

[श्री यज्ञिक]

की गिनती करो। हमने २५ रुपया मांगा है। मैं सिर्फ सरकारी काम करने वालों के लिये नहीं कहता हूँ। मैं दावे से कहता हूँ कि जो भी कर्मचारी हैं, चाहे वे कारखानों में काम करते हों, चाहे दुकानों में काम करते हों, चाहे सरकारी आफिसों में काम करें, सभी सरकारी आफिसों में काम करें आटोनोमस बोर्डों में काम करें सारे भारत में आज की महंगाई के हिसाब से कम से कम २५ रुपया ज्यादा महंगाई भत्ता उनको दिया जाना चाहिये। नहीं दे रहे हैं इसलिये भूखमरी होती है, असन्तोष होता है, और फिर जब उत्पादन नहीं बढ़ता है तो उसके लिये आप चिन्ताते हैं। सीधी चीज यह है कि सब कर्मचारियों को, चाहे वे केन्द्रीय सरकार के हों, राज्य सरकार के हों, दुकानों के हों, कारखानों के हों, मिलों के हों, मौजूदा महंगाई का हिसाब लगा कर पूरा पूरा २५ रुपया ज्यादा दिया जाना चाहिये। मैं एक लब्ध में कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर आप नहीं देंगे तो बड़ा असन्तोष होगा और आन्दोलन होगा, और उसके फलस्वरूप जो कुछ होगा उसकी पूरी जिम्मेदार हुकूमत होगी।

17.03 hrs.

#### BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

#### TWENTY-THIRD REPORT

**Shri Rane (Buidana):** Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-third Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

#### RURAL WATER SUPPLY\*

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi (Jodhpur):** Before I begin, I would like to reiterate my request that a little more time may be allocated to this discussion.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** This is only a half-an-hour discussion. You can take 15 minutes.

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my purpose in raising this discussion this afternoon is to show how the governmental policies and programmes for adequate and safe supply of water particularly in the rural areas of our country have suffered from lack of integrated approach, from lack of coordinated implementation of programmes and from all-round confusion. My purpose is also to elicit some clarifications and relevant information and also to ascertain whether it is possible even now for us to entertain a ray of hope in the matter of adequate and safe rural water supply in this country. The horizons of rural water supply programmes in this country have often contained nothing but a magnified mirage. I find that the sufferings, the sorrow, the misery, the pathos and the despair of the rural population in the matter of obtaining adequate and safe water supply have gone completely unnoticed in spite of the tall claims of compassion and concessions to democratic processes that are made in our body politic. I feel that those parts of the country which are stricken with chronic and perpetual water famines have not been helped adequately and have been neglected in a manner which can only persuade us to believe that Government have taken a wooden attitude towards their sufferings. I feel that this has tended to shake our faith in the exaggerated claims of democracy and socialism which it appears the party in power is never tired of repeating *ad nauseam*, in spite of the fact that the actual performance on this all-important front has been very poor indeed.

I make bold to say that the performance on this front stands out as the gravest indictment of the Administration in the field of providing the essential utility services in the country.

To illustrate this, I shall take this august House to the Question Hour on the 21st November, 1963. When

\*Half-an-hour discussion.

some of us questioned the Union Health Minister in respect of the rural water supply programmes of the Government, the replies of the hon. Minister, I submit, alternated between evasions, which is an ingenious departmental assistance rendered to the Minister, I suppose, and candid confessions of the confusion that prevails in the field of rural water supply. When I wanted to know from the hon. Minister as to what reasons were responsible for the delay of sixteen years in putting through these programmes and for the delay of several years after the recommendations made by the Rural Water Supply Committee in the implementation of those recommendations, the hon. Minister told us that:

"One of the most important causes is the lack of resources, that is, monetary resources; and the second and equally important reason is the shortage of essential materials like pipes, pumps, and filters."

The hon. Minister then went on to tell us that they had entered into the investigating phase of the requirements of the country in the field of rural water supply. After sixteen years, the only concrete step which the hon. Minister could invoke in defence of her Government was that they had begun to make an attempt to survey the requirements of rural water supply in this country. This is indeed tragic.

We go on further to find the hon. Minister telling us that:

"We would like to do it as soon as possible. We are straining every nerve to try and complete it by the Fourth Plan."

Again, I think that this is a statement calculated only to arouse false hopes.

Thereafter, my hon. friend Shri Tyagi intervened to find out whether Government were still in the stage of investigation, and also to find out what the allocations for this item in the Second and Third Plans were and how much of allocations had

been utilised, the supreme confession of Government was put forth by the hon. Minister, when she said:

"I might mention that there is not one Ministry but more dealing with water supply schemes. The rural water supply scheme is being dealt with by the CD Ministry on the one side and by the Home Ministry so far as the backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are concerned, by the Planning Commission in the form of local works and by the Health Ministry in the form of protected water supply."

Shri Tyagi interjected to say 'Chaos'.

The Health Minister resumed by saying:

"It was in view of this chaos"—it was a very candid admission, and a bold one—

"mentioned by the hon. Member that we established the Drinking Water Board to see what co-ordination could be brought about. So far as the Health Ministry's allocation is concerned, we had about Rs. 60 crores, out of which about Rs. 5½ crores have been spent in the first two years".

**The Minister of Health (Dr. Sushila Nayar):** It is Rs. 16 crores.

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi:** I am reading from the official record.

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** It is a misprint.

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi:** If the record is not correct, I stand corrected. It is a fact that Rs. 67 crores have been allocated in the Third Plan for rural water supply schemes, and out of this, a very small amount has so far been used.

What happens is that because of the injudicious phasing of works, there is a rush of allocations, a rush of expenditure, at the last moment, but there is no proper utilisation of those moneys. Even those moneys are not forthcoming. The experience in most of the States is that this is nothing but a window dressing. Earlier, the moneys they wanted for various pro-

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jects were tied to specific schemes; now it is claimed that they are not tied to specific schemes. But still the money is not coming forward for financing various schemes which the States want to undertake.

I have a detailed tabulated statement containing the requirements of different States for providing adequate and safe water supply in the country. I do not think any serious effort has been made so far to really meet these requirements. I would like to refer particularly to the Third Plan wherein again they confess that we are now entering the investigating stage of our requirements. The same thing is repeated in the mid-term appraisal of the Third Plan. Page 14 of the Report of the Committee on Plan Projects contains this:

"As for the rural areas, very little headway has been made so far. Only about 15,000 out of the 5.85 lakhs of villages figures in the national water supply and sanitation programme. Some progress has been made under the other programmes, but no correct measure of the quantum of work done is available. It has been estimated that the cost of providing water supply and sanitation bodies for rural India may amount to about Rs. 600 crores. This may be placed at Rs. 300 crores, if only minimum facilities are aimed at in the first instance".

Now, I would like to know how the hon. Minister proposes to deal with this problem of monetary resources, to obtain all these funds and to fulfil her promise of giving drinking water to every village of this country by the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan. I should like to know whether an effort has been made to obtain any assistance from any of the UN agencies. I have seen various news reports that the Regional Director of WHO had said specifically that various international agencies would be willing to come forward and assist in our rural water supply programmes. He also went on to say that the U.N.

Special Fund would be willing to give such assistance. He said that the international development body could be persuaded to give us loans on easy terms. But I was distressed to find from the reply of the hon. Minister on the 21st November 1963 that no effort had been made to solicit or to seek any assistance from any international agency except U.N. If this is not an indication of our complete unwillingness to tackle the problem in a massive manner, I would not know what it is.

I would like to know whether it is a fact that the international agencies could be persuaded to give us this assistance and why it is that the Government have not thought it fit to approach them for a substantial measure of assistance so that these programmes could be launched on a really massive scale.

I would like to know whether it is a fact that the expenditure made so far in the First and Second Five Year Plans has admittedly made no significant impact on the problems of rural water supply in our country. If that is so, what is proposed to be done in respect of implementing the various recommendations of the committee that was appointed by Government, the Committee on National Water Supply and Sanitation, in 1960-61, which made many valuable recommendations in regard to streamlining our rural water supply programmes.

We are told by the hon. Minister that a sum of the order of about Rs. 300 crores would be required. I should very much like to know whether, as a matter of fact, any specific schemes have been worked out, whether this estimate is based on a real, comprehensive, specific Plan, or whether it is once again a piece of very general guess-work of some intelligent official at the relevant desk in the Health Ministry. How does she arrive at this figure of Rs. 300 crores, or of Rs. 600 crores for that matter? I wish to know whether any further details have been worked out in this matter.

In regard to the allocation of Rs. 67 crores for the Third Plan period, I have already said that we would like to know whether the hon. Minister thinks that it would be feasible to utilise profitably this entire allocation and to carry forward our programme of rural water supply, because it does appear from the pace that we have kept so far that it would be hardly possible for Government to spend all this money fruitfully and to carry forward the programme of rural water supply.

I should like to know whether the financing procedures and organisational methods in this connection have been improved and changed to suit the exigencies and the urgency of the problem, or whether they abound in the same kind of bureaucratic delays in which they did at the time this National Committee had occasion to go into this matter.

I should like, in this connection, to quote from the Committee on Plan Projects, which says this very clearly on page 4:

"It will be observed that the incidence of work-load in the actual implementation of the programme has been neither progressive nor proportionate to the total provision in the Plan."

This is a succinct conclusion of an expert committee, and that is the conclusion which the hon. Health Minister has to endeavour to answer before this House in order to satisfy us that this rural water supply programme will not be arrested by similar deficiencies in future.

I would also like to know whether the Minister has done anything specific in the matter of procuring or facilitating the procurement of necessary materials, whether it is not possible for as large a country as ours to see to it that pumps and filters are produced locally in sufficient quantities, whether it is not possible for scientific research to supply us the necessary guidance in the matter, for using these materials in a judi-

ous way and for avoiding waste like this.

I would like to end this little speech by saying that unless something on a massive scale is done, unless the Minister is able to give an earnest of her dedication to this problem, the country is likely to be enveloped in the worst kind of despair engulfed by this very deeply human problem. Very little has been done so far. A great deal remains to be done, and unless the Minister is able to convince this House and the country that she is going to dedicate the entire governmental effort in a unflagging manner, we would not be convinced that this Government will be able to deliver the goods in the matter of adequate and safe water supply.

I would like to ask the Minister also as to whether they have secured the establishment of water and drainage boards in the various States and whether they have done anything to secure the establishment of conservation and river water pollution control boards in the country as a whole. These are matters of very great consequence, and both rural water supply and drainage should receive sufficient attention at the hands of this Government if we are to provide the people with this basic requisite of human existence.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** (Jalore): I shall finish in just two minutes.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Not a speech but just a question.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** I would like to know from the hon. Minister what value we are to attach to the assurance given by the Prime Minister on the floor of this House that adequate rural water supply would be arranged by the end of the Third Plan; whether in the light of the statement made by the Prime Minister and a definite recommendation made by the National Development Council held in last November further allocations have been made

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to cater to the urgent and primary needs of the people. I ask this question.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** She will answer; no explanations are needed further. Shri B. K. Das.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Let me complete the question. My question is this. The action taken by the hon. Minister for allocation of funds to Rajasthan which is the worst-hit State in this respect does not reconcile; how does she reconcile the Rs. 20 lakhs allotment for Rajasthan for 1964-65 with those assurances given by the Prime Minister and the National Development Council? Please allow me to complete my point. From the statement it appears that they have allotted Rs. 20 lakhs for Rajasthan for 1964-65. With no new schemes, with the present schemes in progress and with their carrying forward, it will need Rs. 70 lakhs and the establishment charges of Rajasthan are Rs. 70 lakhs, you have completely wasted that establishment charges. How do you reconcile the statement made here on the floor of this House and the recommendations made and the allocations which you have made? What is the necessity of having an investigating machinery when you have not even got funds to carry out the present schemes? Why are you wasting money like this?

**Shri Tyagi (Dehra Dun):** Will you allow me half a minute?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** No. You must give previous notice.

**Shri Tyagi:** I was trying to catch your kind eye.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I have no kind eye.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** If you were to look to the proceedings, you would see that half-an-hour discussions had gone on for two hours.... (Interruptions.) I would have taken it up more strongly....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I have called Mr. B. K. Das.

**Shri B. K. Das (Contai):** In view of the fact that there are some areas at least in my State of West Bengal where due to certain mechanical difficulties as well as the nature of the soil and other reasons tubewells do not work long and there are some areas, called 'no tube-well areas' where tubewells are not possible. What steps have been taken to improve the life of the tube-wells and to supply water in those areas?

**Dr. B. N. Singh (Hazaribagh):** In view of the difficulty about completing the rural water supply plan pointed out by the Health Minister, will it be desirable to consider the formation of a high-power body with representatives from the Ministries of Health, P.W.D. and Finance and Planning Commission and give them the responsibility for implementing this scheme?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It is not a question but a suggestion for action.

**Shri Tyagi:** May I have half a minute?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I cannot depart from the rules; the rules are very strict.

**Shri Tyagi:** If she yields?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** She does not yield.

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to Dr. Singhvi for bringing up this discussion because it enables me to clear up a few misunderstandings which obviously seem to have arisen as a result of some of the questions and supplementaries sometime ago. The first misunderstanding that I would try to correct is that he thinks that the Health Ministry has Rs. 60 crores. We do not have Rs. 60 crores but only Rs. 16 crores. There has been some error or some misprint somewhere which has led to this misunderstanding.

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi:** Is it not the figure given for the entire allocation for rural water supply?

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** The Health Ministry's allocation.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** It is the entire question of the rural water supply. Why did the Health Ministry alone come here? She says it is only Rs. 16 crores and not Rs. 60 crores. Then the other Ministries concerned should also come. Let us postpone this discussion.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** She is replying.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** How can she, if she is not seized of the entire problem? We would request you to close this discussion.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I cannot.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** What is the use of proceeding with the discussion if she is not in possession of all the materials?

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** Do not get excited; it is not good for you Sir, I wish to submit that the idea that nothing has been done is very erroneous. There are two sets of efforts that are being made for the rural water supply. One is in the form of ordinary wells and the other is in the form of piped water supply or safe water supply, what has come to be known as the National Water Supply and Sanitation Schemes. So far as the first part is concerned, that is, the wells, which were the sources of water supply for both Dr. Singhvi's and my grandparents, during the two Plans that have passed—the first and second Plans—and I think during the first year of the third Plan, 7,11,709 wells have been sunk or repaired. That is not a small or mean achievement. So, the result is that the major part of the country—

**Dr. L. M. Singhvi:** What is the population of the country?

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** It is the major part of the population that is served by these wells. I admit there are areas where the situation is still very difficult and the problem is very acute. These are the areas where simple wells are not easy to dig. There, some complicated engineering skills are required. It is for these areas that this scheme of the Health Ministry has been functioning. The Health Ministry has supplied 15,000 villages with these engineering schemes and water supply through these engineering schemes for the people of these areas. I do not say that we are happy with it. I think much more needs to be done and should be done and we are trying to move in that direction.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** was asking why we were having engineering divisions because money is spent on that and enough money is not available for continuing some of the schemes and so on. What we are trying to do is to meet the problem that remains. We are trying to divide it into three areas: one is the problem of those areas where there is no water supply and people have to go miles and miles for water. In these places either there will have to be very very deep wells or water will have to be brought from long distances by pipes, etc. These are complicated problems which are very costly at places. Because of the very cost, they have been shelved in the first Plan and in the second Plan and in the first half of the third Plan. Is it wrong on our part to bring into focus the needs of these scarcity areas? The per capita cost of supplying water in those areas is very much higher than what it used to be in the past. We have to deal with these difficult areas sometime and we thought, let us take courage in both hands and find out what is the quantum of the problem, how shall we go about it, what will be its cost and its implications. We have set up these investigation divisions to assess the problem and to formulate schemes for these areas which are without water, the most difficult areas. The second priority areas are those where some water-

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supply is available but it is inadequate. Either the quantity is inadequate or the quality is not very good. There may be 2 wells where 4 are required and the water may be slightly brackish or it may have some other chemicals which are not very desirable. That is the second priority in the scheme. The third group is where it will be possible to supply all our villages with pipe water-supply instead of their drawing water from the wells, as our people have done for a long, long time.

In this scheme of things, Dr. Singhvi asks what have we done to get assistance from international agencies? He quotes me as saying that we have not done anything. That is not quite correct. When he suggested that we should ask the international agencies to help us solve the problem, I told him that it is not that we do not know how to solve the problem, but we do not have adequate funds to solve it. We have taken assistance from international agencies wherever it was feasible. One instance is the UNICEF water supply scheme which we have taken up for certain areas in certain States, areas with special health problems. In U.P. we have taken Garhwal and Saharanpur districts. In Rajasthan, we have taken Udaipur district, where the guinea-worm problem exists specifically. We want to get rid of this problem.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** There is no matching grant from you.

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** Mr. Mathur seems to think that the money which comes from international agencies is not assistance from the Government of India.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Money is there, but no matching grant from you.

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** Let him understand that assistance that comes from any source is Government of India assistance. It is not coming from heaven. Government of India enters into assistance agreements with WHO or UNICEF.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** On a point of explanation . . .

**Dr. Sushila Nayar:** I am not yielding the floor to Mr. Mathur. I have heard him patiently and that I should be given an opportunity to have my say. He does not want to know; he is so filled with his own ideas that he does not want to hear anybody else. That is not the way in which we can proceed. We have taken up 140 villages with acute guinea-worm problem in Udaipur. Further, in the light of the experience, we have put in further money and we are taking up the whole of that district where the problem exists. It is a simple solution. By closing down the step wells and drawing the water, the problem will be solved.

In Punjab, we have taken up Kangra and Gurdaspur districts, in Madras, Madurai district and in Gujarat, Bhalva area. In Bihar, I do not have the details of the areas taken up. This is a specific limited programme that we have taken up with UNICEF assistance.

We have taken up with the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry the question of funds and have recommended that loans that are available for water-supply schemes may be on the same basis as loans given to telephones, railways and some of the economic projects with very low interest or with no interest and only handling charges. Because when the municipalities or other local bodies have to pay regular interest rates, it becomes very difficult for them to pay the loan back. This matter is being discussed with the agencies concerned and they are considering our suggestions. I hope something will come out of it.

Then it was asked as to what we have done with regard to making available materials, pumps etc. There again, we are proceeding in the matter with the Planning Commission with the various other concerned Ministries like the Ministry of Industries and Steel. We have taken

up this matter with some of the international friends also as to how we can increase the production of some of these items, whether there is need for a new concern or whether the capacity of the existing ones can be increased. All that is being considered and is being processed.

Now, I must say that it is an amazing state of affairs that when we have tried to deal with this problem on a scientific basis, in a systematic manner, when we are trying to go to the very grass root of the problem and see how this problem can be solved, we are accused of evasion of not applying ourselves to it. Well, all that I can say is that this is not correct.

I am asked whether we will be able to spend all the money that we have. I am assured by the Community Development Ministry that they are going to spend all their Rs. 13 or 14 crores. I am assured by the Planning Commission that all their Rs. 35 crores are going to be spent. I am assured also by the Home Ministry that their Rs. 3 crores are going to be spent. So far as our Rs. 16 crores are concerned, they will be spent. But will the State Governments spend what is in their plan?

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur mentioned the case of Rajasthan. So far as Rajasthan is concerned, we recommended to them an allocation of Rs. 1 crore for the coming year for water supply schemes out of the provision that has already been made. By the time they finished all their discussions at various stages, they reduced it to Rs. 50 lakhs. By the time they have

gone back and taken up the implementation, Shri Mathur informs me—I have no official information—they have reduced it to Rs. 20 lakhs. How is the Central Ministry responsible if the State Governments do not attach sufficient importance to the rural water supply schemes and they spend the money on something else? Can we force them? We are trying our level best to carry the State Governments with us and we are trying to help them in every way possible. There is not a single State Government that has come forward and told me that it has spent the money provided in the Plan for water supply and it needs more. I have assured each one of them that the day it has spent what has been provided in the plan for water supply and it comes for more I shall see to it that somehow or other it gets some more money. But let them spend first what is provided in the plan. Let Shri Harish Chandra Mathur take it up with his own State Government instead of waxing eloquent on the floor of this House and accusing the Central Ministry. When hon. Members are not able to get the needful done in their States sometimes they think that by scolding us things will be smoothened and carried on. We are willing to do our best. I can assure the House that we are as anxious as any one of them and we do want to have all our assurances fulfilled and provided our people with safe and good water supply as early as possible.

17.40 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, February 14, 1964/Magha 25, 1885 (Saka)*