

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Monday, April 28 1986/Vaisakha 8,
1908 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

WELCOME TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon'ble Members, at the outset, I have to make an announcement.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the Hon'ble Members of the House, I have great pleasure in welcoming Honourable Mr. Paul Verges and other Hon'ble Members of the European Parliamentary Delegation who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests. The other Hon'ble Members of the delegation are :

1. Mr. George W. Stevenson
2. Mr. Wilhelm F. T. Hahn
3. Mrs. Marie-Claude Vayssade
4. Mr. Friedrich Wilhelm Graefe Zu Baringdorf
5. Sir Peter B. R. Vanneck
6. Mr. Willem J. Vergeer
7. Mr. Michelangelo Ciancaglini
8. Mr. Enrique Sapena Granell
9. Mr. Florus A. Wijsenbeek
10. Mr. Bernard Thareau

The delegation arrived Delhi on Saturday, 26 April, 1986. They are now seated

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in the Special Box. We wish them a very happy and fruitful stay in our country. Through them we convey our greetings and best wishes to the European Parliament.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

National policy for drinking water supply

826. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a national policy for supply of drinking water is under formulation;

(b) if so, when the said policy is likely to be announced; and

(c) to what extent the villages in different States facing acute shortage of drinking water will get the facility ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) and (b). The National Master Plan for drinking water supply to rural and urban areas was announced in '81 in the context of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. The plan envisages provision of safe and adequate drinking water facilities to the entire population by March 1991. A recent review, has however, indicated that it might be possible to provide drinking water facilities to only 90 per cent of the urban population and 85 per cent of the rural population by 1991.

(c) Out of about 2.31 lakhs problem villages identified in 1980, about 1.92 lakh villages were provided with atleast one source of safe drinking water by the end of 6th

Five Year Plan. During the 7th Five Year Plan, priority will be given to coverage of remaining problem villages as well as problem villages identified subsequently and to provide full coverage for villages partially covered earlier.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the shortage of drinking water exists everywhere, in the urban areas as well as in the rural areas. Especially, you take Nagpur or the villages of Maharashtra, everywhere the people are facing acute scarcity of water and are raising their voice. I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that ever since the survey was conducted in 1980, the water level has fallen sharply during the course of past 5 or 6 years. It has been falling at all places.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Especially in Rajasthan.

MR. SPEAKER : Sometimes Dagaji speaks a right thing.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Water level is falling sharply in the States like Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, etc. In Maharashtra, where one used to find water at a depth of 50 feet earlier, water level has now fallen as low as 125 to 300 feet and even at that depth, it is difficult to strike water. Secondly, due to water pollution, the river water has become dirty and people do not get potable drinking water. Thirdly, since the survey was done, the population has increased immensely and the norms which were fixed at that time are not adequate.

My specific question to the Hon. Minister is that if he wants to give assistance by applying norms of 1980, the assistance so given will be too inadequate to be of any use. Therefore, I would like to know whether he would consider changing norms in view of the present conditions for giving assistance to the villages which are facing scarcity of water ?

SHRI DALBIR SINGH : The question of the Hon. Member is that the water level is falling day by day. This is due to deforestation. Secondly, India is also one of the

signatories to the U. N. Resolution on the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade passed in 1981. We had made a commitment in that Resolution that we would endeavour to supply adequate drinking water and sanitation facilities to the entire population by 1991. As has been stated by the Hon. Member, we had conducted a survey in 1980 during the Sixth Five Year Plan and out of about 2.31 lakh problem villages, about 1.92 lakh villages were provided with drinking water supply by the end of the Sixth Plan. We intend to cover the remaining villages during the Seventh Five Year Plan.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is not the answer to my question. I seek your protection. What I had asked was whether he would consider changing the norms in view of the changed conditions after the survey was conducted.

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR) : Norms will certainly be changed... (*Interruptions*). It is not that the job of the State Government is over after having helped the problem villages. Arrangements will be made to supply drinking water in new villages also. This is not static in the Seventh Five Year Plan that—

[English]

Once declared a problem village, it will always remain a problem village.

[Translation]

The shortage of water is due to increase in population. Whatever is possible will be done.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Old problems will be solved; new problems will arise.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : The assistance being received from the Centre is totally inadequate. I would like to quote an example Maharashtra had sought Rs. 116 crores for 1985-86 and you had provided only Rs. 7.83 crores. Their need for making

arrangements for supply of drinking water is Rs. 116 crores and you are giving them only Rs. 7.83 crores. How then will you be able to solve this problem, will you let me understand ?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : I shall explain it like this—Uptil a few days ago, we were looking after this Department, now it has come under the charge of our Agriculture Minister. This question has already been discussed in this House. During my tenure, there was an incentive scheme under which the States which would supply drinking water to their problem villages speedily were to be given cash incentive. Your State might have lagged behind. We from the Centre do not make arrangement for the supply of water. We provide the required assistance only. It is for the State to execute the scheme. We do not supply water...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Sir, there were orders from the Central Government for the construction of overhead water tanks for drinking water in the villages during the Fifth Five Year Plan and water tanks were used to be constructed during the Fifth Plan, but this scheme was abandoned during the Sixth Plan. Similar advice was received for the Seventh Plan as well. In the villages, the water tanks were the only source of pure drinking water. I want to know as to why this scheme was discontinued in the Seventh Plan ? In the absence of water tanks, should we take it that the Government do not want to supply pure drinking water in the villages ?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : As I have already stated, once the Central Government had written to all the State Governments to identify such areas and villages in their respective States as do not have even a single source of assured drinking water supply. A report in this respect was received and on the basis of that, funds were sanctioned. After the funds are sanctioned, the responsibility thereafter rests with the State Governments. Even after that, as stated by the Hon. Member from Maharashtra, if water level has fallen, it will be our earnest endeavour to get boring done by another 20 feet...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : What I am saying is that the U. P. Government had

submitted the list of scarcity villages and you had also allotted it full share, but in spite of that the Jal Nigam has stopped constructing water tanks with effect from the Sixth Five Year Plan. The submission of the U. P. Government is that they have submitted a complete list of scarcity villages. May I know as to why the State Government are not constructing the water tanks even though the State has been given its share ? The list in Uttar Pradesh is quite long...

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : If a State Government says that they are making arrangements for drinking water, I do not think the Centre would stop them. This is just not possible.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : That is all right.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : I am asking for specific information.

MR. SPEAKER : It is all right. He is also very specific in his reply that it cannot be done.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : He is replying in ifs and buts, I am saying that the Uttar Pradesh Government wants to do it but will the Central Government arrange to construct water tanks to provide drinking water to the villages.

MR. SPEAKER : You take your seat.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : The problem of drinking water...

MR. SPEAKER : What is your problem, are you also facing the same difficulty ?

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : This problem is particularly severe in the desert areas of Rajasthan. Earlier, during the Sixth Five Year Plan, a good amount of assistance was provided by the Centre to Rajasthan. The assistance so provided under the A. R. P. was 14 per cent to all the States, but now it has been reduced to 6 per cent and the norms now fixed do not have a cost consideration.

The cost of supplying water to one village in Rajasthan is sufficient enough to supply water to 20 villages in U. P. and Bihar. Therefore, I want to know whether the Government would consider about cost consideration and accordingly change the norms for such areas with a view to giving them special assistance under the A. R. P. ?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : With regard to your suggestion I would say that the Hon. Speaker also comes from the same area. One day when I was replying to a question, he had said that I should do it quickly and that he would recommend me for Padma Vibhushan...

MR. SPEAKER : I had said about Param Veer Chakra.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : Therefore, I am looking after all these things. I think my responsibility is towards him...

MR. SPEAKER : I am keeping a close watch.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : You tell us whether norms would be changed in case of Rajasthan or not ?

(Interruptions)

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : Only Rajasthan in India...

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : Rajasthan cannot get water unless the norms are changed. Change of norms for Rajasthan should be announced.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr Minister, how have you replied to his supplementary when I did not allow ?

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : The Hon. Minister has replied that in 1980 the States were asked to give a list of villages and towns which faced acute shortage of drinking water. In the meantime, the conditions have undergone a change, population has registered an unprecedented increase and there has also been some migration of population from one place to another. As such, the population of cities has increased and new markets have come up in the villages which do not have

arrangement for drinking water. Therefore, will the Hon. Minister consider asking for new lists of scarcity prone villages and cities for the Seventh Five Year Plan ? At the same time, I would like to ask a specific question in this regard. Varanasi is quite an important city as compared to other cities and pilgrims from all parts of the country go there. But there is acute shortage of drinking water there. Yesterday only, I took a round of a number of localities where people had to fetch water from the streets. It was a terrible situation. It was in this context that I had requested the Hon. Prime Minister to allocate an amount of Rs. 4 crores, otherwise a terrible situation is likely to be created in the coming summer season. Will the Hon. Minister give it a consideration and take steps in this regard ?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : So far as the question of allocation of funds is concerned, we are not in a position to say that an amount of Rs. 4 crores would be allocated.

So far as the plea of an elderly Member like you that there will be commotion in Varanasi, is concerned, it is indeed a big problem. I shall talk to the Chief Minister of your State and ask him what he is going to do in this matter. There may be any Government, but when there is such a problem, it has to be solved. On our part, we shall do whatever is possible in a difficult situation like this.

[English]

Development of National Capital Region

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*828. **SHRI C. JANGA REDDY :**
DR. B. L. SHAILESH :

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the development of National Capital Region would be speeded up during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, the main outlines of the plan, the allocation made for the purpose and the programmes included for execution in the Plan as a whole as also separately for each year ?