

जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या मंत्री जी उन को भी पिछड़ा घोषित करेंगे।

श्री चरणजीत चानना : मानरेबिल मेम्बर को यह सूचित किया गया है, हाउस को यह जो प्रश्न उठाया गया है, उस के बारे में सूचित किया गया है लेकिन जो इशू अभी मानरेबिल मेम्बर ने रज किया है, इस प्रकार के जो इशूज हैं, उन के बारे में नेशनल कमेटी मान दि डेवलपमेंट ग्रॉफ बेकवर्ड एरियाज कंसिडर कर रही है। जब तक उस कमेटी का काम पूरा नहीं हो जाता, तब तक क्या किया जायेगा और क्या नहीं किया जायेगा, इस के बारे में कुछ नहीं कहा जा सकता।

SHRI XAVIAR ARAKAL: The hon. Minister has said that a sub-committee is looking into the plans and sanctioning of these projects. But I would like to say that certain units have failed miserably. Has the Government considered the causes of failure of those industrial units which were started by the Government and whether they are considering to give some help to these industrial units?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: As far as the norms for identifying the areas are concerned, the Committee I have referred to is not re-considering the norms at all. The norms remain the same. It is only the functioning and the growth of these areas which has been considered by this Committee. In the process, if there are some areas to which the attention of the Committee is drawn, the Committee would consider that aspect.

SHRI B. K. NAIR: We have to make a distinction between industrially backward and industrially not so backward districts as well as the backward & not so backward States. In Kerala we feel we are industrially very backward. In spite of all the

facilities available, no new industrial unit is coming up in our State. Therefore, while setting up industrial ventures in the country, will the hon. Minister consider the backward States? Would he also evolve a formula by which the capital investment by the Centre will be distributed throughout the country on a population basis?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: The hon. Member has shifted from the district to the State. In fact, the district is a part of the State. The object of identifying these areas as industrially backward districts or areas is to promote higher development in those areas and, therefore, in those States. If you see the list of industrially backward districts, you will see that the industrially backward States have the maximum number of such districts and areas. Therefore, this is already being covered by the scheme of industrially backward areas.

Mishap at Tarapur Atomic Power Station

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SHRI SATISH AGARWAL:

*204. SHRI SHIV KUMAR SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn towards a news item appearing in "The Hindustan Times" dated the 2nd March, 1980 under the caption "Major nuclear mishap averted";

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to avoid such dangers; and

(c) the action being taken against those responsible for proper maintenance of the Power reactor at Tarapur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI C. P. N. SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the routine hydrotesting of various sections of Unit I of Tarapur Atomic Power Station, before starting the reactor after refuelling some minor leaks were noticed in the by-pass lines of the recirculation loops. These tests/inspections are periodically carried out on all reactors. There was no danger to the surroundings or the station.

(c) Well-established preventive maintenance procedures are followed at the Station and this has enabled detection of the leaks and hence the question of action against maintenance personnel does not arise.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: The hon. Minister has probably referred to an accident which took place somewhere in the third week of February. May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that another accident took place on 14th March 1980, which resulted in the gushing out of radio-active water into the regular building? This happened when attempts were made to repair the cracks in the 6" by-pass line of the primary coolant tubes, which carries the radio-active water from the reactor core. As a result of the accident, the contaminated water drained from open-ended by-pass line into the reactor building, from where it was pumped out. What is the amount of radio-activity caused on account of this and whether it is a fact that such an accident again occurred on the 14th March?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: I think the hon. Member is not aware that it was not really an accident. What happened was that during the months of December 1979, January and February 1980 re-fuelling operations were going on and most of them were completed by the middle of February. As per the normal procedure, hydro-testing of the various sections of the system was in progress prior to the preparing of the unit for a re-start. In this process, some minor leaks were noticed in the by-pass lines of the re-circulation loops of the unit.

The second question which the hon. Member asked was when this was discovered. It was during the process of routine hydro tests.

It was also decided to make a metallurgical examination of the defective pipe. For this purpose a piece was cut. Till a new piece was welded in its place, an ice plug had to be formed, using liquid nitrogen to prevent leakage of water. The ice plug remained intact.

This is the second incident the hon. Member is referring to. This ice plug had been put there, but unfortunately after a period of 12 hours it got dislodged. Leakage of water due to dislodging of the ice plug was controlled by using another plug which had been kept ready for such an eventuality. The level of water in the core was maintained at the required level by recirculation of the water which leaked from the pipeline.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Sir, my question is very simple. He is simply reading the notes that have been put up by the Department. My question is whether an incident about which reply has been given in this House occurred in the third week of February and it was reported in the newspapers on 2nd of March. I would also like to know whether another incident or accident occurred on 14th March resulting in the gushing out of radioactive water into the reactor building.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: Sir, the hon. Member did not get my point. The hon. Member is a very old and experienced Member and I hope he will give some time and understand what I am trying to say.

What happened was that at the time of routine testing, these leaks were discovered. And the second accident which the hon. Member is referring to was when the test was being conducted, an ice plug was used to prevent leakage of water that has been

caused, but at the stage when it got dislodged, another plug had also been kept ready for the eventuality. That is the accident that you are referring to.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: On 14th of March?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: Yes, on 14th of March. The first unit was shut down on 29-9-1979 for refuelling. And the routine hydro testing was conducted when the leaks were discovered. That is the first accident that you are referring to. And on 14th March, the ice plug got dislodged. That is the second accident that you are speaking of.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: I asked in this very question about the radio-activity. My question has not been answered in full. This part of the incident has not been replied.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is your second Supplementary?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: How can it be? The last portion of my first question was not replied. In that particular connection I enquired about the radio-activity because the hon. Prime Minister in this very House had stated on 19th March, 1980:

"No significant releases of radio-activity had taken place either due to the recent breakdown at the Rajasthan atomic power station or the defects noticed at the time of re-fuelling in the bypass lines of the re-circulation loops at the Tarapur atomic power station."

I enquired in the last portion of the first question as to what is the radio-activity. The Prime Minister said that no significant releases of radio-activity had taken place. But then, how much radio-activity had taken place?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: Sir, the hon. Member has asked about the radio-activity aspect. I would like to inform him that the leaks that were noticed could not have caused any

disaster even if the reactor was in operation. There are provisions for monitoring leaks and for bringing the reactor to a safe shut down condition. The design is such that even when a 24" pipeline ruptures with the reactor operating at full power, the reactor can be brought to a safe shut down condition without any escape of radioactivity from the reactor containment.

(Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He wanted some clarification to the first Supplementary.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: There is no provision for clarification under the rules.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: May I know whether any guarantee was given by the concerned foreign manufacturers against such accidents, and if so, whether the Government of India has claimed any damages or compensation from them or asked them to repair the damage and ensure non-recurrence of such accidents in future, and whether also, since our reactors and the American reactors are designed alike and both are using light water, whether the Government of India has contacted the American unit to ascertain the techniques that they are following to avoid such accidents and if so, with what results?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: Regarding guarantees, I would like to have notice, but it should perhaps be mentioned here that reactors of this type are in operation in other parts of the world, notably in USA, Europe and Japan, and they too have experienced leaks in certain parts of the piping system. The pipes in question have been built and tested as per the procedure existing at the time of construction.

SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT: My question is more out of anxiety than inquisitiveness. May I ask the hon. Minister if a similar incident in the

heavy water plant at Baroda took place some time ago, and whether it was suspected to be a case of mischief? So, in the circumstance, of what the hon. Minister has described as an incident and not an accident, may I know whether the enquiry has revealed that there was not merely an element of negligence, but there is a probability of mischief too, and if so, what action the Government are proposing to take?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: We have no knowledge of the accident that the hon. Member has referred to.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: I wonder whether the hon. Minister has with him statistics of the number of times the Tarapur plant was shut down during the last one year, whether he has seen reports in international journals that the General Electric Co., which sold the Tarapur plant has old sub-standard and defective material and cheated the Government of India on this deal, and whether the Government has investigated this aspect.

SHRI C. P. N. Singh: We will definitely look into the aspect that the hon Member has pointed out.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: What about the number of mishaps during the last one year? Has he any statistics on that?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: I said, this was not a mishap. It is merely something which come up in routine check-up. As far as the number of accidents that have taken place is concerned, I will need notice.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Please read what the question says. "Mishap at Tarapur". I asked for the number of mishaps during the last one year. I am not asking what happened in this particular case.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: The hon. Member refers to the question tabled by another hon. Member saying that it was a mishap, but the answer is

that it was not a mishap.

SHRI M. S. SANJEEVI RAO: We are glad from the hon. Minister's reply that our able scientists have plugged the leak in the reactor of the Tarapur atomic power station I also learn from reliable sources that the work done by our scientists is something fantastic. I would like to know what type of reward they are going to give them. The hon. madam Prime Minister also knows that during two and half years rule of the Janata Party, they have systematically damaged the excellent infrastructure built up by our party. You are well aware that even France, which is generating nearly 15 per cent of the power generation, plans to produce 50 per cent by 1985 I would like to know what steps our present Government is going to take to see that the morale of our scientists is again brought up to a proper shape, so that the country comes to have a proper nuclear energy policy.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI-MATI INDIRA GANDHI): The hon. members opposite need not get excited because it was nobody's contention that the Janata Party damaged the plants. But what they did do was to dengriade Science and it is true that the Scientists did feel demoralised. Teams, which were working together were dispersed and as a result the work could not be so effective. It is not easy to suddenly build up the morale. But we are trying to do it. I think... (*Interruptions*) Before 1930, there was no science in India Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, Perhaps, you were doing something with the British at that time—I do not know.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: The Minister's reply that it was not a mishap is what really raises the question of the extent of radio-activity involved and the extent of damage involved. The Minister said in the course of his reply that before starting the Reactor after re-fuelling, some minor leaks were noticed in the by-pass lines of the recirculation loops. In other words, the leaks were there, they were noticed when you

shut down the reactor and then started feeding it with fuel. What happened till these leaks were noticed is the first point. The second point is, you had decided to commission the reactor on the 20th of this month. But without any notice, you have again said, a very cryptic announcement has come from Tarapur that it is delayed by another fortnight. What happened? You said that nothing happened on the 14th, it was no accident, some plugs, extra plugs and so on. What happened? Why is it that though there was a public commitment by you that the reactor would be recommissioned on the 20th, it has again been put off by another fortnight. Thirdly, is it not a fact that steps were taken in Tarpur to evacuate the villagers and is it not also a fact that a number of employees from Tarapur are currently in Bombay hospital being treated for the damage done to them due to radio-activity?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: I think the hon. member's concern regarding Tarapur is very necessary and good. He talks about the incident of Tarapur villagers being moved out. I am sure, the hon. Member will appreciate the fact that precautionary measures are far better than taking steps after something happens and we do that. He talks about certain people being in hospital. You will appreciate that in all, 26 persons were involved in the operations regarding insulation of back-up plug. All these persons had been checked up for radio-active contamination as per health physics procedures and no contamination has been detected on any of them after they took their usual showerbath.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: My question has not been answered. You have said first and foremost that it would be commissioned on the 20th. Why the postponement? Secondly, the Minister is now admitting that the villagers are being evacuated.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: No, no.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: He said that they are taking. Some

precautionary measures.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: On every reply, you cannot make out another question.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: He said that they are taking precautionary measures. Have you evacuated or are you evacuating them? Thirdly, as far as the hospitalisation is concerned, I am not talking about the number of people who are engaged on that. The real question is in your reply. The leak was noticed at the time of re-fuelling. When you shut down the reactor and re-fuelled, then you suddenly noticed the leak. The leak was already there and at that time there were a number of people who were affected by radio-activity. Are not they in Bombay hospital just now?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: No, Sir. I had replied it very clearly. I wonder why the hon Member did not get me. I will clarify it again. There was no radioactive contamination of the people. They have all been cleared after the necessary check-up. Regarding the starting of the reactor, the hon. Member has pointed out about the time factor. It is like this. The hydro test was planned for the 3rd April, 1980. To start a reactor after this particular test, a certain period of time is required, say, 2 to 3 weeks.....

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: But you did make an announcement that it will be commissioned on the 20th.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: I am sure, the hon. Member will appreciate that certain things have to be taken into consideration before the reactor is commissioned. There is a certain procedural aspect.

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH: I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that radiological tests by Indian scientists of the main vessel of the Tarapur unit had revealed hidden hair-cracks and, if so, whether they are a

potential danger due to the well-known phenomenon of metal fatigue that is metals give way after prolonged use due to stress and strain. Further the Tarapur unit being a turn-key project, I want to know whether the U.S. Government or the General Electric Supply Company has given an assurance that they will compensate for any damage or loss caused to giving way of such a defective vessel.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: The hon. Member has asked a number of questions. Firstly, I would like to tell about the metallurgical aspect. He asked about the metal fatigue. The corrective action is needed.

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH: My question was that Indian scientists had made a radiological X-ray examination of the main vessel of the Tarapur unit and had detected hidden hair-cracks. It is a potential danger or not and, if it is a potential danger, what assurance the U.S. Government has given about it, about giving compensation for any damage or loss caused?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: The hon. Member is asking something different from what was asked in this question. For that, I will need a separate notice.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Will you permit a full-fledged discussion on this question?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That does not come in supplementaries.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Of course, I am somewhat confused as to whether we had a number of accidents or mishaps. I am not quite sure of that. But in any case I would like to know whether it is a fact that these leaks were detected in what is known as the primary coolant system and detected at the time, fortunately for us, when the reactor was not working. When it was being checked up and

inspected, these leaks were found and, at that time, the reactor was not working. The leaks were obviously already there. My question is, had the reactor continued to work, if it had been working, was there not every possibility of a major disaster taking place, like the one that happened in the Three-Mile Island station in the United States?

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: No, Sir. It was a routine check.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: He says, it was a routine check. Fortunately, we were saved because the reactor was not working when the routine check was being carried out. But supposing the reactor had been working and the leaks had been there, there would have a major accident.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has replied that.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Sir, the Tarapur power plant is in my constituency, the constituency which I represent in this House. My distinguished friend, Mr. George Fernandes, raised two very important questions. One is whether anyone who was working...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you going to repeat his question?

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: The question has not been answered and the House has a right to get an answer from the hon. Minister. This is a very important question. The question is, whether anyone who was working in the plant at the time the leak was detected is still in hospital and, if so, what is the number of people who are in the hospital and what treatment is being given to them.

Secondly... (*Interruptions*) It is not a question of repetition. I represent that constituency and I have every right to raise this question. My second question is whether...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You may ask in continuation of the first question. You cannot raise two supplementaries.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you cannot have two standards. My question is related to the first, and I must be permitted to raise it. (Interruptions) My question is whether it is a fact that villagers were asked to vacate as a precautionary step, and if so, whether the villagers have been asked to return or permitted to return, and what checks were conducted to decide that safety was such that they could be allowed to return to the villages from which they were evacuated.

SHRI C. P. N. SINGH: The hon. Member is quite right. There should be very strict procedures regarding its safety, and that aspect will definitely be looked into. As far as the people going to hospitals is concerned, our information is that they were sent there for a routine observation. That is the information we have.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: My question is whether there is any one still in the hospital. We are entitled to an answer for this simple question.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI
rose—

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister says that they were sent there for a routine observation, and, therefore, they need not remain there. Mr. Niren Ghosh.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: My question has not been answered.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The Prime Minister got up, got frightened and sat down.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have called Mr. Niren Ghosh.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: My question has not been answered com-

pletely and you are passing on to another hon. Member. (Interruptions)

AN. HON. MEMBER: The Prime Minister had got up.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Niren Ghosh.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Have you called Mr. Niren Ghosh on the same question or on the next question?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: On the same question.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I can answer either after him or before, as you like.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Niren Ghosh.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: My question is whether there is any one still in the hospital. That has not been answered.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: May I answer now?

Firstly, it is our information that nobody left the village. Secondly, 16 out of 26 people were checked for internal contamination also, and nothing adverse has been found. There is no one in hospital for any treatment.

Earlier on, my colleague has answered very clearly that, because of these leakages taking place in other countries also, starting from about five or six years ago, an in-service inspection of various pipe joints, and so on, has become mandatory and is being carried out regularly, and also that there is no danger to the persons involved in this repair work or to the people living in the neighbourhood. He has also said, the reactor system is designed to handle a complete break even in a 24-inch pipeline with the reactor operating at its full rated capacity. This is in answer to the question of my hon. friend, Mr. Indrajit Gupta.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: If we go on like this, the other questions we may not reach at all.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is an important question.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: The Prime Minister said that some projects were not taken up during the Janata Government and that scientists were demoralised. If so, what are those projects and what is the decision of the present government? And since it has been found that the supply of materials by the GEC is defective and also in view of our dependence on USA for fuel, may I ask whether India has any plans to build, design and fabricate reactors on its own and manufacture and produce fissionable material, heavy water and all the component parts? If so what are those plans?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: The question is a very much larger question. I do not think it comes within the purview of this.

He has asked about scientists. It is not a question of particular projects. Somehow an impression was given by some members of the government that they did not regard science as an important activity. For instance, the then Prime Minister himself said that he did not believe in peaceful nuclear explosions. That was not a solitary statement. There were other such statements made about science and scientific work and therefore, our scientists felt may be their work was not considered useful—that they were not considered as important as we think they should be and they think they could be.

Decline in Industrial Growth

*205. **SHRI CHITTA BASU:** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industrial growth is on decline during the year 1979-80:

(b) if so, full facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to reverse the process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the general index of industrial production released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and available upto November 1979, the rate of growth for the period April-November 1979 was 0.3 per cent as compared with 7.9 per cent for the corresponding period of the previous year.

(c) The steps taken to improve industrial production include measures to ensure fuller utilisation of capacity by close monitoring to achieve targets, availability of requisite imports where necessary, improved labour relations and increase in infrastructural facilities.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I want to know whether it is not a fact that the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce submitted a memorandum to the Government of India suggesting an immediate action for economic progress which included, Sir, amongst others, entry of big houses into coal, power generation, road transport and steel industry, inclusion of the representatives of the big houses in the Board of Directors of the public sector industries, handing over certain public sector enterprises to the private sector on a long trial and contract basis and deletion of certain provisions of the MRTP Act and also stricter measures for disciplining the labour. If that memorandum was received by the government, may I know, does it not constitute a complete reversal of the industrial policy of the government and what are the reactions of the government in regard to that particular memorandum for economic regeneration given by the FICCI?