief Minister, B. C. Roy's regime things improved enormously and West Bengal made great strides but things started deteriorating as soon as they took the reins of administration. They are responsible for that, not the Congress Government.

THE MINISTER OF PLANNING (SHRI D. P. DHAR): I was unfortunate to have missed in person a very lucid and elaborate speech which the hon. mover of this resolution delivered some days ago in this House. I, however, had the privilege of going through the verbatim record of what he said.

In essence, I think we can divide the subject into two parts. One part relates merely to a few specific problems and the other part relates to the general question of the development, the economic development and the social development of West Bengal. I am afraid my distinguished friend, Mr. Gupta, while stating

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the resolution, spent a good deal of time on dwelling on some of the specific issues like the Farakka barrage, Calcutta Port, oil exploration, etc. in West Bengal, the question of jute prices, the question relating to per-acre agricultural yield, the question relating to power shortages and also to the question relating to the negligence or alleged negligence of Calcutta airport by Air India, etc.

As far as Farakka and Calcutta Port are concerned and also as far as the allegation regarding the negligence of Calcutta airport by Air India is concerned, I am grateful to my colleagues, the Minister for Civil Aviation and the Minister for Irrigation & Power, for having somewhat lightened my task in having dealt with their subjects. But, I would certainly like to add, with the permission of my colleague, that, as far as the future of the port of Calcutta is concerned, it is not a matter which is of importance only to West Bengal. It is of importance to West Bengal because it is located there. But there are large number of questions of employment, of various structural associations etc. which are connected with the issue of the future of the Calcutta port. Without being sentimental about it, without talking about the past of West Bengal,—its glorious past,—without talking about the great contribution made by that part of our country to the freedom struggle of our land (which, in itself is a glorious chapter of our history), without sentimentalising, if I may say so, of this issue, without unnecessarily going into the history of the issue, as Professor Mukherjee wished to go, I wish to say, the importance of Calcutta port as a viable efficient port, is for the whole of the country, and therefore, the economy of the whole country is greatly associated with the proper and efficient functioning of the Port of Calcutta.

I am sure, after the lengthy statement which was made by my colleague Dr. Rao, the apprehensions which rightly or wrongly—in my opinion absolutely wrongly—were entertained regarding the nature of the Farakka Barrage and the quantum of water which would be discharged for cleansing the choking port of Calcutta by siltage, would have been allayed, if not fully removed,

About oil exploration in West Bengal once again there has been an unfair insinuation that

this region of the country has been specially excluded from a closer and more intimate attention in the matter of oil exploration than, for example, the area from which my old and distinguished friend Mr. H. M. Patel comes. That is not a fact. The fact of the matter is, we proceeded on the basis of the data available to us, to explore for oil by drilling at a place called Bodra. We discovered that the possibility of striking oil or gas was almost extinct. Therefore we again reviewed the position. We have now started very sophisticated seismic studies with sophisticated instruments in the entire range of West Bengal for locating more promising tracks of oil or gas. This has been considered necessary not only by experts of the ONGC but also the top experts of the Soviet Union.

I would like to assure the mover of the Resolution and his colleagues and the people of West Bengal that they should not entertain any doubts about our intentions. As soon as this work is over, we shall begin the work of exploration at great speed or hastily, if I may say so, wherever promise is held out, of reasonable success.

The other question relates to power shortages. My learned colleague Dr. K. L. Rao has given a picture of the future that we visualise with regard to the generation of power in West Bengal. But what we are interested in or concerned with is today or the immediate future, because the problems that face us are really of a very urgent nature in West Bengal particularly, and, therefore, we have got to make our best endeavour to see that the installed capacity, a good portion of which is lying idle and the capacity that is available but is run and managed inefficiently is looked into, thoroughly examined, and the faults and the inadequacies determined and quick remedial measures taken.

I have taken note of the complaint made by my hon. friend Shri Indrajit Gupta that the committee which has been appointed to examine the causes which were responsible for those shortages and what he has called the mismanagement of the distribution of the power system in West Bengal or most parts of it is composed mostly of those persons who are responsible for this management. If I remember the figures correctly, he said that out of six members, perhaps four belong to those agencies. I have received a similar

complaint, not regarding the composition of the committee, but the Government of West Bengal have complained bitterly about certain defects and certain lacunae which are apparent both in the generation and in the distribution of power within the quantities within which it is available, and we have decided in the Planning Commission, in consultation with the Government of West Bengal, and I shall have no difficulty in persuading my colleague the hon. Minister of Irrigation and Power, to appoint a high-powered committee in which experts from the Centre and otherwise will be associated with comprehensive terms of reference to see (a) how, and how quickly we shall be in a position to utilise to the fullest available resources for generation of power in West Bengal, and (b) to organise its distribution and the conveyance of this power with minimum losses and greatest efficiency. I hope that within a couple of months, we should be in a position to know exactly the nature of the malady and also equally exactly the nature of the remedy.

As far as the question of jute prices and the per acre—acre agricultural yield is concerned, I shall with your permission come to this issue a little later. What I, however, expected and hoped to be educated upon was the basic feature of the structure of the economy of West Bengal in its totality, and I further most hungrily awaited to be educated as to how we could apply the proper remedies in order to achieve results quickly and speedily. I must admit that my long wait has been rather futile and I have been somewhat disappointed. Of course, I am sick and tired of listening to questions of disturbances, somebody disturbing some public meeting being held, somewhere there being lockout, somewhere there being strike, and so on. Somebody is this parishad and somebody else is that parishad and so on. I even listened with the utmost respect and attention to the tales of woe regarding the law and order situation in West Bengal from quarters from whom I did not expect to hear it. The anguish of sowing wind and reaping a whirl wind perhaps holds good even today. But I am not a controversialist and I do not believe in indulging in idle polemics. But I think the time has come when we should turn our backs on that unfortunate, tragic period of disorder and disharmony in West Bengal. Whoever may be responsible for it, I am not here to apportion blame. Nobody has made

me a judge to pronounce who is wrong and who is right. But I am a judge of the situation in the sense that such a situation did exist and that situation had to terminate if we had to hope for an orderly development, if we had to take to the path of a peaceful development and reconstruction of our economy in West Bengal.

SHRI MOHAMMAD ISMAIL (Barrackpore) : If you are sincere, we are.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : I can assure the hon member that I would be the last person to be so impertinent as to question his sincerity. I readily agree and I would not even by inadvertence, by the remotest innuendo, attribute such actions of violence and disorder to the hon. member. I would never indulge in such an irresponsible utterance. Nevertheless, I was referring to a situation. That situation cannot be called a natural calamity. It was a man-made calamity. It was a situation created by man and it is our duty to see that those disorderly elements are isolated so that we are able to give buoyance not to violence but to development. That is the only way we can go forward,

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER : Find out from your own party.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : He says disorderly elements should be dealt with equally, irrespective of the party to which they belong, including your own.

SHRI D P DHAR : Certainly, as soon as you find me disorderly, you are at liberty to deal with me.

Coming back to an examination of the broad contours of the structure of the West Bengal economy, there are certain things which—(*Interruption*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let him continue.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : Except to the extent that I am taking notice of this highly orderly behaviour, I have nothing more to say.

Coming back to the enunciation of the broad contours of the economy of West Bengal, we see that in the field of industry, and its history—as it was hinted very briefly

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by Prof. H. N. Mukerjee—West Bengal's industry had a colonial base. It had a colonial orientation, though West Bengal was the pioneer in industrial efforts of the country before Independence. The classical examples of this type of industry are provided by jute and by coal. As we know, jute has reached a point of diminishing returns and it is suffering from a large number of ills. We also know in the recessionary period the production of coal did not reach the targets that were envisaged and, therefore, in both these sectors, West Bengal unfortunately was hit very severely.

Then in the second category of industry which developed rapidly in the fifties falls the engineering industries. The engineering industries in West Bengal were hit unfortunately mainly by the recessionary period through which we passed.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): The national retention price of steel.

SHRI D. P. DHAR: So far as the question of price is concerned, it is a separate matter. It is not only one factor which is responsible for this. There are a large number of factors which are responsible for this recession. I need not go into them because I have read some erudite thesis on the question of recession from the party to which Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu belongs; and with quite a number of those formulas I am in complete agreement, though Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu does not seem to agree with some of them. The fact remains that the engineering industry in this country was the first victim of recession, and as a result, the economy of West Bengal was hit very hard.

If we go to agriculture, I have no hesitation in saying that the development in agriculture has been almost slothful. It has been extremely slow in this field, because of various factors. Instead of going into these factors, I would rather suggest remedies than raise controversies.

The basic question, therefore, is in the first field, namely, the field of industry. What do we do? I would submit that in the first instance, a diversification of the industrial structure, the industrial investment, in West

Bengal is essential. This is the promise which the Central Government made, and I can assure Mr. Indrajit Gupta that from this promise the Central Government is not going to backslide.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: What is that promise?

SHRI D. P. DHAR: That there will be diversification from the traditional base of industries in West Bengal and a certain amount of new lines of industrialisation will be introduced. We have the petro-chemical structure; we have the steel alloy structure, and so on and so forth.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Are you aware of the fact that out of a total allocation of about Rs. 55 crores from institutional financing for minor irrigation, West Bengal got nothing but zero?

SHRI D. P. DHAR: I thought the distinguished Member did realise that minor irrigation is part of agriculture, not of industry. When I come to agriculture, I will talk about it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Jute is an agro-based industry?

SHRI D. P. DHAR: Jute is not an agro-based industry. Jute is a raw material for agro based industry.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Jute mills are agro-based industry. You are right there.

SHRI D. P. DHAR: I accept quite a number of your theses except some which you do not accept yourself.

The question, therefore, is that as far as the industries which are installed there are concerned, namely, the engineering industries, they suffer from what has become fashionable in our country sickness. In the case of every industry—in many cases I admit—where the owner takes away the milk and the cream out of the industry, he declares it sick and the sick child falls in our lap. My hon. friends there also say, yes, the Government should take it over because out of the kindness of their heart which always melts on such

occasions, they say, that so many workers will starve and, therefore, you adopt this sick child. This process of adoption is endless. Even the healthy children are now falling sick and, I am afraid, a time may come, unless and until we do something drastic about it, when the lap of the Central Government will be not only full but will have no capacity, even if it is joined with the capacious lap of Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, to hold any sick child.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : What about R. P. Goenka and Balmer Lawrie ?

SHRI D. P. DHAR : Ultimately, even he may fall sick. That is my difficulty.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : And recover elsewhere.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : I will send them to you for maternity care.

I am grateful to the West Bengal Government for the highly competent planning board which they have set up and which can be an example to many States in the country. I have told them that it is time not only to start with curative measures, namely, when the person falls sick, you start a cure, but also preventive measures. Therefore, we have agreed in the Planning Commission with this highly laudable suggestion of the West Bengal Government. The Chief Minister was here yesterday with his colleagues of the planning board, as I said, a very competent, a very efficient planning board ..

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Chickens have been counted before they are hatched.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : Well, it depends on your capacity. It is a question of incubation. The processes are different. I would again deal with chicken when I come to agriculture.

Therefore, we have agreed in the Planning Commission in conjunction with the Government of West Bengal that we shall help either the Industrial Reconstruction Corporation, strengthen it, or have a new machinery to examine thoroughly the working of some of these mills, some of these enterprises, so that we examine in each case what is exactly the

malady from which an industry is likely to suffer.

Secondly, and I think this fact is incontrovertible, in the last two or three years we have tried to increase the orders for those industries of things which they are competent and capable of manufacturing, namely, wagons, and the orders run into several crores. We feel that if the climate of harmony prevails, as it is prevailing by and large today in West Bengal, and given the necessary effort, given the necessary financial assistance, given the necessary managerial competence which is not lacking in our country, I think that in a short period of time most of these enterprises will be well on their way to a healthy existence.

Thirdly, we are also conscious of the fact that the second category of engineering industries is suffering from lack of raw materials, mainly steel. We again discussed this question with the Government of West Bengal yesterday and we are trying to do our best, as far as the engineering industry in West Bengal is concerned, to increase the allocation of some of the essential raw materials.

As far as jute is concerned, I do agree with Shri Gupta that there must be a rationale in determining the jute prices. But what is far more important is that whatever increase you may make in the jute price reaches the grower, the man who produces. The difficulty in West Bengal is—I am sorry, I speak as if I am a Bengali though my sub-caste sometimes does create some difficulty and embarrassment to my distinguished friend, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu—that the element of price which the producer gets is lower than the price that is usually fixed. So, I was very happy to find that the West Bengal Government was fully aware of this fact, and the manner in which they want to deal with this question gives me hope that any increases which will take place, or are likely to take place, in the jute prices, consistent with the prices of the end products which have got to be competitive, those increases will reach the grower and will not be pocketed by the middlemen.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : What about the Jute Enquiry Committee Report ? That was scuttled under pressure.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : There is no pressure. I hope Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu knows me sufficiently well. I am not under pressure of the gentleman he is referring to. I will never be a party to any organisation which yields to such pressure.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : I am talking of the entire government.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : The Government is clean ; it does not suffer from pressures.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : The people are not convinced of it.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : I am convinced that the people of India are convinced of it. While I submitted that every effort has to be made on some of the lines—the list is by no means exhaustive—for the rehabilitation of the industries and the industrial structure, for its diversification, for its expansion in West Bengal, at the same time, the main prosperity both in terms of generating employment and in terms of generating higher money incomes will come from the favoured subject of my distinguished friend, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, namely, the chicken, namely, agriculture, West Bengal is about to embark on, I should say, comparatively, reasonable progressive land legislation. In my opinion, when fulfilled, this will be one of the pre-conditions for releasing the energies of the agricultural population, for devoting them to greater production. Along with that, we have got to have package programmes so that the facilities of credit, the facilities of better seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. and water, above all—irrigation—are made available not to the upper, richer layer of agriculturists but the lowest layer of agriculturists. (*Interruption*) If you come with me to Kashmir, I would show it to you. If you come with me to Maharashtra, I will show. If you come with me to where Mr. Patel was ruling—though I and he differ in politics, we have been very old friends—I will show...In many parts they have made this package programme a great success. I do not believe in condemning something merely because I differ from some in politics. (*Interruption*)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : You are carrying coal, to New Castle.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : The question is that we have to remedy defects and those defects

cannot be remedied by paying all your kind attention, all your sweet attention, to me while I am speaking in this House. They will have to be remedied.

Again in the village it is our duty to see that this package of programme, that this package of aid, that this assistance reaches the deserving, and I can assure you that I was deeply impressed by the big programme—my only objection was to the size, to the bigness of the programme ; nevertheless, the essence, the character, of the programme which the West Bengal Government and its Planning Board have visualised for this purpose is very laudable, and once it comes into motion, I am very sure that, within a period of a year and a half, you will see that the face of the West Bengal countryside will change ; and when it changes, I would love to see the faces of my friends there.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : We should very carefully preserve your valuable speech.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : I am most honoured.

I am very conscious of the clock, Mr. Chairman, to which you are looking repeatedly.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can take your own time.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : But I would only make reference to one or two other points.

One of them is a very tragic situation in West Bengal, *i.e.*, the problem of the educated unemployed. It is tragic because Bengal happened to be one of those few areas in our country before Independence which made the headway in the field of education, and particularly higher education, and that this should now freeze in the form of a cruel tragedy is indeed very sad. No programmes for the improvement of the economy of West Bengal will be complete, unless and until we make serious efforts, genuine efforts, to make a sizeable impact on the problem of educated unemployed in West Bengal. This is one of the most essential elements that we have to look after. For this purpose again, I would refer to the West Bengal Planning Board and to

my discussions with the Chief Minister of West Bengal for this purpose, I found that some of the programmes that they have drawn up are absolutely realistic and are likely to bear fruit in the shortest possible time.

These, in my humble opinion, are the broad outlines of the present malaise which afflicts the economy of West Bengal and along with these, I have ventured Mr. Chairman, to suggest also in the broadest outline some of the remedies which are being considered actively by the State Government in conjunction with the Central Government and the planning Commission.

I personally feel and I am sure that my colleagues in the Government of India, my colleagues in my own Party to which I have the honour to belong, share my view that West Bengal, because of the tragedy it has gone through, which was described so poignantly by Prof Mukerji, has to be treated on a different level from other States for the purposes of development. We have to take into account the fact that one tragedy after another followed this land, this land of great people, this land of wonderful people and this most beloved part of our country and, it is, therefore, the responsibility of the rest of India for whom West Bengal has suffered even in the last one year they had to give shelter and hospitality to over seven to eight million refugees, I was a witness of that tragedy, that grim tragedy. Therefore, I can assure the mover of this resolution, I can assure this hon. House and I can assure the people of West Bengal on behalf of the Government of India that, as far as their problems are concerned, they will receive precedence for solution over the problems of any other part of the country. When I say this, I am not only repeating the promise, but I am also repeating an assurance which we shall, God willing, fulfil to the fullest measure possible.

With these words and with this assurance, Mr. Chairman, I feel that the mover of this resolution will perhaps look at his suggestions once again which, by and large, are not merely acceptable to us but which are very valuable to us and shall guide us in formulating our policies, for removing—to quote an expression from the Resolution—for removing the stagnation from the economy of West Bengal.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Allpore) :
I am grateful to all the members who have

participated in this discussion on both the days and have tried to highlight many problems, large and small, relating to West Bengal, many of which I was not able to cover. I am somewhat overwhelmed by the unusual spectacle of practically a 'galaxy' of Ministers who have taken the trouble of investing this discussion with some seriousness.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah) :
Only to assuage the feelings of West Bengal.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : That is a big thing. Sir, the Chief Minister of my State recently in a reference to the interim solution of the Farakka water problem, said to the Press : We have succeeded in de-linking this problem from political agitation.

If agitation—whether political or otherwise for which incidentally I think the people sent us here, to do the right type of agitation which is required on the Parliamentary floor, could produce some results, perhaps, although not to our fullest satisfaction,—so much to the good. I am glad several Ministers dealing with subjects with which I had dealt with in my opening remarks did take the trouble to come here and they tried to explain,—or, shall I say, explain away,—some of the allegations that I had made.

I also would like to congratulate our new Planning Minister for having made a very competent defence of a weak case. He is new to his responsibilities and I don't want to be uncharitable to him. Anyway, it is a very interesting speech because it gave us some insight, not perhaps directly into what is being done in West Bengal, but a sort of general insight, as to his outlook on the question of Planning, and the sense of priorities that he wishes to develop.

I agree with the Planning Minister when he said that he did not get from this side of the House a total picture of the economic structure of West Bengal and remedies for which he said, he was hungering I only wish the House had an opportunity of having a debate of that dimension sometime in the future. I don't know whether it will be possible. It is true that I did concentrate on certain specific matters ; this debate came up on Friday before last, and in this span of two weeks there have been some promising responses ; it would be wrong on my part to

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deny those responses, limited though they are,

I spent quite a lot of time in my speech on the question of Farakka. The interim solution was found and 40,000 cusecs of water for which we were hungering,—or shall I say, thirsting,—have been promised to us at least for a period of five years, to start with. Better late than never. So I do not want to go into this matter more in detail, except to say this. I hope he will not think me uncharitable when I say this. The way the matter was solved almost overnight between him and the Chief Minister of West Bengal has, to my mind, only further deepened the mystery behind all these things. Of course, I welcome it, because if it were such a simple matter, I do not know what all this hullabaloo was about, and why this hullabaloo was allowed to develop, and they could have scotched it long ago. Why was that not done? Even today, Dr. K. L. Rao has said that the original project report had recommended a certain schedule for the discharge of waters from the Ganga into the Bhagirathi, and it was exactly that schedule which he had placed before this House on the 31st May this year. He said that it was a quarrel only over two months of the year, the flow would be 40,000 cusecs and that would be assured. But I have that schedule with me here, which was part of his own statement made in this House on the last day of the last session, and it does not anywhere assure us of 40,000 cusecs for ten months of the year: it says that 40,000 cusecs would be there only for six months of the year, namely from 20th June up to December, end for the rest of the period that is, from January to mid-March, and mid-March to mid-May and mid-May to the 20th June, it would be something less than 40,000 cusecs, and at times even less than 20,000 cusecs would be available. Therefore, I say that the confusion is worse confounded now, but if we get the end-result, if the 40,000 cusecs come, then it would be well and good.

As far as the Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister's reply goes, I do not know whether he had actually taken the trouble of reading my speech or he had simply been briefed by his Department. I had not complained incidentally that day about the behaviour of other international airlines towards the Dum

Dum airport; I had rather exonerated them in a way by saying that 'How can I blame them, when our own Air India takes an indifferent attitude towards Dum Dum?' and I am very glad to hear from the hon. Minister today that at least one concession is going to be made that at least one flight, one international flight of Air India will originate from Dum Dum and will terminate at Dum Dum, I think, beginning from next week...

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH):
From 3rd November.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: But two or three questions still remain. I do not expect him to reply just now, but I would just draw his attention to them, and I had raised them last time also. What about the fact which I had pointed out that these west-bound international flights from India are not charged at the same fares? The fare structure works to the disadvantage of Calcutta, because 20 per cent rebate is allowed on flights from Bombay or from Delhi, and that is one thing which acts as a disincentive.

Again, what about the fact that no chartered flights are operated by Air India from Dum Dum? What about the fact that Dum Dum has been asked to content itself with the technical servicing of only Fokker Friendships and Dakotas while all Boeings and Caravelles are to be serviced only at Delhi or Bombay? These questions still remain in our mind. Of course, I congratulate him on exposing rightly the bloomer that I had committed about category I and category II landing equipment. stand correct.

It was not simply a question of starting one flight from Dum Dum, but all these different aspects of this problem are things over which the people in West Bengal have rightly been aggrieved. Since he has now decided to intervene in the matter, I hope that he will pursue it still further.

Then, there is the question of jute prices. The Planning Minister, I am sure, is aware of the fact that jute is the main cash crop of my State, in fact, not only of my State but of four or five States of Eastern India; it is the principal cash crop there. The Planning Board of West Bengal to which he made a laudatory reference has only a day or two

ago made a survey and then calculated, that whereas the number of people below the poverty line in the rest of India works out to an average of 40 per cent of the population, the figure in West Bengal is 70 per cent. Everybody knows that this figure must include not only Bengalis but the several millions of non-Bengalis who work in our State, for their livelihood and whom we are happy to have there. Nobody in our State no responsible person or organisation or party in our State has as yet made any public utterance such as, I regret to say, was made in West Bengal, a few weeks ago by the Chief Minister of Bihar, who in a public speech at Asansol reminded the people that in Bihar, his Government had taken steps to ensure that 90 to 95 per cent of the jobs were reserved for the people of Bihar. Nobody in Bengal has made a statement like that about Bengalis. We have never felt like that. Never have our people tried to rouse any kind of sentiments like that, as for example was done in Shri S. Mohan Dharia's State by the Shiv Sena. We are proud of this. We think the democratic movement in West Bengal should be proud of this fact. But you must see the problem in its true proportions.

17 hrs

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA (Begusarai) : Was it in a sectarian spirit that the Chief Minister was saying that ?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I do not know in what spirit he said it. And now we are having to struggle against a school of thought which is wanting to reply to him in the same terms. Do you want that to happen ? It will snowball. We do not want that.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA : I can say that in the breadth of our outlook, we do not yield to anyone, anywhere in the country.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : My charge is—and I hope the Planning Minister will look into it at his leisure—is that the pricing policy approved by the Central Government has been used as an instrument, particularly by the Finance Ministry, to inflate the prices of certain commodities, cash crops, and to depress the prices of others. In the case of raw cotton, in one decade, 1961-62 to 1970-71, the price has been allowed to go up by 109 per cent whereas the price of raw jute went

up in the same period by 41 per cent. This seems to me to be a machinery by which the per capita income in predominantly cotton growing States is pushed up in relation to the per capita income in those states of eastern India whose main cash crop is raw jute. So these are also larger problems on which the question of general poverty and so on depends.

I will touch on one or two specific points—I cannot go into a general discussion now. One is about the Jute Corporation of India, which I mentioned last time. There is an impression around, which has been voiced many times in this House, and refuted by Government, that sometimes politicians belonging to the ruling party defeated at the polls are compensated by being made chairmen of various corporations. I am sorry to say that since I spoke on this two weeks ago and pointed out that this Corporation was without a Chairman, an appointment has been made which to our mind is rather disturbing because the Chairman of a jute corporation should have something to do with jute, should know something about it. This is a very important Corporation and I think the gentleman who has been appointed is probably not very well qualified, if I may put it in the mildest possible language I can think of, to hold that charge.

There is as yet no representation of West Bengal on the board of this Corporation. All the raw jute growing States are officially represented on the board except West Bengal. I would throw out a suggestion for his consideration. Since this central corporation has decided that in the coming season it will purchase raw jute in West Bengal from only three districts of North Bengal, Cooch-Behar, Malda and West Dinajpur, and since he knows very well that North Bengal is also one of the most backward regions in the country, however developed Calcutta may be—I would suggest that they go into this question, I am sorry the only relevant Ministry not represented here is the Ministry of Foreign Trade. Shri Mishra had promised that in areas where raw jute is grown, some new mills would be licensed, in Bihar, Tripura, Assam and so on. Very good. I would propose that since raw jute is going to be purchased only in three North Bengal districts by the Jute Corporation and that raw jute has to be transported all the way and then across the Ganga to be processed in the mills around Calcutta to be

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made into sacks and those sacks are going to be sent back to North Bengal again, why not you consider the proposal to set up two or three small 10,000-tonne capacity jute mills in North Bengal, providing for the sacking requirements of that area? This is the only way it can be co-ordinated and it will go some way to easing the acute unemployment position in North Bengal also.

Then, what about the Calcutta port? Something was said about it in general terms. Nothing was said specifically about Haldia which I had raised. I still have no answer as to why dredging of the dock area is still held up due to some contractual dispute. I still have no reply as to when the work at Haldia is expected to be completed and why no decision has yet been taken about the location of a shipyard at Haldia, although the entire engineering infra-structure which is required for the shipyard is available close at hand in Calcutta.

No development, I think, can take place at all—and the Planning Commission will agree—unless this power famine can be overcome. Neither industrial nor agricultural development nor anything can advance if we are in a perpetual state of chronic power shortage. Therefore, this has to be given topmost priority. We had discussion on this subject here the other day. I do not think the Members coming from West Bengal have been satisfied by whatever assurances were given by Dr. K. L. Rao on this subject, because, the various agencies—I have already mentioned that—responsible for providing West Bengal with power are all of them, without exception, in a state of utter mismanagement and chaos. If a new committee is set up as the Planning Minister promised just now—a high-power committee in the place of what I would call the bogus committee consisting of people who are to be taken to task—may be something will come to light.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member's time is up.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : But a very, very energetic action will be required before this power famine can be overcome in an area which has the biggest industrial and commercial concentration in this country and where 2,00,000 industrial workers have been

laid off because of these power cuts, and where the West Bengal Government's plan to electrify at least 10,000 villages has to be given the go-by. So, how is this problem to be solved unless these specific things are taken up? That is why I tried to highlight those specific problems.

Sir, you have rung the bell. I can go on for quite a long time, but it would not be fair. We will take another opportunity sometime. Now, I would like to know why the hon. Minister is not accepting my resolution. Is it because he has in effect accepted the demands which I have made in the resolution? In the resolution I have demanded that the Central Government should not in anyway resile or backslide from the specific assurances which have been given from time to time regarding the solution of these specific problems. If he is accepting that demand in the form of an assurance, that means something. We will hold the Minister, the Government of India, to it, because all that we are asking for here is that the assurances given and the mandate given by the people to this Government in respect of that should be carried out. If they are not carried out, then, what sort of consequences might follow, many of my colleagues in the House have hinted at and given a warning of it.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : Only waiting here—

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Nobody is waiting here, because the people who are suffering are not in Delhi; they are at the other end. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister in what way he regards this resolution before I decide whether I am going to press it or not.

SHRI D. P. DHAR : The resolution was in the form of a reminder to us that we should keep our promises and we should not dilute our promises. I assure the hon. Members that his fears, his apprehensions, were not well-founded and that it was in our character, and the character of our party and the character of our Government to stick to whatever promises we have made and not to allow any dilution of our promises. That is the solemn assurance that I can give.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Without agreeing with his formulation of the characteristics of his party and the Government, to

which I do not agree at all, nevertheless, since he has given an assurance for the future, I do not wish to divide the House on this question. I prefer to let the assurance stand and then we will hold them on to it. On the basis of the assurance, I do not press my Resolution to a vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has the hon Member the leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

17.12 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: PROBLEM OF
UNEMPLOYMENT

SIIRIMATI MAYA RAY (Raiganj): I beg to move that:

"This House, while appreciating the efforts of the Central Government to eradicate unemployment, is of the opinion that the Central Government in co-ordination with the State Governments should work out a time bound, phased programme to solve the massive unemployment problem facing the country and take immediate positive and concrete steps to tackle the same."

My intention in bringing this Resolution before the House is to focus attention of all those concerned on the burning problem of unemployment, the solution of which brooks no further delay. And I say this with all the emphasis at my command. In doing so, I am not suggesting that the Government is not aware of the problems, or that it is not intending to deal with it in all urgency. In fact, I make bold to say that no government so far has dealt with this issue in all its magnitude, with the sense of earnestness and purpose as the present government of today. This is demonstrated by the findings of the Interim report of the Bagavathi Committee on Unemployment. The Dantwala Committee has been set up. The Joint Consultative Council on Community Development and Panchayat Raj has also been constituted. The National Committee on Science and Technology is preparing a scheme to absorb

unemployed engineers. The Bagavathi Committee Interim Report has disclosed a number of constructive methods of ameliorating this dread disease in our society. Thus the Government is certainly aware of the dimensions and the urgency of this problem.

I shall not meander into the realms of statistics while talking about unemployment for the simple reason that I for one do not believe that anyone is in possession of the correct figures or a correct estimate of the context of this unemployment problem. Therefore, the first task before us is to find out the exact nature and dimension of the problem. This we can do, by firstly, taking a sample survey of all the employment exchanges in the country. This should be done by the Central Government and State Governments to ascertain the actual unemployment figures in the live registers, bearing in mind that it is not all the unemployed who actually register themselves in these employment exchanges, for various reasons which one need not go into here or elaborate because, sometimes I must confess these employment exchanges do not work in the way they should.

Secondly, the State Governments should undertake a blockwise survey of the unemployed in each block, in each district and in each State. From my experience of travelling extensively in the districts of my State, that is to say, West Bengal, I can tell you that such blockwise surveys will disclose the most horrifying spectacle. The spectre of unemployment casts an ominous shadow across the length and breadth of our country enveloping it with despair. If this problem is not tackled vigorously, purposefully and with fortitude, the very structure of our society stands imperilled.

The right to work is enshrined in the Directive Principles of our Constitution. The youth of any nation is its potential wealth. It is this vast section who are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to participate in the building of this country. If this eagerness and energy is not canalised and harnessed for the development of this great nation, we shall be swept by a tidal wave of frustration, grief and revolt, the magnitude of which will sweep aside everything before it and there will remain in its wake, only chaos.

I say this with full responsibility for we are standing literally at the edge of a pre-