

for two years, in spite of my writing a dozen letters for it.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, in this case a temporary peon was appointed for cleaning the Bank. He was appointed on production of an out-patient slip. In that slip it was mentioned that he was more than 18 years of age. Within six days it was revealed that he was not 18, and fortunately or unfortunately that boy was removed and the manager was cautioned.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Individual cases should not be put forth in this manner.

[English]

I think, we should not do it in future.

SHRI S.M. GURADDI : I would like to know whether you have received any complaints from other nationalised banks' staff like Managers or Chairmen and whether any action has been taken.

MR. SPEAKER : This is a routine question and too wide a question.

MR. SPEAKER : Next question. Smt. Vyjayanthimala Bali.

SMT. VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Firstly I am glad that my question is coming after two years ! Question No. 29.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : You have achieved in two years, what others achieve after 12 years of penance.

(Interruptions)

[English]

Preservation of Forests Areas in
Tamil Nadu

*29. **SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI :** Will the Minister of

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the regions in Tamil Nadu having 60 per cent or more forests area;

(b) whether felling of trees in these regions during the past several years has taken place depriving their forest wealth; and

(c) if so, the corrective measures taken in this regard including any special schemes of afforestation in the Central sector ?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) :

(a) No district in Tamil Nadu has more than 60 per cent of geographical area under forests. However, 'The Nilgiris' district has approximately 59% of the area under forests.

(b) No large scale felling of trees in 'The Nilgiris' district has taken place in the past years so as to deprive it of its forest wealth.

(c) Clear felling of natural stands in Reserved forests has been banned since 1977. The management of private forests in the district is covered under the Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forests Act, 1949 and Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955. The central scheme for hill areas development is being implemented specially in 'The Nilgiris' district of Tamil Nadu. Central assistance for afforestation is also provided under various programmes.

[English]

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Sir, I would like firstly to mention that while we are very grateful and proud... (Interruptions) I cannot explain certain things in Hindi... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Silence please. She is getting a chance after two years.

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : We are very proud of the fact that the present Government of India is

fully aware of the problem of pollution and the need for preserving, protecting and progressing of our forest areas.

Sir, in the South, we have Nilgiris where out of the total area of 2549 sq. kms. of land, an extent of 1559 sq. kms. is the forest area which comes to nearly 61% of the total land area. I would say that our Hon. Minister is not quite correct when he mentioned about the total land area. After checking up from specific statistics it is coming 61% and not what the Hon. Minister has mentioned. My question is as to the category of forests in this area. I have been told that 1,304 sq. kms. is reserved area and 59 sq. kms. is a protected area and 196 sq. kms. is still to be classified. I would like to know from the honourable Minister as to what protective measures would be taken unless the area is specifically classified.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. lady Member has not raised a very specific question, I can say only this much...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : But it has been raised by a special lady Member.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : I have said the hon. lady Member. She has said that 61 per cent of land there is under forests. But I can prove with the help of figures that in Tamil Nadu 1,49,500 hectares of land is under forests which comes to only 59 per cent of the total land area. However, whether we take the total area or the portion under forests, there is not much difference between 59 to 60 per cent. However, I still want to say that so far as the cutting of forests or the use of force is concerned, the Government is making every effort to ensure minimum deforestation and double the afforestation. The Union Government has helped the Government of Tamil Nadu fully in this regard. About Rs. 70 crores have been earmarked for Tamil Nadu in the Seventh Five Year Plan. Half of the amount is to be contributed by the Centre and remaining half of it is to be contributed by the State. Besides, Sweden has provided an aid of Rs. 30 crores for this purpose. This amount is being utilised in the three States of Tamil

Nadu, Orissa and Gujarat. But it is in Tamil Nadu that Sweden's special scheme has been launched.

[English]

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Hon'ble Minister has said in the second answer that no large scale felling has been done. But even on a small scale, I would like to say that rose and teakwood have not been spared for fuel purposes.

I would like to know whether any long term perspective has been done and what are the impediments. Not only that. Is it not a fact that man cannot create forests even in two decades? He only has to help the nature and now area under the forests has been affected and eroded. Here I would like to know whether the man-made areas of forests are also diminishing day by day and what is the growth of forests since blue gum has been planted all over. There is lot of fertility of soil which is being eroded. I would like to know from the honourable Minister what are the plans for the growth of forests.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are aware that the forests are cut according to a working plan. Trees are felled after taking their age into consideration. The hon. Lady Member has rightly said that there is large scale felling of trees. But everybody must help to stop this. The Government has framed the law. We take stringent measures also. But unless everyone cooperates, I don't think this felling of trees is going to stop. It should be the foremost duty of every human being to protect trees. The Government is taking action with this approach only. We have done our best to ensure minimum felling of trees. So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, I have already told that 20 per cent of the total forest area has been denuded. As against this, 11 per cent afforestation has also taken place.

MR. SPEAKER : The people who indulge in illegal felling of trees should be taught a lesson.

[English]

SHRI C.K. KUPPUSWAMY : Are the Union Government aware of the fact that the State Government are supporting the practice of afforestation in forest area? What steps are the Union Government going to take in this regard?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : He has already answered this question.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : We are making plans for it.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM (Kanker) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the States are advised by the Planning Commission to mobilize maximum possible resources. The States are left only with one option to cut forests and increase their revenue. I want to enquire from the hon. Minister as to what action is being taken to check this policy of the Central Government and to control the tendency of the State Government to increase their revenue by felling forests.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : The Union Government never says that they should cut forests in order to mobilise more resources. Someone must have informed the hon. Member wrongly about the figures. The Central Government has always made and will continue to make efforts to protect the forests and give more assistance to the States for this purpose. During the Seventh Five Year Plan Rs. 2000 crores will be spent on the forests so that our forest wealth could be increased to the maximum extent possible.

SHRIMATI USHA VERMA (Kheri) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh is rich in forest wealth but since the inception of the Forest Corporation, trees are being felled there constantly. Is the hon. Minister aware of it?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question related to Tamil Nadu but, if you permit, I would reply to it. So far as U.P. is concerned, it is true that forests are cut there but the Hon. Prime Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers that

felling of trees should be strictly controlled and our forests should be preserved.

[English]

Report of Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax

*30. **DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI† :**
SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax had submitted its report; and

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations made and the reaction of Government thereon with steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) The Study Group on Taxation of Expenditure submitted its interim report on 19.12.1986. The Study Group has not so far submitted its final report.

(b) The recommendations made by the Study Group in its interim report are being examined by the Government.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not expect that my hon. friend, Shri Poojary will give such a reply. The newspapers have already published the salient features of recommendations of the Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax. Before I ask my question, may I request the hon. Minister to give us the salient features of the recommendations made?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : It is only the interim report and the recommendations of the interim report cannot be published. The recommendations are being examined and if at all any decisions are taken, those will be reflected in the coming Budget. I would request the hon. Member not to put any further questions in view of what I have stated.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, I will embarrass my friend. I would just