

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Thursday, March 8, 1984/Phalgun
18, 1905 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आज क्या बात है,
इधर सब खाली सा है।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना) : पटना
गये हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपने क्या किया है।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : मेरे इलाके में
गये हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : और आप यहां बैठे
हैं।

क्वेश्चन नं० 162, श्री चौबे।

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Authority for Central Inland Water
Transport Development

*162. SHRI NARAYAN CHOU-
BEY : Will the Minister of SHIPPING
AND TRANSPORT be pleased to
state :

(a) whether Government have a
proposal under consideration to set up
an authority for Central Inland Water
Transport Department ; and

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(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) :
(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The draft legislation for setting
up the proposed Inland Waterways
Authority of India is being finalised.
The proposed Authority will be entrust-
ed with the responsibility of develop-
ment, maintenance and operation of
National Waterways. It will also act
as a research and advisory agency for
shipping and navigation on inland
waterways in the country.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :
Mr. Speaker, Sir, everything is in
future; no indications have been given
about the present.

MR. SPEAKER : Even our future
lies in the future.

AN HON. MEMBER : But they
have no future.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : We
have got future and you have also got
your future, but while yours is dark,
ours is bright.

We in India respect water, and we
have got respect for our rivers. When-
ever you may go, even a small man in
the village, who has never seen the
Ganga or Yamuna chants the *mantras*.

गंगेच यमुने चैव गोदावरी सरस्वती
नर्मदे सिन्धु कावेरी जले

अस्मिन्संनिधि कुरु ॥

अध्यक्ष महोदय : ये चौबे जी हैं।

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : I believe in the Ganga, I do not believe in God.

After independence, if there is any wastage, it is the wastage of rivers. Ganga is polluted today. Pavitarpawani Ganga is herself *patita*. In 36 years of Congress rule, this is the situation. Of course, Janta Government was there for two and a half years. This is the situation in respect of Yamuna, Ganga and all the rivers of the north at least are polluted. You are going to set up the Inland Waterways Authority of India. What arrangements are you going to make to keep water in those rivers. I come from the district of Midnapore.

There is a famous river called Rупnarayan. If you see that river's condition, you will weep. The famous irrigation engineer, Mr. Kapil Bhattacharya had warned 30 years ago that if our Indian rulers did not take care of our rivers, we might have Green Revolution and draw more water, but our rivers would die. Have you seen the condition of the river Jamuna. (*Interruptions*)

My question is already, you have a Central Inland Water Transport Corporation. Your experience of this is not very sweet. It is running at a huge loss. Every year, you are running at a loss. Kindly let me know (a) what you are going to do, to see that your Authority can actually work having sufficient water in the rivers. There should be some coordination. Whenever I put this question to you; you always make the Irrigation Department responsible for it. Actually, there should be coordination between your department and the Department of Irrigation. What is the guarantee that after the formation of this Authority, there shall be sufficient water in which our boats can ply? and (b) actually, what is your experience in the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation? What is the amount of loss you have incurred in the last several years? What are you going to do, to save the

losses in the Authority you are going to have?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY) : I will reply to part (b) of the question first. The Central Inland Water Transport Corporation is incurring a loss. Mr. Choubey knows that it has inherited it, and it had to face a lot of difficulties because of Bangladesh. Only recently we have extended the agreement after negotiations. This has been mainly operating in the north-eastern sector. Naturally, with these Bangladesh problems, we had to incur a loss. The other point is that the fleet that the Corporation is having, is very old. We are replacing them, and we are modernizing them. Now it is showing an upward trend. In the course of 2 or 3 years, it will wipe out its losses, and it will be a paying proposition.

About water, we are going to take under this Authority, only rivers which have a source. We have selected about ten rivers in the country for surveys and other such studies, for declaring them as national water-ways. Only rivers where there will be water, will be included. Even if there is water, we will have to train them. It is a very scientific subject. We are also getting foreign experts to go into all these things, and we are looking into them.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : I thank him that he is going to have the Authority only for such rivers which have water. I would like to know what those ten rivers are.

Secondly, in most of the Authorities, IAS officers are brought in at the top—people who do not know the exact subject. I am apprehensive. When I hear that they propose to do something good, I am a little bit apprehensive, because these days I am seeing that in all these places, districts are being divided into several districts. I do not know for what. One district,

Ranchi, is being turned into four districts. There will be four district magistrates; there will be several SDOs; there will be four SPs etc. So, because of the experience which you have in this matter, when you have this Authority and entrust it with some responsibility, will you see that only such persons who are important people in this domain of irrigation and water-ways are entrusted with the responsibility, and that IAS etc. officers are not put in a charge of this in a stereo-typed manner?

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : Naturally, technicians will have their importance. But how can I comment about a thing which is under consideration? The Bill may come very soon before Parliament and then it will be taken up. His views will also be taken into consideration. Technicians will definitely have their place.

श्री बी० डी० सिंह : अध्यक्ष जी, आपको याद होगा कि परिवहन मंत्रालय को जब श्री केसरी जी सुशोभित कर रहे थे तो उस समय इलाहाबाद और हल्दिया के बीच में प्रथम राष्ट्रीय जल मार्ग बनाने के लिए एक बिल आया था। वह पास भी हुआ था। उस समय हमने कहा था कि बिल तो आप बड़े उत्साह से पास कर रहे हैं, लेकिन उस पर कार्यवाही क्या होने जा रही है? केसरी जी ने आश्वासन दिया था कि हमारे कार्यालय में इसको कार्यान्वित करने के लिए काफी तेजी से काम चल रहा है। मैं, आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि इलाहाबाद से हल्दिया के बीच में राष्ट्रीय जल मार्ग बनाने के लिए जो बिल पास हुआ था, उसको क्रियान्वित करने के लिए क्या कार्यवाही हो रही है?

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : A lot of steps were taken in this regard. But the first bottleneck on

this river is that Farakka gates are not ready, once they are ready—they are assuring us that they will be ready by July—from July from Hoogly to Patna it can be operated, from Patna to Allahabad, we have to make further study, we are thinking of entrusting it to some authority to go and give us their suggestion. It is a highly technical matter. Upto Patna, once these gates are ready, I think it should be possible. We are trying, in the meanwhile, to build up infrastructure which is needed, that is terminals and navigational aids. We have spent some money on that, we are doing that. But the gates are the main bottleneck to go upto Patna.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR : The hon. Minister was pleased to state before the House that there are 10 rivers which were taken up for inclusion in the central inland water transport development scheme. I want to know whether Cauvery, Themiraparani and Vaigis rivers have found a place in that list, if not what are the reason for not including them, if they are included what work has been done so far?

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : An expert committee was appointed some time back under the Chairmanship of Mr. Bhagwati. He has gone into the whole thing and recommended 10 rivers. Amongst those 10 rivers, the rivers mentioned by the hon. Member do not find a place.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR : What are the qualifications for finding a place in that list? We have been demanding linking up Andhra rivers with Cauvery for the last 36 years. What are the reasons for dropping them?

MR. SPEAKER : Rivers do not need any qualification.

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : It is a technical thing.

SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI : What is the idea of the government with regard to the present proposal of the

Central Inland Water Transport Corporation? Will this authority run that corporation or the corporation will be an autonomous body working under the authority?

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : The corporation will continue and it will be the main body. It operates river services and this authority which we are going to form will survey rivers and create infrastructural facilities on the rivers to come under national water way. They are two different things. One does mainly the research work and the infrastructure work and the other will operate the routes.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Is it not a fact that this commission has still now concentrated too much upon Gangetic valley and the inland water transport there alone. But, on the other hand, would this authority be charged with the task of developing inland water transport in South India also, more specially Cauvery, Krishna and Mahanadi rivers? Would any consideration be given to the earlier proposal to develop inland water transport from Kakinada right upto Madras where there is the famous Buckingham Canal? At one time, the late Lal Bahadur Shastri was incharge of this Ministry, he was good enough to sanction some money.

But unfortunately through some objection raised by Tamil Nadu—though they later removed it—the scheme has not been developed, as it become too late. If that scheme been developed there would have been inland water transport, motor transport all the way from Kakinada to Madras, for about 350 miles. Would the Government specially consider all these proposals also and revive that project for the development of the Buckingham Canal?

SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY : As I mentioned, a Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Mr. Bhagwati and he has recommended ten rivers. They are : The Bhagirathi-Hughli river system, the Brahma-

putra, Mandovi, the Zuvari and the Cumburjua Canal, the Mahanadi the Godavari, the Narmada, the Sunderbans area, the Tapti, the Krishna, and the West Coast Canal. These are the ten rivers which they have recommended. Whatever is not there, I cannot say at this stage. First, we have declared only one National one Water way and that also we are not able to operate. It takes some more time. Once this Authority is set up and the Bill is passed, the work will be done quickly and then we will be able to take up some more other areas. Till then, it will take some more time for us to finalise the schemes on these ten rivers.

साबरमती एक्सप्रेस का गोरखपुर तक चलाया जाना

*163 श्री हरिकेश बहादुर : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का विचार लोगों की कठिनाइयों को ध्यान में रखते हुए साबरमती एक्सप्रेस को, जो इस समय अहमदाबाद और फ़ैजाबाद के बीच चलती है, गोरखपुर तक चलाने का है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसे कब से वहां से चलाया जायेगा; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो ऐसा करने में क्या कठिनाइयां हैं ?

THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOU-
DHURY) : (a) to (c) A Statement is
laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The extension of Sabarmati Express to and from Gorakhpur will involve withdrawal of this train from