

[English]

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINH : It is possible that detailed estimates may not have been submitted to the hon. Minister. In June 1984, a conference was held under the then Minister, with the Kumaon Vishwa Vidyalaya at Nainital, for the entire environmental planning of the Nainital Valley, including the lake. The details are there. A report was submitted, whereby the cleansing process would play the major part. Anyway, I would like to say that such problems exist in about 25 important hill stations of the country, and a decision should be taken for setting up authorities in each of these hill stations, whereby the problems of a large influx of people going there and creating slums, polluting waters, destruction of forests and non-perspective planning, are properly managed under these authorities. So, will the Union Government take the initiative of coordinating with the State Governments for having such authorities in all the major tourist hill stations in this country?

MR. SPEAKER : I thought this was a recommendation.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I replied just now, that such problems exist in more than 25 hill stations. But we can only help them when they submit a proposal regarding a project. It was said that a meeting was held in Kumaon Vishwa Vidyalaya in 1984 in which such a proposal had come up. We had written to the concerned State Government in 1979, and discussions were also held and action was also initiated on it.

[English]

SHRI D.N. REDDY : It is a problem concerning not only the Nainital lake. But also finds an echo in such places of interest throughout the country, wherever there are rivers and lakes. While it is a thing of beauty in the Western countries whenever there is a river or a lake in the precincts of the cities or towns, it is a source of danger in our country. Will Government think of passing a legislation for imposing severe penalties on those who pollute our rivers

and lakes? Even the holy Ganga is not spared.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has framed an anti-pollution law which came into force on 19th November, 1986.

[English]

Denudation of Forests in Andhra Pradesh

*433. **SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY :** Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh is one of the States where green coverage is considerably low and denudation of forest is very high;

(b) the funds allotted for afforestation for the year 1986-87; and

(c) whether special steps are contemplated to improve afforestation in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) Proportionate forest cover and rate of its loss in Andhra Pradesh is almost the same as it is for the entire country.

(b) Rs. 12.63 crores have been provided for afforestation schemes in Andhra Pradesh during 1986-87 under Forestry Sector.

(c) In addition to intensifying afforestation efforts under Plan Schemes and the externally aided Social Forestry Project, the State Government propose to take up two new schemes for reclamation of *podu* areas and mechanised plantation.

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : The importance of forests cannot be overstated. Forest is very important. The relation between the forest and the rainfall is very important. In this country, there are a number of areas where because of the

denudation of forest there are, continuous droughts. For instance, in Andhra Pradesh, in the four districts of Rayalaseema and Mahaboob Nagar in Andhra Pradesh and in Karnataka, there are three Districts : Chitra Durga, Kolar and Tumkur, in these areas the rain fall has become very very low because of the forests have been denuded considerably; and these areas are likely to become desert in course of time. So, in order to improve rain fall here, in order to save people from the onslaught of famine, will the Central Government take up any plan to develop this area, to develop forest in this area so that the rain-fall will improve and the imminence of famine will be reduced ?

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : As far as the plantation programme is concerned, we have provided Rs. 12.63 crores of allocation for Andhra Pradesh and that will take care of those areas. Apart from that, there are Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme under which Rs. 8.87 crores have been provided for afforestation, under National Rural Employment Programme Rs. 10.98 crores have been provided and under for Drought Prone Area Programme for eight selected districts out of which four are in Rayalaseema and for that Rs. 10.35 crores have been provided. These are the programmes which are being carried out. The Wasteland Development Board is also taking up the programme for social forestry and farm forestry.

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : While giving an answer to part (c) of my question, the Minister has said some good words about Andhra Pradesh. It reads as follows :

“The State Government propose to take up two new schemes for reclamation of *podu* areas and mechanised plantation.”

While praising the efforts of the State Government, will the Minister stop with these praises and resort only to Shusk Priya ? The Minister may go a step further. Is he going to extend only *sunya hasta* or will he extend financial aid for the Government of Andhra Pradesh to take up reclamation of *podu* areas and also mechanised plantation. Merely *sunya hasta* will not do.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : This is the scheme which the Andhra Pradesh Government is propping for afforestation about *podu* areas and that scheme they have not forwarded to us; they have taken it up on their own out of plan resources which they have got outside the plan allocation; they are taking steps according to that.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Thousands of acres of land without even one tree are there in Andhra Pradesh under the guise of forest land. The government has formulated a scheme of giving three *pattas* to those areas where local poor people are there with a view to help them to grow fruit trees also. Here it is a peculiar case when the entire country is worried about ecology and the environment and they are encouraging to plant trees in Andhra Pradesh in certain areas with the aid of the State Government officials in areas where local poor people have developed mangos; they are being cut in hundreds of acres. Will the Government of India give a clear directive in those areas where poor people have grown these trees ? They should not be cut on some technical grounds when they have put in their energies by bringing water from miles and spent their energy. The Government, on the contrary is cutting. The Central Government must take the initiative and give immediate directive that they should not be harassed by the police or the State Government officials where they have developed trees.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : As far as the Government of India is concerned, we have already sent the guidelines and instructions to the State Governments not to allow felling of trees in these areas.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Raising trees, they themselves should undertake it.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : There is already a free *Patta* scheme and the rural poor may be given land for planting trees.

MR. SPEAKER : Question Hour is over.