

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : I want to know from the Hon. Minister the facilities being considered by Government for being provided to the middle and low income group passengers in view of the recommendations of this Committee ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the main recommendation of the Railway Reforms Committee was on the lines of pilot projects like the Yatri Niwas which we have just taken up at the New Delhi Railway Station. This is for the middle and low income group passengers and we endeavour to...

[English]

PROF. N. G. RANGA : Is Government taking any steps to see that drinking water is provided during summer ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Special attention is being given to provide drinking water on the railway platforms and in the trains. (*Interruptions*) In the matter of drinking water not only have we asked to give special attention at the railway stations and on trains with vestibules, but we have said that even the first class AC or first class passengers, a particular category which Madam probably patronises the most; that is why, she is very keen about it, they either carry their own thermos or the facilities are good enough. But where priority must be given is to the second class passengers. Therefore, we have said that on vestibule trains there should be covered buckets or jerry cans with water and an attendant with water facilities.

Completion of Irrigation projects in Maharashtra and Bihar

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*880. **SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT:**
DR. G. S. RAJHANS :

Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that some of the Irrigation Projects in States of Maharashtra and Bihar are far behind their schedule;

(b) whether the Governments of both the States have requested the Centre to provide adequate funds for completion of such irrigation projects; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) (a) to (c). Some of the projects in Maharashtra and Bihar are behind schedule. Central assistance is given in the form of block loans and block grants and is not tied to any particular scheme or sector of development. The States have to plan, fund and implement their own projects and make adequate provision therefor within their over-all plan allocations.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : 22 big and 42 medium projects of Maharashtra are pending for years. The reason is that there is no coordination between the 15 departments of the central Government connected with it. When the State Government sends a proposal to the Central Water Commission, queries are received there from 15 Central Government departments. These queries are not raised at a time. One department wakes up after six months and there is still another who takes action a year later. Thus, the queries regarding the project take many years, leading to a rise in the cost of the project and consequently a revised project estimate needs to be submitted. Like this, this cycle goes on.

The second reason is paucity of funds. Your Forest Act also comes in the way of these projects. Therefore, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether efforts would be made to complete these projects soon by bringing about coordination between these 15 departments of the Central Government? Secondly, what is the amount of allocation, sought by the Government of Maharashtra and what is the amount sanctioned by the centre ?

[English]

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : The Hon. Member's main grievance seems to be that the projects submitted by the Maharashtra Government for clearance are delayed because, according to him, the various Departments of the Government have no coordination with the Department of Irrigation. I have explained in this House on more than one occasion the reasons for delay. They are:

the plans and projects submitted by the State Governments are not at all complete in all respects in spite of the guidelines given to them by the Central Government. When certain defects are noticed or certain observations are made, they are sent back, and in the meantime, the cost escalates. The State Governments also revise the projects sometimes. On more than one occasion, they revised the scope of the project itself. There are various reasons which the Hon. Member is not aware of and which perhaps are not due the default of the Department of Irrigation or the Central Water Commission... (Interruption).

PROF. N.G. RANGA : He is asking about coordination.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Cooperation and coordination is already there. It is a question of cooperation and coordination between the State and the Centre. The State should give all the details that have been asked for by the Centre.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my important question was how much allocation was sought by the Maharashtra Government and how much was sanctioned by the Centre.

MR. SPEAKER : The vital question is that the more the delay, the more the dislocation. Efforts should be made to obviate delay.

[English]

Delay breeds every damn thing.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Sir, I have answered to the main question that Central assistance is not given to any particular scheme or project, it is given in the form of block grants and block loans. Maharashtra Government had requested for assistance in 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83 and 1983-84. In 1980-81, they asked for Rs. 32 crores; in 1981-82, Rs. 20.70 crores; Rs. 22.00 crores in 1982-83 and Rs. 47.06 crores during 1983-84. However, no such additional assistance could be provided by the Government of India.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : Sir, the reply of the Hon. Minister leads us nowhere. We

want a specific reply. For example, I want to know the exact position of Western Kosi Canal. It is a project involving two countries Nepal and India, and is being executed by the Government of Bihar. I want to know its exact position and also as to when it will be completed.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Sir, the main question is whether there are any projects in Bihar and Maharashtra which are behind the schedule, and I said, there are some. The reason for this is non-completion of the projects in time for want of funds, for want of technical clearance and for other reasons that I have already given. Bihar has 12 major and 20 medium pre-Sixth Plan projects and 7 medium Sixth Plan schemes spilling into Seventh Plan. Their latest total estimated cost is about Rs. 2,300 crores whereas the rough spill-over cost is about Rs. 1,700 crores. Bihar has not been able to complete these projects in VI Plan because they have taken up many projects for which they cannot provide funds. The thin layers of resources spread over the many projects is the main cause for the non-completion of the various projects.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ram Swaroop Ram.

I am looking towards Ram. If Balram does not look towards Ram, who else would he look to ?

SHRI BALKAVI BAIKAGI : Please see that Nand Ram is not left out in between Ram and Balram.

SHRI RAMSWARCOOP RAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Tilaiya Dadar Irrigation Project and the Muhane Reservoir Project are quite big and important schemes, whose foundation stones had also been laid, but the work has not started on them due to the paucity of funds, although it is now more than a year since the foundation stones were laid. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether arrangements are being made to make available the funds allocated by the Government of India for these two schemes within two or three months, so that the work could start there ?

[English]

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : I have already said that the funds are provided by the State Governments. The projects are funded and implemented by the State Governments. The Central assistance is not given to any project.

[Translation]

SHRI C. P. THAKUR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether some action is being taken regarding the Sone Canal Scheme which is pending with the Centre for a long time? The Sone Canal was constructed by the Britishers and it has not been renovated for the last 150 years.

MR. SPEAKER : He will not be in a position to tell us about the project.

[English]

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : Sir, it is a very important question. The canal referred to by the Hon. Member is 120 years old and it provides assured irrigation to two districts Bhojpur-Rohtas and Patna. The scheme was to be funded by the World Bank. All formalities have been completed by the State and it is lying with the Central Government. So, I would like to know what steps the Centre is going to take in this regard.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Sir, we must thank nature that this project is working for the last more than 100 years in Bihar.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : Yes, it is one of the oldest projects in the country. It is more than 100 years old.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : That is what I said. We must thank nature for that.

(Interruptions)

That is the reason why Buddha was born in Bihar.

SHRI C. P. THAKUR : I would like to know what is the Central Government doing in this regard. I would like to have an answer from the Hon. Minister on this question.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Whatever external assistance could be given is being given to Bihar. Without funds no project is completed and there cannot be any moderni-

sation or renovation also without funds. Whatever we could do is being done. Now, it is for the Bihar Government to do the rest.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : Sir, its clearance is awaited. It is a very important thing. Would the Minister consider to take a decision for its early clearance from his end? All the formalities by the State Government have been completed.

MR. SPEAKER : Is it such a thing as clearance ?

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Sir, we will not delay even for a moment, if all observations are complied with by the Bihar Government.

[Translation]

Complimentary Railway Passes to Freedom Fighters.

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*882 **SHRI VISHNU MODI** :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a scheme was prepared for extending first class pass facility to the freedom fighters for 'Bharat Darshan';

(b) if so, how many freedom fighters have availed of this facility;

(c) whether this facility has recently been withdrawn;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government have received any memorandum in this regard from freedom fighters;

(f) if so, whether Government propose to restore this facility; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor ?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS :
(SHRI BANSI LAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 136 first class all India Complimentary Card Passes were issued to the freedom fighters by the Railways. Out of these, the number who actually availed of the travel facility is not known.