

श्रीमती गुरबिंदर कौर द्वार : स्पीकर साहब, श्रीमती पटनायक के सवाल का जो जवाब माननीय मन्त्री जी ने दिया है उसमें उन्होंने बताया है कि मास्टर प्लान का एप्रूवल हो गया है। मैं सिर्फ इतना कहना चाहती हूँ कि झालरेडी हम लोग बहुत पीछे हैं, बहुत पहले से ही यह सारी चीजें वहाँ पर होनी चाहिए थीं। वहाँ पर जो टूरिस्ट जाते हैं उनके लिए पूरी फैसिलिटीज नहीं है। मैं यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि जो प्लान्स सैगेशन हुए हैं उनके सिलसिले में आप कोई ज्वाइंट मीटिंग हाई आफिशियल लेवल, मिनिस्टीरियल लेवल पर करेंगे जिससे कि पता लगे कि कितनी देर में उनका इंप्ली-मेंटेशन हो सकेगा और कितनी जल्दी से जल्दी उड़ीसा टूरिस्ट मैप पर आ जायेगा ?

इसके साथ-साथ मैं यह भी जानना चाहूंगी कि बाहर के टूरिस्ट्स के लिए उनके खाने के मुताबिक क्या वहाँ पर छोटे-छोटे रेस्टारेन्ट्स खोले जायेंगे ?

श्री खुर्शीद आलम खां : मान्यवर, जैसा मैंने पहले बताया है वहाँ पर काफी होटल हैं इसलिए छंटे-छोटे रेस्टारेन्ट खोलने का सवाल नहीं है। वहाँ पर काफी होटल ठहरने के लिए मौजूद हैं और रेस्टारेन्ट भी काफी हैं।

दूसरी बात यह है कि स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का जहाँ तक ताल्लुक है, उनसे बराबर बातचीत होती रहती है और प्रोग्रेस की जांच की जाती है। हमारी और स्टेट गवर्नमेंट, दोनों की स्वाहिश है कि जो भी प्रोजेक्ट है वह जल्दी से जल्दी पूरे हो जाये क्योंकि अगर जल्दी पूरे नहीं होंगे तो उनकी कास्ट बढ़ती चली जायेगी।

#### Implementation of Neora Khola Project

\*913A. SHRI ANANDA PATHAK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to lift the objection for the implementation of Neora Khola Project for alleviating the hardship being experienced by civilians as

well as Military population due to acute shortage of drinking water in and around Kalimpong town in the district of Darjeeling ;

(b) if so, when the scheme would be given clearance ; and

(c) whether Government have also decided to share the cost of the project ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN) : (a) to (c).

The Neora Khola Water Supply Project is under examination, especially from the point of view of its environmental impact and technical feasibility *vis-a-vis* an alternative water supply scheme from the Teesta river. The question of sharing the cost will arise after a decision on this issue is taken.

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK : I am not satisfied with the reply of the Minister. The problem is very serious. People are suffering for want of drinking water. There are long queues before the water hydrants. The requirement is of about eight lakh gallons per day, but there is only about 4 lakh gallons available. The project was prepared by the civil authorities, in consultation with the military engineers, who had examined the feasibility of this project. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has repeatedly taken up this matter with the Central Government to give clearance to this Project, but it has not come up. It is mentioned that the Government is examining the matter. How much time will it take for the Government to complete this project ?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I think the hon. Member knows the difference of opinion between the West Bengal Government and the Army on the one side and Department of Environment on the other. So far as the Neora Khola Project is concerned. The Department of Environment is of view that it will affect the ecology of that area and therefore it should not be proceeded with. The other scheme, the Teesta River scheme is costly according to the West Bengal Government. Therefore, this aspect has to be kept in mind. It is not a question of delay but it is a basic question.

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK : The

Union Minister for Environment visited Calcutta and met the West Bengal Chief Minister, Shri Jyoti Basu. He promised to reconsider the Matter. The Teesta River project will not be feasible, nor practicable, because the water is to be pumped from about 1,000 ft. above the sea level but Kalimpong is situated in the elevation of more than 4,000 ft. above the sea level. There is no difference of opinion according to me.

Secondly, the problem of power shortage is also there. Frequent interruption of power may hamper pumping of water. The Neora Khola project is considered not to be costly, but the Teesta river scheme is likely to be more costly. I want to know whether the Government is prepared to reconsider the matter and approve the Neora Khola project as early as possible.

**SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN :** The hon. Member said that there is no dispute and then he is giving all the points in dispute. Actually, the question is, whether we should choose the Teesta Project or the Neora Khola Project. The Neora Khola Project has certain advantages and certain disadvantages. The Teesta Project also has got certain advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantage in the Teesta Project is that you will have to pump water to a height of about 1,200 metres and the cost of this will be high. As against that, the capital cost will be about Rs. 3 crores as estimated by the army and it will be about Rs. 16.5 crores in the case of the Neora Khola Project.

So far as the Department of Environment is concerned, they are of the view that the Neora Khola will affect the ecology of that area because it will also involve felling of some trees. These things have to be kept in view—these are their views, what am I to do in this—but according to me the practical proposition is, if you ask me, I would suggest to the West Bengal Government that they should agree to the Teesta Project and go ahead with it. A bird is worth two in the bush.

**MR. SPEAKER :** I think Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty is convinced now.

**SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY :** It is not a question of convincing.

It is only the question of persuading the Minister. We have, in our State also a Department of Environment and there is a Minister also. We are equally concerned about this environment. But, our Government, that is, the West Bengal Government is considering all these aspects.

**PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :** What is 'Our Government'? You are a Member of Parliament here.

**SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY :** 'Our Government' means this Government. This is our Government and that is also our Government.

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**PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :** He has nationalised the opinion expressed here.

**SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY :** Considering the difficulties that are being experienced by the local people about the shortage of drinking water, this question was also raised during the discussion on the Cantonment Bill. The West Bengal Government wants that this should be implemented. Since these aspects have already been gone into, are you going to talk again with the West Bengal Government? I think, if you start a dialogue and take initiative, this can be settled. Are you going to do it so that this stalemate can be broken and delay can be overcome?

**SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN :** There is a difference of opinion between the Environment Department of the West Bengal Government and the Environment Department of the Government of India, the difference being that the Environment Department of the Government of India thinks that this will affect the ecology of that area and disturb even the rainfall in that area. They are of the view that the Neora Khola project itself will be a failure if you go along with that project, cutting down trees, etc. Therefore, my point really is this. Instead of going on wasting time on this kind of a dialogue saying which Environment Department is right or wrong, we should better go forward. The Army itself is in favour of the Neora Khola project. I am saying that in the interest of the expeditious water supply to the people we can adopt the other one on which there

is not much difference so that water may be given. I am willing to start a dialogue with the West Bengal Government and try to persuade them.

#### Air Crew Status to Flight Calibration Unit Officers

\*916. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether officers of Flight Calibration Unit of Civil Aviation Department who are performing duties on board the departmental aircraft are neither treated as crew members nor as passengers;

(b) whether no insurance cover is available to these officers against physical disablement or injury in case of accident whereas the same is available to the Pilots with whom they fly ;

(c) whether Officers of Calibration Units are not treated at par with officers from other Government agencies like IAC, IAF BSF, HAL, NRSA etc , in respect of flying allowances, R/T handling allowance, insurance against disablement and other benefits ; and

(d) if so, do Government propose to ensure that Flight Calibration Unit Officers are treated at par with officials from other Government agencies performing similar duties and distinction in this regard is put an end to ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ALHOK GEHLOT) :

(a) The Senior Technical Officers and Technical Officers in the Calibration Unit who perform duties on board the aircraft are classified as Calibration Crew.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir, they are not treated at par.

(d) The matter is under examination.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Why should the technical people who are working in the Calibration Units not be treated at par with the officers from other Government agencies like IAC, IAF, BSF, HAL, NRSA, etc. ? The technical people attached to the Calibration

Units are like any other passengers or crew travelling in the aircraft and they are also having the same risk to their life. When that is the case, why should they not be given all those facilities which are available to the pilots with whom they fly, and the officers of other Government agencies ? These people have represented to the Ministry. Since when the Ministry has been considering their representation ? What are the reasons for not treating them at par with pilots and other crew of the aircraft and other officers of the Government agencies, in the matter of insurance cover and other things ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN) : I can appreciate the concern expressed by the hon. Member that the Calibration Crew has not been covered by the Insurance so far. But I would like to assure him that this is receiving our earnest attention. We have decided that this must be done. But one thing I would like to say. So far, they were not covered by the insurance, but ex-gratia payment was available to the extent of Rs. 1 lakh in case of death of the calibration officer and upto Rs. 60,000/- for the technician. Apart from this, they are covered by group insurance. However, the representation which they have made to the Ministry about including them in the insurance coverage is also receiving very earnest attention and we would certainly like to give it very sympathetic consideration.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Even though it was a genuine claim of these technical people because they have been trained heavily and money has been spent for their training in USA and other places and they are handling radio, telephone and other things, discriminatory attitude has been shown by some of the senior officers to put down all their genuine claims. If so, what are the reasons for such discrimination ? Will the Minister kindly remove this kind of anomaly and see that they are also treated at par by a time-bound programme. Will the hon. Minister assure at what particular point of time, the situation will ease ?

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN : I have already assured the hon. Member that