

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, April 16, 1986/
Chaitra 26, 1908 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Atomic Reactor in Kerala

*701. PROF. K.V. THOMAS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to establish an Atomic Reactor in Kerala; and

(b) if so, when it is likely to be started ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) Sites in Kerala which forms part of the Southern Electricity Region have been assessed by the Site Selection Committee for setting up of nuclear power stations. Its report is under consideration of the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

PROF. K.V. THOMAS : Sir, the electricity produced in Kerala is solely based on hydro-electric projects. As we have seen, with a severe drought in 1984-85, the electricity production in Kerala will be heavily affected. Secondly by the end

of the Seventh Plan Kerala will have to face electricity shortage even if all our hydro-electric projects are commissioned in time. Thirdly any thermal plant in Kerala will not be viable. So my question to the hon. Minister is whether an atomic plant will be started in Kerala within the time target ?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : The electricity generated by using nuclear technology is fed into the grid. So wherever the plant is, the electricity will be available to all the States in the area for which the grid is created.

As far as setting up a plant in Kerala is concerned the Committee has looked into the matter of setting up the plant in Kerala and the report is under consideration of the Government. Before a decision is taken it will be difficult to say anything specific on this point.

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Mr. Speaker, I need your protection because very often Kerala is offered major projects but they are never implemented and they go to other States. The answer is given that the Selection Committee has looked into the sites and no decision has been taken. In that case it may take ten to fifteen years. So I would like to know whether Government can put a time target for starting this plant ?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : As far as this question is concerned it depends on the availability of funds. If we select a site and the funds are not available, then it is not going to be possible to set up the power plant. As far as Kerala is concerned, many public sector undertakings are there in Kerala. Most of the Space Technology projects are situated in Kerala. So, it is not that we are neglecting any part of the country. As far as this question is concerned it depends on the availability of funds.

SHRI T. BASHEER : As the hon. Minister has stated, a committee has visited Kerala and they in their report, to my knowledge, have said that Kerala is a suitable place for locating an atomic plant. The name of the place is Bhootha-thankettu. So I would like to know when a decision in this regard is going to be taken ?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : I have already said that taking the decision depends on the availability of funds also. Simply saying that we are going to have a nuclear power plant at a particular place is not going to help unless we have the funds to have the power-plant there. So, Sir, it is not proper for me to give any time-limit or time frame within which the decision will be taken and we would have this plant there.

Forest land in Kerala

*702. **SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the total area of forest left in Kerala without clear felling; and

(b) the area of forest land which is now in the adverse possession of farmers in Kerala ?

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) The total area of forests left in Kerala without being clear-felled is 7870 square kilometres.

(b) An estimated area of 20805 hectares of Reserve Forest land is in the adverse possession of farmers in Kerala.

SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN : Sir, I understand that the Kerala Government have taken a policy decision that the forest lands in the adverse possession of the encroachers before 1-1-1977 will be assigned to them. I would like to know whether the Government of Kerala have approached the Government

of India for permission for the same and if so whether permission has been given.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : In fact, the joint inspection has to be done by the Revenue Department and the Forest Department. They have already inspected the land and they are assessing as to how much land is adversely possessed by the private persons. I think about 16,000 hectares of land are already admeasured and assessed as to find out whether it is adversely possessed or it is in the possession of the Government.

SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN : I am extremely sorry to say that the answer to part (b) of my question, that is, only 20,805 hectares of Reserve Forest land is in the adverse possession of farmers in Kerala is not satisfactory. In one taluq, that is, in Udumbanchola taluk alone, in Idukki, more than one lakh acres of forest land is in adverse possession of agriculturists for a long time and since the Government of Kerala has taken a decision to assign the land to the encroachers before 1-1-1977, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the area encroached upon by the people before 1-1-1977 and the area under encroachment after 1-1-1977 and whether the Government has taken any steps to vocate those encroachers, that is, the latter category of people, who have occupied the land after 1-1-1977.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : The area which has been allowed to be cultivated by the private persons is in the vicinity of 8,000 hectares and the remaining area is not given to the private persons. The report which we got from the Kerala Government is the basis for the answer given to your question.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, protection of forest is very important but the answer given by the hon. Minister is not in conformity with the facts because more than 20,000 hectares of land are under the possession of the farming. Sir, when I visited Idukki district, I went to one of the towns and I saw the buildings constructed there were more than 20 or 25 years old and those people told me that that town itself was a forest area as per your