

[Shri C. D. Deshmukh]

cause no damage to the domestic industry. The Millowners' Associations have also accepted this view.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WORKING OF THE
KOSI PROJECT

Shri Kasliwal (Kotah-Jhalawar): Sir, under Rule 216, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Irrigation and Power to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Recent press reports making allegations against the working of the Kosi Project."

The Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power (Shri Nanda): Sir, with your permission I make a statement regarding the Kosi Project.

My attention has been drawn to some press reports expressing doubts regarding the technical soundness of the Kosi scheme, the eastward swing of the river at Baghjora, the role of public co-operation and the expeditious completion of flood embankments. I have kept the House informed of developments in respect of this scheme from time to time. I have thought it necessary now to apprise the House of the latest position regarding these aspects of the project in question.

It has been alleged that the present Kosi scheme is not technically sound. The scheme drawn up by the Central Water and Power Commission in November, 1953, was the result of detailed and prolonged investigations carried out since 1946. An Advisory Committee including several Chief Engineers and a Hydraulic Research Expert was appointed to scrutinise the project in December, 1953, and they reported that it would provide protection against flood damage for a reasonable period. I sent the Chairman, Central Water and Power Commission and a senior engineer of the Commis-

sion to China in the beginning of May, 1954, to study the various flood control measures on the rivers of that country. A careful study for a period of two months, of the flood control measures adopted in that country convinced them that the 1953 Kosi scheme was sound and was consistent with the experience gained on similar rivers in China, and that only a few minor modifications, like increasing the free board of the embankments, were necessary. These have been incorporated in the scheme. We have also consulted eminent foreign experts. Mr. Wang Hu Chang, Chief Engineer in the Ministry of Water Conservancy of China, who visited the Kosi Project area in January, 1955, endorsed the scheme as drawn up. Two American flood control experts, who recently studied the project, have expressed the opinion that the present plan had been devised after careful study by competent engineers and that it appeared to be the best of the several possibilities each of which had certain disadvantages.

In addition to the western and eastern embankments on both sides of the Kosi downstream of the barrage, the scheme provides for earthen banks both on east and west upstream of the barrage stretching to sufficiently high level to prevent inundation by the river. The eastern bank stretches for about 23 miles upstream of the barrage and serves to close a number of spills taking off from the river during high floods. Last year's floods in Kosi were the highest on record for a number of years and resulted in some of the eastern spills being abnormally active. Perhaps this caused some fear among the local people and exaggerated versions appeared even suggesting that the river was going to take a eastward swing, and that the project would become infructuous if the eastern flood bank was not completed and other measures undertaken before the monsoon. The fact is that the engineers had already included in their programme the construction of the eastern flood bank upstream of the barrage, but their main objective was

matter of urgent public importance to ensure accessibility of the barrage site during the monsoon. With regard to the apprehensions of an eastward swing, complete studies have also been conducted on river models at Poona after incorporating the topography as per the latest surveys of the area. Besides the Director, Poona Research Station, the Chief Engineer, Kosi, and the Chief Engineer (Flood Designs) of Central Water and Power Commission, were also present and all the three officers have submitted a unanimous report that there is no danger of any such eastward swing.

The Eastern flood banks above the barrage lie in Nepal and they were not intended to be constructed by public co-operation. Nearly 50 per cent of the work intended to be done as a minimum this year had already been finished by 15th April and it is hoped that the rest will be completed in time.

The Kosi scheme, as drawn up in November, 1953, was expected to be completed in 6 years. Public co-operation was enlisted to speed up the work. Whatever has been achieved through this agency during the current working season is a distinct advance over the progress that would have been possible otherwise. The current year's programme of construction was drawn up by the Project Administration and approved by the Kosi Control Board at its first meeting held on the 2nd December, 1954. The principle of enlisting public co-operation was accepted by the Board at that meeting.

The experiment on public participation in the construction of the Kosi Project has led to gratifying results and has fully justified the faith we have reposed in the people. The principle of co-operative labour through the Panchayats organised under non-official guidance has been operated with success in this field and is bound to yield far-reaching benefits in other fields in course of time. In point of quality the work done on the basis of public co-operation has been greatly commended. It is a point of consi-

derable economic and social significance that the labour co-operative set aside 7½ per cent of their earnings for programmes of community development in the Panchayat areas. The tempo of work through public participation has been progressively rising and as reported on 27th April, 1955, there were 450 shramdanis, 12,025 village co-operatives labour and 7,923 students engaged on the work. The progress on the western embankment is very satisfactory. Regarding, the eastern embankment, because of late start and other reasons the pace was not sufficiently rapid initially but a very substantial improvement has lately occurred even in this sector. We do not find that claims contrary to actual facts were made on behalf of public participation. The organisation and the leadership developed there at various levels will, with the experience and training that have been acquired, be capable of undertaking far bigger responsibilities in the next season thus leading to a great acceleration of the rate of progress and much earlier completion of the project.

I am glad to say that Bihar Government and the Project Administration are making an all-out effort to accomplish the tasks of the season.

Shri Kaaliwal: Sir, may I make a request! Now that the Prime Minister is here, may I request that action be taken against those circulating false rumours regarding the work of Kosi Project and trying to sabotage this noble scheme!

Mr. Speaker: We will go to the next item.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEE

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education (Dr. M. M. Das): I beg to move:

“That in pursuance of Clause (f) of paragraph 3(i) of the Resolution of the Government of India No. F.16-10/44.E.III, dated the 30th November, 1945, as amended, this House do proceed to elect, in