

on river Narmada and this project will lead to large-scale deforestation and displacement of tribal settlements in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. May I know if the Government intends to stop the construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam on the same lines as the construction of Narmada Sagar Dam is being considered to be stopped.

[*English*]

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND** : This question is about Narmada Sagar, and not about Sardar Sarovar; but in spite of that fact, I would like to inform the House that all aspects of protection of environment and rehabilitation of people affected, will be taken care of.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD** : Mr. Speaker, Sir, river Narmada is considered as the lifeline for the people of Gujarat. There is a proverb in English which says—

[*English*]

“Strike the iron while it is hot”.

[*Translation*]

Keeping this in mind and considering the past three years of drought in Gujarat, will the Government accord priority to this project so that the work is executed quickly ?

**MR. SPEAKER** : Please get it done quickly.

[*English*]

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND** : The hon. member has asked a question about Sardar Sarovar. But the question here is about the Narmada Sagar Dam. Even then I would say that we are also equally keen in completing the project in time and I also share the anxiety of the hon. member for the completion of the project in time.

**SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI** : What is the cost-benefit ratio of this project ? Since in all big river valley projects large sums of money are involved and also the problem of submergence and rehabilitation of villages, is the government considering or asked to consider taming of tributaries where the degree of submergence is negligible and the cost benefit ratio in many cases is almost the same as available after

taming big projects directly ? Would they also consider invariably the aspects of other big river valley projects ? About taming of tributaries, if it is not feasible from the cost benefit ratio point of view, would they also take up the proposal of taming big rivers ?

**PROF. N.G. RANGA** : That has been delayed for decades now.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND** : The hon. member has answered the question partly by himself by suggesting certain things by taming some rivers. He has suggested that quick action should be taken while completing the project. As far as cost benefit ratio is concerned, the State Government is yet to submit their revised project report giving the cost benefit ratio. Only then I will be able to give it to the House.

#### Improvement in Export Performance

\*52. **SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA** : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the trend of the country's export performance is showing improvement on expected lines;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken or contemplated to further improve the export performance; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH)** : (a) Yes, Sir. According to provisional figures available, exports have shown a satisfactory growth of 25.3% during fiscal year 1987-88.

(b) and (c). Government have already taken a series of initiatives designed to generate surpluses for export, to induce production of goods internationally contemporary in technology and competitive in prices, and to make exports more profitable.

**SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA** : Due to persistent efforts made in the Commerce Ministry, in spite of unprecedented drought—I want to congratulate this Ministry—they have not only fulfilled the target for export but have also exceeded it. But due to absence of monitoring and coordination between the different Ministries in some areas, there is an impediment increasing

exports especially in marine products and other areas. Is the hon. Minister going to establish a High Level Committee to see that the entrepreneurs are not put to difficulties in getting the clearance from different Ministries to start the export-oriented industries in the country ?

**SHRI DINESH SINGH** : I am grateful to the hon. Member for the compliments which he has paid to the Ministry and in fact to the exporters. I must say that they have done very good work. So far as the difficulties experienced by exporters are concerned, may I say that the procedures have been very greatly simplified and the export promotion councils are there to help the entrepreneurs in the export of the commodity or goods they may be interested in ?

**SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA** : I do not mean that there is any difficulty in your Ministry, but there are Ministries like Finance and others which even after clearance from your Ministry, take a long time to clear. I have a specific example here, that some people were trying to get these marine products into the country, but they have not been helped by the Finance Ministry.

So, I want a specific reply, because the Government of India has laid down some norms for the purpose, but they are not being observed by the different Ministries. So, I want to request the Minister that he should see that even with regard to the other Ministries, the exporters do not find difficulty in getting the clearance.

**SHRI DINESH SINGH** : Yes, I understand the point the hon. Member has made. An Empowered Committee of Secretaries has been set up to coordinate the activities of all the concerned Ministries to promote exports.

**SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS** : Exports have gone up by 25 per cent and imports by 11 per cent last year but I want to point out that export of cashcrops like cashew and coir—coir is not a cash crop—has gone considerably low. It has reduced, or dwindled to a very great extent. At the same time gems and jewellery and leather goods have gone up in export and also iron ore. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether items which provide job opportuni-

ties to people here, like iron ore, are being sent out, and while such things are being exported, steel is being imported. Though there is an overall increase of 25 per cent in the exports of goods like polished gems and leather goods and all that, will the Government consider a proposal that such things which provide job opportunities for the people in the country and other items like coir and yarn etc. are prohibited from export, so that more job opportunities are created for people and also, export of such cash crops which are stimulated ? Will the Government consider such a proposal ?

**SHRI DINESH SINGH** : I appreciate the hon. Member's suggestion that there should be more value added exports and our effort is to see that as far as possible they should be more value added exports. But it will not be possible to convert all the iron ore, for instance, that we have into semi-manufactures or manufactures to send them abroad. There are various limitations in that respect. While an effort is made to see that more and more value added exports take place, the exports of primary commodities also are necessary.

**SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY** : It has been reported in the Press that there has been a steep fall in the foreign exchange reserves of the Government of India. How does the hon. Minister reconcile these news reports with his statement that there has been a healthy growth in our exports. Will he able to tell us whether our exports have overtaken our imports and to what extent our exports have overtaken our imports and what is the surplus in foreign exchange that we have been able to gain during this fiscal year ?

**SHRI DINESH SINGH** : Our exports have not overtaken our imports. There is a big trade imbalance in our trade relations.

So far as the question of foreign exchange is concerned, I am sure my colleague, the Minister of Finance, will be able to give him a better reply.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA** : May I know from the hon. Minister whether the pattern of our export trade is being compelled under certain circumstances to undergo a change from the past ? Mr. Thomas has pointed out that there is evidence to

show that the increase in exports is now-a-days mainly—not entirely—confined to articles which previously did not figure very largely in our exports such as jewellery, readymade garments, handicrafts, leather goods and all that. Whereas our traditional export items like tea, jute goods, leather, hides, I am sure, all these things have shown steep fall. So, I would like to know from him whether there is any trend towards any change in the export pattern and if so, how the Government proposes to step up our export performance in the light of these changes ?

**SHRI DINESH SINGH :** There is no change in the overall policy as such. Greater effort is being made to diversify our exports so that we are able to export more things than what we did in the past. We cannot depend only on the export of commodities. We are now trying very hard to export engineering goods, jewellery, and various other things that are made, which is a value added export instead of just exporting the primary produce. Our effort is to add value and then export it. But that does not mean that there is any less effort to export the traditional items. They are also being exported.

So far as the direction of exports is concerned, the old directions are being maintained and we are making effort to find new markets for our goods.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** Knowing what you would be interested in, Sir, so far as this question is concerned, I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what steps have been taken by his Ministry to promote export of fresh fruits and vegetables. There is a very large scope for increasing the export of these commodities. Is it a fact that the subsidy for the export that is made available by the Commerce Ministry is only available to exporters of fruits and vegetables, the people who collect this produce from the cultivators. The farmers are not getting any benefit. Hundreds of crores of rupees are given as air freight subsidy, as transport subsidy, to the middlemen who only collect the produce from the farmers and no benefit flows out to the farmers.

Would the hon. Minister be pleased to state as to what scheme is he thinking of and what are the steps already taken by the

Commerce Ministry to try and prevent huge wastage of fruits and vegetables in the country just because it cannot be exported ? The farmers are not getting the benefit of any scheme formulated by the Commerce Ministry.

**SHRI DINESH SINGH :** There are two issues that hon. Member has raised. One is the question of support that we are giving for exports. May I say that we are making every effort to promote the export of fruits and vegetables ? In fact the export last year over the previous year, has gone up by 4.24 per cent. It is practically a new item as compared to the traditional items of the past and therefore more effort has to be made in this regard. Also there are certain rules and regulations which the importing countries have regarding import of fruits and vegetables, which at times become an impediment. But there is an Agricultural Produce Export Development Authority in the APEDA which is specifically responsible for assisting the export of fruits and vegetables.

The other question that the Hon. Member has raised is a rather basic one as to what is the profit of the producers as compared to that of exporters. Now, I do not have those figures with me but I dare say that there would be a difference. This is not only in the fruits and vegetables business but in all goods that are manufactured and sold. There is always a mark up between the cost of production and the sale price.

As regards assistance, Sir, the assistance is given only to offset any disadvantage that the exporter may have in comparison with the exporters from other countries. And, therefore, this system is required to be given only to make our goods competitive in international market.

#### River Basin Authority

\*53. **SHRI H.N. NANJE GOWDA† :**  
**PROF. RAMKRISHNA MORE‡ :**

Will the Minister of **WATER RESOURCES** be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up a River Basin Authority for optimum utilisation of river waters in view of drought, floods and drinking water shortage in various parts of the country;