

## LOK SABHA

*Monday, April 5, 1982/Chaitra  
15, 1904 (Saka)*

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*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of  
the Clock*  
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[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Harnessing of River Water by Tamil Nadu and Adjacent States

\*603. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the steps taken by the State of Tamil Nadu and its adjacent States to harness the water of their rivers for common good and irrigation; and

(b) the details of the steps taken by Government of India to bring them together in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) and (b). Tamil Nadu and each of its adjoining States have their own existing schemes and further plans for development of the waters of their rivers for various uses including irrigation and where the development in one State affects or is likely to affect prejudicially the interests of other States, the States concerned resolve the differences by mutual discussions and the Central Government also extends assistance for settlement of disputes. Cauvery is an important water dispute which could not be settled in spite of sustained and continuing

efforts by the concerned States as well as the Central Government. The meeting of the Chief Ministers of the concerned States was convened on 3rd April, 1982 but it could not take place because of the inability expressed by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to attend the same due to unforeseen circumstances. As regards Krishna river waters on inter-State agreement was reached in the year 1977 with the assistance of the Central Government amongst the Governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for giving 15 TMC of water for water supply to Madras City from Srisailem reservoir at a rate of 5 TMC each by the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra from their respective shares.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Here comes Mr. Somnath Chatterjee who has won West Bengal's case in the Supreme Court. (*Interruptions*)

AN HON. MEMBER : How is it important during the question hour, Sir?

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : It is important for the whole of India.

Shri Somnath Chatterjee : It is important because the question also involves elections to the House.

SHRI N. DENNIS : Sir, Cauvery waters dispute is a major Inter-State dispute in the country. Ever since the expiry of the agreement of 1924 between Mysore and Madras in 1974, several meetings of the Chief Ministers of the disputant States of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Pondicherry have been held under the mediation of Central Ministers without solution. Referring the dispute to tribunals or Commission would be too time consuming. Delay in the settlement of Inter-State river disputes creates a

lot of problems. About 85 major and minor Multi-purpose projects are kept in suspended animation. Apart from the postponement of benefits, there is the problem of cost escalation, May I know from the Hon. Minister whether a Central legislation envisaged under Article 262 of the Constitution would be enacted with adequate powers for quick adjudication of Inter-State river disputes?

Also may I know whether the Government would take effective steps for arriving at an early solution of the Cauvery Waters dispute on the basis of the already entered into agreement of 1924 and, whether the rights of the existing 28 lakhs acres of ayacut land of Tamilnadu would be fully projected and safeguarded on a settlement of Cauvery waters dispute?

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : Sir, I share the concern of the Hon. Member. It is true that under the provisions of Art. 262 we can refer the matter to some Tribunal if the States do not agree amongst themselves and therefore, we are taking all necessary steps to get the dispute resolved by mutual understanding and by mutual co-operation of these States.

As far as the legislation is concerned, there is no immediate proposal under consideration of the Government for amendment of Art. 262.

SHRI N. DENNIS : Sir, may I also know whether early decision would be made on the proposal to divert the surplus waters of the West-flowing rivers to the drought-prone areas of Tamilnadu and also, what positive steps the Government have taken regarding the inter-linking of rivers to divert waters from flood-affected areas to drought-prone zone. Is any step in this regard taken on the proposed inter-linking of Ganga and Cauvery?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : As far as the diversion of water from the west-flowing rivers to the drought-prone areas in Tamilnadu is concerned, this is a matter to be settled between the Tamilnadu Government and the Kerala Government. We have asked the Tamilnadu Government to take up the matter and negotiate it with the Kerala Government. If they come to an agreement, we have no objection.

As far as inter-linking of rivers is concerned, as the House is well aware, we have a very big national perspective programme. But, it will take some time to investigate on such a Perspective Plan and then to take action on that.

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM : May I know from the Hon. Minister whether it is a fact that in the year 1975, the Government of India constituted an expert Committee for utilising the west-flowing rivers in Kerala and Karnataka? I would like to know whether the Committee has submitted its report or not? If the Committee has submitted its report when are you going to implement it?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : Sir, the Irrigation Commission...

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM : This is a technical committee.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : Sir, the Irrigation Commission has suggested in its report that there is some surplus water in the west flowing rivers. Therefore, we have written letters to Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Kerala is not agreeing to that proposal. They are of the opinion that there is no surplus water as far as west flowing rivers are concerned and that it is only sufficient for their present and future needs. So, we have written to the Tamil Nadu Government that the Tamil Nadu Government may take up the matter with the Kerala Government and come

to an agreement as far as west flowing rivers are concerned.

**THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION (SHRI KEDAR PANDAY) :** Sir, irrigation is a State subject according to our present constitution. We have already projected a national plan for linking of rivers in the whole of the country. Peninsular rivers belong to the South. We have to link them up. It is being discussed during the last National Development Council meeting there was a proposal and that proposal has been accepted. National Water resources council headed by the Prime Minister is going to be constituted.

**SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM :** Is it a statutory committee ?

**SHRI KEDAR PANDAY :** It is not statutory committee but it is a new step being introduced. A water resources council is going to be constituted headed by the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers of different States and the Central Ministers concerned are the Members. So far as Cauvery and the rivers flowing towards the west are concerned all these rivers are under dispute and we are going to negotiate. The last meeting was fixed for 3rd of this month but the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu expressed his inability to attend the meeting. So, the meeting was postponed. I am very keen that the meeting be convened and this matter is settled. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI Z. R. ANSARI :** Sir, probably the Hon. Member was referring to a technical committee which was set up to investigate whether there is some surplus water in the west flowing rivers. That Committee submitted its report in 1981 and it has given its opinion that there is surplus water available in the west flowing rivers. But our hands are tight because unless the States agree...

**SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM :** Why don't you amend the Constitution

and take away the water as national assets ?

**SHRI Z. R. ANSARI :** That is a very big issue. Here I am only trying to give the facts. The Committee has recommended that there is surplus water available in west flowing rivers which can be diverted to drought-prone areas. The matter has to be settled between these two States — Tamil Nadu and Kerala — under the existing provisions of the Constitution.

**SHRI B. V. DESAI :** Sir, half of the question which I was going to put has already been answered. So, I am putting the other half.

Sir, is it not a fact.... (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI SATISH AGARWAL :** Which is the better half ?

**MR. SPEAKER :** He is in a dilemma.

**SHRI B. V. DESAI :** The Cauvery, Water Dispute is as old as 1924 and even earlier than that. Unequal agreement was there in between the old Mysore State and the Madras State in 1924. And, that is over. After that agreement was over, negotiations are going on. Sir, as late as the 3rd of this month, a meeting was called. For reasons better known to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, he did not attend, whereas the Karnataka Chief Minister was here. May I know in this connection whether it is not premature to refer this dispute to arbitration under Article 262, when the meetings are going on and one party is trying to be absent for reasons best known to him ? I would like to know the reasons...

**SHRI Z. R. ANSARI :** I could not follow you....

SHRI KEDAR PANDAY : I have followed. The Hon. Member referred to the setting up a Tribunal under the present existing constitution. I don't think it is necessary just now unless we have had a full discussion with these State Governments. So far we have not made up our mind to settle this matter through Tribunal. We shall try to negotiate failing which we shall think of what should be done.

### National Water Plans

\*604. SHRIMATI USHA PRAKASH CHOUDHARI : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether during the present year of productivity Government propose to devise national water plan :

(b) whether it is also proposed to provide higher outlays, full utilisation of funds, adequate power and diesel to run the tubewells and preservation of ecological factors ; and

(c) what other action Government propose to take to remove inefficiencies in the present water resources development in India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) to (c). During the current productivity year, special efforts are being made to achieve additional agricultural production by taking the following actions so far as Irrigation Ministry is concerned —

(i) ensuring quicker and more efficient utilisation of irrigation potential by construction of field channels upto the last field ;

(ii) introduction of warabandi (rotational water supply) ; and

(iii) during 1982-83, an outlay of nearly Rs. 2100 crores has been provided including command area development but excluding institutional finance. The corresponding figure for 1981-82 was Rs. 1830 crores. For major irrigation projects, the physical and financial progress is being monitored within the State as well as by the Central Government so as to ensure not only fuller utilisation but more efficient use of funds so that the benefits accrue at the earliest. Measures are being taken to improve the power supply. The supply position of diesel has been generally satisfactory, so far as the pumpsets are concerned. The programme of energisation of pumpsets is also being accelerated.

More funds are being provided for on-going projects so as to complete them as early as possible. Provision of drainage and conjunctive use of ground and surface water are proposed to counteract water logging conditions.

श्रीमती ऊषा प्रकाश चौधरी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस समय जो हालात जल-योजना के हैं या जो उन कार्यों का स्वरूप है, उन से हमारा लक्ष्य पूरा नहीं होगा। हम ने बीस सूत्री कार्यक्रम में भी इस प्रोग्राम को काफी महत्व दिया है। इसलिये मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहती हूँ कि हमारे देश में जो जल के प्राकृतिक साधन बड़ी मात्रा में उपलब्ध हैं—ऊँचे पर्वत हैं तथा बड़ी नदियां हैं, उन के सहारे या अन्य मार्गों से देश के पानी का पूरा उपयोग करने के लिये आप कौन सी विशेष योजनाएं बनाने जा रहे हैं? क्या इस के लिये कोई निश्चित प्लान आप के विचाराधीन हैं ?

मैं यह भी जानना चाहती हूँ—साइन्स तथा टेक्नासाजी डिपार्टमेंट की ओर से एक