

SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : I want to know whether the government proposes to improve upon the present scheme so as to make the voluntary retirement more attractive to the retiring employees; if so, the details.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : This new scheme was introduced in August 1977. After the scheme was introduced, there was further liberalisation, and we are now adding the weightage of five years to any one who retires with or without permission. The scheme was liberalised. The scheme has been in operation for a period of nine years. There is no proposal now to liberalise it further.

SHRI K.S. RAO : It is commonly observed that most of the people who come out of the institutes or Post-Graduate Doctorate or something do not have the confidence to have their own way of living based on their talent. So, it would be better to give incentives to those officers who come out of their service voluntarily. Certainly, it requires incentives from the government or the State Government concerned. So, as the government thinking in terms of giving some extra facilities or giving some incentives to start industry or to have their own enterprises by giving financial assistance or some concessions in the various fields ?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I don't think I can answer this question.

Development of A & N Islands

*521. **SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the development of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and implementation of anti-poverty programmes is facing hindrance due to the policy of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in the matter of clearance of forest in the Union Territory of A and N Islands; and

(b) if so, what alternative arrangements are proposed by Union Government ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS

OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : It appears that the hon. Prime Minister is unkind to us. I wanted a sweeter reply from him. The question is that Island territories are having different problems, different from those of the other parts of the country. We are having 86 per cent of our land covered under forest whereas throughout the country it may be 22 something land covered under forest.

AN HON. MEMBER : 13 per cent.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : That is an artificial figure.

If you take the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, our entire development programme is getting a hindrance because of this attitude taken by the Ministry of Forest and Environment. Just now the Minister has said that the question does not arise. I am just asking a very simple question from him. Is it in the knowledge of the Minister that there is a village called Miletalak in South Andaman where land was allotted by the revenue officials to the villagers and the villagers got the occupancy right under the Land Tenure Regulations? But subsequently, the Forest Department claimed that that land belonged to them as that was a reserved forest. And they had to be evicted from that land. So, no anti-poverty schemes could be implemented.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : The answer given by the Government is quite appropriate and I would say, quite sweet, because the steps taken by the Department are not hindering the development of the island. As far as the rehabilitation of some people in some islands are concerned, I can give the information that out of four matters which were brought to the notice of the Department, there have already been cleared for settlement. As far as that particular case is concerned, I will collect the information and give to him. But for matters of this nature, the clearance has been given and is likely to be given for drinking water, for rehabilitation, for development and all those things. But the fact has to be borne in

mind that Andaman and Nicobar are the islands where we have a very precious forest wealth. And if we use that precious forest wealth, out of that the development can take place. But if we destroy the precious forest wealth, the development cannot take place. Also we are providing other facilities such as fisheries and other things for the development of that area.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Just now what the Minister has said I also endorse that we are not in favour of destroying the forests. But if we deny the people residing there the basic facilities, then I do not think that maintenance of forest is for the benefit of the mankind. We have a programme to provide house-sites to the poorer sections of the people. But in certain areas, there is no revenue land available for house-sites. Some land has to be de-reserved for providing house-sites. If the Minister now says that those people are to be rehabilitated on the sea, that is just impossible. That is why, I am asking one question from the hon. Prime Minister that now in the country there are various programmes for desert development, drought prone area development, hill areas development, etc. Will the Prime Minister like to consider to have a special development programme of the island considering the need of the islanders and to see that the development is not hindered due to this policy ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : We are already considering this and it is under the process of being done.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK : It is true that environment has to be maintained and our forest wealth has also to be retained. But even in cases of irrigation projects where they have to cut forests but greenery is created after the project is implemented, your Ministry is objecting to cut such forests. Will you review this policy as far as at least irrigation projects are concerned ? This is happening in Goa.

MR. SPEAKER : This does not relate to this question.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : The policy of the Government of India is very clear. We do realise that the forests have to be there as well as irrigation projects have to be

constructed. The policy enunciated by the Government is that if irrigation projects have to be constructed, the same number of trees or a little larger number of trees have to be planted by the Government in some areas which are adjacent or some areas which are available. The view taken is that we have to protect the forests. Otherwise, if we do not have the forests, even if we construct the dam there would not be rainfall and there would not be water in the tank also. And that will not be available for irrigation purposes. Ultimately it is necessary to get the rain. We have to keep this fact in mind.

Bhagwanpur Nandigram Drainage Scheme

***522. DR. PHULRENU GUHA :** Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Planning Commission has sought certain clarification regarding Bhagwanpur Nandigram Drainage Scheme in Midnapur District from West Bengal Government;

(b) if so, whether any reply has been received; and

(c) the present position of the scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI A. K. PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir through Ganga Flood Control Commission.

(b) and (c). Intimation has been received by the Planning Commission from the Ganga Flood Control Commission stating that the State Flood Control Board has given its approval to the scheme and intimation of this was received by them from the State Government on 24th March, 1986.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA : Sir, my first question is when this scheme was first formulated, how long did it take to get the sanction. Also I would like to know who is responsible for the delay and what is the amount sanctioned for the scheme.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : Sir, the scheme appears to have been formulated in April 1976 by the then Dr. Siddhartha Shankar