

Ganga Action Plan

*84. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the progress of the Ganga Action Plan in the states of U.P., Bihar and West Bengal; and

(b) the steps taken to expedite the implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Under the Ganga Action Plan, 262 schemes have been sanctioned for the three States of U.P., Bihar and West Bengal. As on date, 99 schemes have been completed, 53 in U.P., 14 in Bihar and 32 in West Bengal. An expenditure of approximately Rs. 187 crores has been incurred on the implementation of the Ganga Action Plan so far.

(b) The Ganga Project Directorate is closely monitoring the implementation of the programme. Regular meetings are held with the State Governments and the implementing agencies to ensure the quick implementation of the schemes and field visits are undertaken by the staff of the Ganga Project Directorate to supervise and check upon on going works and to render technical advice, as well as to help overcome problems and delays. From time to time the Minister of State and the senior officers take up at the appropriate level with the State Governments concerned any scheme which may be facing delays. The Central Ganga Authority under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister meets once a year to review the Progress. The Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests and including the Chief Secretaries

of the State Governments reviews the progress once a quarter.

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to state that 163 projects are still pending and they have not yet been completed as such. Out of these, in West Bengal alone 70 projects are on-going ones, except the two i.e. Dum Dum Municipality and Kamarhati Municipality. This is due to the land dispute there. Regarding the rest, for the completion of these projects, the West Bengal Government has asked for a sum of Rs. 70 crores more. I would also like to state that the West Bengal Government has already submitted an alternative low-cost sewerage plan. Has it already been given to the experts? What is the reaction of the experts on these project? I would also like to know from the hon. Minister of State whether the Government has sanctioned the money that has been asked for by the West Bengal Government i.e. Rs. 70 crores.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: We have received the requests now. We are looking into the matter. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: They are talking so much. But the Ganga river has been polluted very much by them..... (*Interruptions*) I would now come to my second supplementary. There are some industries on the bank of the river Ganges. These industries are polluting and releasing pollution everyday. These particular industries have been persuaded to set up effluent treatment plants. What action against them has been taken so far?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: There are a total number of 264 industrial units which have been considered polluting the Ganges. Of these, 68 have been considered as high pollution industries. Further, we have taken legal action against 9 units. One unit has been given time. 37 units have been provided with treatment plants. Under instructions, 11 have got treatment plants now. 10 of them have been closed down.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, the City of Cal-

cutta was established by Mr. Job Charnock because of the perennial Ganga and the navigable Ganga. After the city was established it was clean. At that time, the Ganga was to take the entire discharge of sewage water but still it was clean. In January, the hon. Minister visited Calcutta and I do feel that she told the State Government the right-words boldly about their non-performance. It is a fact that there were 112 schemes sanctioned for West Bengal. Crores of rupees were allocated. But only ten schemes were completed, as stated by the hon. Minister in the Symposium held in Calcutta at the end of January this year. There is a Maratha Ditch Canal which goes through the heart of the city of Calcutta. In this Canal, entire swerage and garbage is discharged. This Canal, Madam Minister, connected from the Bag-bazar Lock-Gate, is discharging the entire pollution in the Ganges. There was a scheme—I happened to be a Member at that time—to include this Maratha Ditch Canal in the Ganga Cleaning Action Plan so that the discharged water of the entire city of Calcutta goes through this Canal through the heart of Calcutta and after treatment is discharged in the River Ganga, thus save from polluting the Ganges. There has been a lock-gate made for the last five years at Bag-abazar so that the water of the River Ganges goes inside the Canal and during high tide flushes out the canal. This was the old system. However the lockgate is not used nor the flushing operates. I want to know whether Maratha Ditch Canal would be included in this, if not why not. The entire area is suffering because of the mosquito menace.....

(Interruptions)

SHRI K.S. RAO: How can a P.A. come into the House? *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He should not have come.

(Interruptions)

PROF.P.J.KURIEN: I saw a stranger coming into the House.

MR. SPEAKER: He should not have come.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: A Reporter had come.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have been told that he is not a P.A. He is one of the Reporters of the House.

(Interruptions)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: You should conduct an enquiry. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He is Shri Raj Kumar Verma, one of the new Reporters. He is not a P.A. to the Minister.

(Interruptions)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: We owe a responsibility as Member of Parliament elected by the people of this country. I say, I have seen a person coming from that side to the side of Madam Minister. He came upto there, and just when we mentioned it, ran away. I only say that the Speaker should conduct an inquiry. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have checked up. Mr. Raj Kumar Verma is a new reporter. He does not know the rules. A reporter can come to the House. He is a reporter.

(Interruptions)

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): Whatever the hon. Speaker has said is correct. He is not a member of my staff. He may be a Reporter, but I did not call him.

[*English*]

I am not in charge of the House. Only the Speaker can direct in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: I have checked up and found out that Mr. Raj Kumar Verma is a reporter and he is not a PA to the Minister.

PROF. P.J.KURIEN: Kindly produce him here. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

[*English*]

I will check up and find out.

[*Translation*]

You may please resume your seat.

[*English*]

Shri Ajit Panja to speak.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: The part (b) of my question is....

MR. SPEAKER: One question, not part (b).

SHRI AJIT PANJA: You have allowed the question in different parts Sir and this is a part of one Question.

Therefore another question is that in the Ganga Action Plan meetings the elected representatives of the people like the MPs, MLAs and the Councillors of the Calcutta Corporation are not being invited for discussion. A part of my constituency is by the side of the Ganga. Never do we receive any invitation for any meeting of the Ganga Action Plan. We are not called upon to discuss any problem. If we want to say anything, if any letter is sent, it is never replied to.

The third part of my question is, whether the hon. Minister will direct the State Governments to include all the MPs, MLAs and people's representatives, whoever is within the side of the Ganga Action Plan area, so that we can take part in that and we can deliberate.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: The answer to the first question is that we have given from 1985 onwards Rs. 75 crores to the West Bengal Government. It was put into 110 schemes of which 32 are complete, a certain number will be complete before the financial year is over and we expect that the rest would be completed by the end of the year after next year.

As far as the new scheme is concerned, it will depend on the resources available to us in the 8th Plan. Therefore, because all the schemes are not complete, we have decided to first utilise the money to complete the to existing schemes and then add new ones. However, we are encouraging small sanitation schemes in West Bengal.

As far as the third part is concerned, there is a Ganga Action Plan Committee where we have included MPs. I have asked them to put MPs through whose constituencies the Ganga flows I do not think the notifications have gone out this year.

As far as letters are concerned, if you write to me I will be happy to answer you. If you feel that there has been delay in replying to your queries, I apologise.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the Statement, the hon. Minister was very pleased to refer to the progress of the Ganga Action Schemes in West Bengal. The Minister has mentioned that 32 schemes have so far been completed. Of course, Shri Panja has said that only 10 schemes have been completed. Anyhow, it is for him to understand. But, in the statement made by the Chief Secretary of the Government of West Bengal on February 2nd last, it is stated that out of 115 projects in West Bengal, 45 have already been completed and the remaining 70 would be completed by 31st of march this year. Now, in view of the fact that a steering committee is there of which the Chief Secretaries of the States concerned are also members, how is it that these discrepancies are existing between the statement made by the hon. Minister and the statement publicly made on behalf of the Government of West

Bengal? May I request the hon. Minister to kindly check up the figures?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: I am not aware of the Chief Secretary's statement and I do not think that he could have made a statement saying that 70 schemes would be complete by the 31st of March. It is not possible. However, we do confidently expect all the schemes to be completed by 31st of March year after next year.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GANGA CHARAN LODHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the leather industry in Kanpur is the major pollute out of river Ganga. The river water is unfit for consumption due to the industrial effluents that are discharged into it. The water of river Ganga is considered as holy in our country and it is good for health also, but if anyone drinks the river water in Kanpur, he would not be able to survive. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Government has made any arrangement to check the discharge of industrial effluents into the river Ganga.

[*English*]

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, the answer to this question is that a common effluent treatment plant has been held up all these years. We have asked the tanneries to give 35% of the money for this and the State would subsidise the rest of it. Now, we have finally agreed—the MP also intervened—and we are happy to say that a common effluent treatment plant is coming up in the country.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ISHWAR CHAUDHARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, although the main question is about Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, but attention is being paid to West Bengal only and nobody is bothered about Bihar. Now, it has become quite clear that the lack of proper attention is responsible for the pollution of Ganga in our region. Due to this, pollution is spreading in other States also

adjoining Bihar. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether maximum possible assistance would be given to Bihar since Biswas Board has been set up. Are there any schemes, wherein there is delay in their implementation? If so, when will these be completed so that the river is made free from pollution?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: The schemes that were started there, are yet to be completed. Until, regulated schemes are completed, it would not be possible to take up any new scheme. Further, it is not possible to say anything in this regard, until the financial allocation in the Eighth Plan for this purpose is finalised.

SHRI ISHWAR CHAUDHARY: Are you launching any new scheme there?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: A number of schemes are already there in Bihar.

SHRI ISHWAR CHAUDHARY: When are you going to implement them? (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: No. Not like that. You may address the Chair. Now, Shrimati Subhashini Ali.

SHRIMATI SUBHASHINI ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like the Minister to inform the House as to whether there is any scheme in the Ganga Action Plan to construct a barrage on the Ganga at Kanpur because a specific assurance to construct such a barrage was given to the people of Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh by the previous Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who was also the Chairman of the Ganga Action Plan. I would like to know whether there is any provision to provide finance for such a barrage to be constructed at Kanpur on the Ganga?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: I am going to repeat it again. We have 262 schemes. We are to complete these

schemes. We will not be in a position—until we get further financial allocation in the Eighth Plan—to take up any other scheme. It is dependent on how much money we get in the next Plan.

SHRI ABDUL SAMAD: The Minister was pleased to state that for the treatment of effluents from tanneries, the Government is giving 35 per cent of the total expenditure. I know fully well that in Vaniyambadi, Tamil Nadu, the tanners have contributed Rs. 25 lakhs for this purpose whereas the Central Government has not contributed a single pie for the completion of the treatment plant.

Will the Minister be pleased to instruct for disbursement of money so that the effluent plant is completed in time?

MR. SPEAKER: The question pertains to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ABDUL SAMAD: Out of 872 tanneries in the country, 700 tanneries are situated in my constituency. It is causing pollution. That's why I have put this question.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Involvement of Voluntary Organisations in Rural Development Programme

*85. **SHRI SURYA NARAYAN SINGH:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to adopt a new approach in the Eighth Plan in regard to involvement of voluntary organisations in rural development programmes; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b). Emphasis on involvement of Voluntary Organisations in Implementation of various schemes relating to Rural Development is expected to be enhanced during the Eighth Five Year Plan period. The details would be incorporated in the Plan document.

UNDP Conference on Environmental Degradation

*86. **SHRI DHARMESH PRASAD VARMA:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Conference convened recently by the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at Nairobi voiced concern at environmental degradation;

(b) if so, whether India also participated in the Conference;

(c) the main subjects discussed and the proposals made by India; and

(d) the decisions arrived at in the Conference?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI MATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b). The Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had convened an Informal meeting with invited experts from various countries on Funding Mechanisms for the Montreal Protocol and another meeting with invited Ministers on a number of global environmental issues in an informal manner in January, 1990 at Nairobi. India also participated in these meetings.

(c) and (d). A statement is given below.