

regard to the question of the service of railways concerning speed, electronics and so on. If the Minister does not know, we should express sympathy.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister may be knowing many things, but they must relate to this question.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: May I know whether any international centre for sharing of knowledge of railways does exist in any other country, particularly in countries such as Japan Belgium or USA?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: I said there are two international organisations of which the Indian Railways are also members. Japan too might be a member. But in the conference held in Paris, among Asian countries India attended. Malaysia and Pakistan did not attend. It is possible Japan might have attended, but I have no information. This international organisation is like other international organisations which hold periodically conferences in which a number of countries attend.

Utilisation of Irrigation Potential

*305. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been made of the irrigation potential created during the various Five Year Plans but which remain unutilised;

(b) if so, what are the findings of the study; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to see that the irrigation potential created is fully utilised?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA) (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c). There is always some time lag in the utilisation of irrigation potential in almost all new projects, particularly in the tail reaches, as it takes a few years for these areas to be developed and the entire potential as envisaged is achieved.

Prior to Independence, a period of ten years used to be allowed for full utilisation. In view of the need for accelerated production of additional foodgrains, State Governments have taken a number of steps on many projects to speed up the development. These include synchronisation of construction of the smaller canals to serve 40 ha. blocks along with the main canals and branches; technical advice and provision of credit facilities to farmers for construction of field channels, drains and land shaping; construction of field channels and recovering the cost thereof from beneficiaries where ever there is inordinate delay; augmentation of facilities for supply of inputs like seeds, fertilisers, etc.; research, demonstration and farmer's training and extension services to farmers. Comprehensive ayacut development programmes including the development of regulated markets, all weather roads and storages have been taken up on some of the bigger projects. As a result of the various measures taken the utilisation of irrigation potential has shown significant improvement during the recent past as will be seen from the table below:

| | At the end of | Potential Utilisation in million hectares). |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| 1st Plan: | . . | 2.48 1.48 |
| 2nd Plan | . . | 4.63 3.34 |
| 3rd Plan | . . | 6.46 5.47 |
| At the beginning of 4th Plan | . . | 8.45 7.06 |
| 1969-70 | . . | 8.93 4.49 |
| 1970-71 | . . | 9.30 7.76 |
| 1971-72 | . . | 9.81 8.11 |
| 1972-73 (anticipated) | | 10.71 8.86 |

The national average of utilisation of potential created in the preceding year is now about 90 per cent. Even so, every effort is being made to bring the potential created into full use. A Committee of State Ministers of Irrigation has also been set up to analyse the existing pattern of utilisation in the country region-wise and project-wise; analyse the reasons for the lag in utilisation and under utilisation and to identify critical regions or projects where steps are immediately called for; and to suggest remedial measures to be undertaken at different stages of planning, execution and operation to enable proper and prompt utilisation. Their report is expected to be available in another two months.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the utilisation as is shown hereby the Minister is about 90 per cent. It is very good. What I want to know is this. Some areas which were once under good utilisation have now turned to be under un-utilisation. I want to know whether these areas also have been removed from this.

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO): I think what the hon. Member is referring to is a project like the Mizamsagar where the irrigation water could not be supplied this year for want of water. This list does not contain such kinds of projects. The statistics that have been given are entirely for new irrigation projects that have been constructed, potential created and utilisation not made.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: I want to know which are the States that are utilising this water hundred per cent and which are the States which lagging behind.

DR. K. L. RAO: There are 33 major projects and 97 medium projects where the utilisation of water is less than 50 per cent. It is not that it is judged by the projects that we want to take up. In particular, the States and the projects where the lack of

utilisation is due to various reasons are: Andhra; to a small extent, Pochampad and the hydel canal II; Mysore Tungabhadra project; Maharashtra. Some of the recent projects like Bhima, Purna and other projects; Gujarat Kakkarpara, Mahi and so on. Then Bihar, where development of irrigation is pretty bad as in Kosi, Gandak.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Kerala?

DR. K. L. RAO: In Kerala it is all right.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: Sir, if all the natural resources of water in the rivers are utilised for the larger interests of this country, I think we would not have faced this drought and natural calamities like famine in this country. It is most unfortunate that the natural resources have not been exploited fully. Even this question of linking Ganga and Cauvery is there since years. I do not know when it will see the light of day, and Mysore is also included in it. We doubt very much, because there is a lot of controversy. I would like to know why in the Cauvery basin all the projects which are pending and which are not seeing the green signal of this Ministry till today are not able to make full use of the water for the development of the famine areas of the Mysore State. We have been utilising only the non-outlay, and also the money from the States. The Centre has not been paying even a single pie on the ground of clearance not having been given. I am asking this question as to why it is still pending for a long time.

MR. SPEAKER: Keep some scope for listening to me also! (Interruptions).

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: These are the questions connected with my constituency and my State. The Minister has been saying repeatedly, consistently and persistently that these projects have not been given the clearance.

DR. K. L. RAO: What the hon. Member said is correct, there is irrigation only for about 25 per cent of our cropped land. If we do all the projects that are known to us, both underground and surface, it is expected that the irrigation potential would be 50 per cent, and with the inter-basin transfers like the one we are thinking of, namely, a national water grid, then the percentage of 50 per cent can be taken up to two-thirds or 66 per cent.

With regard to the question of the Cauvery project, there have been differences among the States—Kerala, Madras and Mysore. They have had discussions, and they have agreed that they would like to have it settled out of court. Therefore, we have appointed a fact-finding committee with a judge and two other experts. Their report has now come. It has been printed and circulated to the various States. We hope that further steps will be taken to settle the problems amicably.

SHRI PARIPOORNANAND PAINULI: Sir, may I know whether the hon. Minister is aware of the fact that lift irrigation has very great potential in the Himalayan region, and still, the Government continues to sanction tube-wells in those areas? May I know from the hon. Minister whether in the fifth five year Plan, this practice would be stopped and special rigs would be made available in the terai areas so that water is supplied for irrigation purposes there?

DR. K. L. RAO: We depend upon lift irrigation quite a lot and in fact in the Himachal region lift irrigation is inevitable. I hope more and more schemes will be taken up.

SHRI BIRENDER SINGH RAO: Will the hon. Minister be pleased to say to what extent the irrigation potential created in the country has remained unutilised due to inter-State water disputes and if any has remained unutilised because of these disputes, what concrete steps Government are taking to solve these disputes within a reasonable time?

DR. K. L. RAO: When we discuss about non-utilisation of the potential it only means those projects which were approved and potential has been created but utilisation is not there; that is what the question deals with. I do not know whether the hon. Member is thinking of this or of theoretical possibilities of projects which are not yet started because they are not sanctioned or approved. (Interruptions).

श्री झारखण्डे राय : क्या सिचाई मंत्री यह बताने की कष्ट करेंगे कि सरकार पिछली चार पंच वर्षीय योजनाओं के अन्तर्भव के माध्यम पर अपना यह विचार निश्चित करने जा रही है कि ट्यूबवेल से ज्यादा एम्फेसिस केनाल वाटर्ज और नदियों से केनाल निकालने पर दिया जाये ?

DR. K. L. RAO: Tubewell water is very good; of course there should be water in the tubewells, which means areas like the Gangetic basin or the Narmada basin. Wherever there is water available, underground water is important and it should be exploited, as well as the other surface waters.

श्री बिभूति सिन्ध : अभी मंत्री महोदय, ने कहा है कि गंडक का पानी झनपूटिलाइड रह जाता है। क्या यह सही नहीं है कि सरकार ने अभी तक डिस्ट्रीब्यूटरी नहीं बनाया है और अन्य इंतजाम नहीं किया है ? इस हालत में सरकार ने जो पेटेशल क्रीगट किया है, उस के यूटिलाइड न किये जाने में कसूर सरकार का है या जनता का ? यदि इसमें सरकार का कसूर है, तो क्या मंत्री महोदय इस सम्बन्ध में सब साधन उपलब्ध कराने के लिए तैयार हैं, ताकि जनता पानी का इस्तेमाल कर सके ?

DR. K. L. RAO: It is true in respect of Gandak project utilisation is not good in Bihar because, as the hon. Member says, some of the field channels are not being dug; in some areas the drainage question also should be attended to. I have discussed with the Chief Minister of Bihar these problems and they promised that they would take more energetic steps to see

that the potential is better utilised. A committee of ministers has also been appointed to look into unutilised projects and we are awaiting their recommendations. I agree with the hon. Member that more efforts are necessary to make use of very valuable projects like the Gandak.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Year after year, month after month, we were told that an award was forthcoming on the Narmada project; it was promised at the end of last year; a tribunal was set up and that was dissolved and the matter was left to the Prime Minister and the award was expected to come last year. Now it is past; January and February are also past and in the month of May we are passing another Budget and there seems to be no award forthcoming... (*Interruptions*) Is it March. I am glad that they have learnt the names of the months. If the Prime Minister has no time to deal with this matter why is it not done through some other procedure and why is it that we do not accept the awards already given by many commissions that had been set up?

DR. K. L. RAO: The Tribunal has not been dissolved, as the hon. Member has said. It is still in existence. All that happened was that the Chief Ministers agreed that on two points the award should be given by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has taken a lot of pains in the matter. She has given an opportunity to the various State Governments to put forward their points. They have sent whatever they wanted to say or represented them in person. I expect the award would be made shortly.

SHRI D. D. DESAI: Has the Minister studied the Chinese system of irrigation where they pump running water so that problems of constructing dams, silting etc. can be avoided? In that context, will he give immediate clearance for building the canal system for Narmada?

MR. SPEAKER: It is a suggestion for action.

SHRI D. D. DESAI: It is not a suggestion. I want clearance for building the canal system for Narmada.

DR. K. L. RAO: A project has been sanctioned already, long before. I think they are awaiting the taking up of a comprehensive project after knowing exactly what the height of dam is to be.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY: In view of the opinion of the experts that a larger proportion of irrigation facilities can be derived by linking Ganga with Brahmaputra, and that too at much lesser cost, than linking Cauvery and Ganga, may I know from the hon. Minister whether he has taken any positive steps and, if so, what are the steps to link Ganga with Brahmaputra?

DR. K. L. RAO: All these are components of the wider national water grid. There are many links, two of which have been mentioned by the hon. Member. The plan for investigation of this project is pending with the Planning Commission. Once funds are made available, the investigation work would be taken up, which is expected to take five to seven years. So far as linking Ganga with Brahmaputra is concerned, we would require the co-operation of Bangladesh.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: In view of the fact that Kosi and Gandak projects are international in character, keeping also in view the statement of the Minister of State for Planning in Patna, may I know whether the Central Government is prepared to take over the Kosi and Gandak projects under the Centre for early completion and proper utilisation of the resources?

DR. K. L. RAO: This question is often raised on the floor of the House. A policy decision has to be taken about the taking over of these projects as national projects. That demand has not been conceded. The States are competent to tackle them. So far no project has been taken up as a national project. The same demand was made about Rajasthan canal and many

other projects. That demand has not been conceded so far. So far as the international character of these rivers is concerned, many rivers are international in character. That is not one of the reasons which will weigh with us in taking over a project by the Centre. It is a very difficult problem on which a policy decision is yet to be taken.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA :

A Member of the Planning Commission is reported to have said that we have by now invested about Rs. 5000 crores, to be precise, Rs. 4770 crores, in our irrigation projects in the country during the last twenty years and we are suffering a loss of about Rs. 140 crores every year. That is what a Member of the Planning Commission has said. Will the hon. Minister consider this very serious situation and take appropriate steps, particularly, with regard to policy decisions in three respects that is, firstly, along with irrigation projects, the field channels should be simultaneously dug; secondly, that the beneficiaries should be exempted from paying any tax for at least two years in order to enable them to get used to it and, thirdly, in view of the fact that underground water level of canal areas rises up causing water logging he will also provide for augmentation canals for the irrigation projects particularly in the north-eastern zone of the country?

DR K. L. RAO : The irrigation projects require a considerable amount of money. We are equally proud that we have built a very magnificent system of irrigation. In the last 25 years, we have actually doubled what we had already before. It is a very good performance that we have had in the field of irrigation. But still I agree that a lot more requires to be done.

With regard to the utilisation of irrigation, as the statement has mentioned, the utilisation was only 60 per cent in the First Plan, 70 per cent in the Second Plan, 80 per cent in the Third Plan and now it is 90 per cent (agree) with the hon. Member that we

should make use of every inch of irrigated potential. We are anxious about it. That is why we have appointed a Committee with the Minister of Irrigation of Maharashtra State as the Chairman. They are taking a lot of interest; they are going round all the places. I will pass on the various suggestions made by the hon. Member to them. They will make a recommendation as to what positive steps should be taken to utilise every inch of irrigated potential.

Fire in O & NGC well No. 109 at Lakwa, Assam

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***306. SHRI R. S. PANDEY :
SHRI HUKAM CHAND
KACHWAI :**

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the O&NGC's Oil Well No. 109 at Lakwa near Sibsagar in Assam has been on fire for a long time causing a loss of crores of rupees;

(b) whether any inquiry has been made into the breaking out of the fire in the said oil well and the loss suffered therefrom; and

(c) the action taken against those responsible for the fire?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BOROOAH) : (a) No, Sir. There was no fire but a "blow-out" in which oil and gas under pressure came out of the well in an uncontrolled manner.

(b) and (c). A high-level Enquiry Committee has been set up by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission to enquire into the causes of the "blow-out" and to fix responsibility in case it was due to negligence on the part of any one, although such mishaps are not unknown in the oil industry.

श्री राम लक्ष्मण शर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस प्रश्न के पूछने का एक मतलब यह भी था कि मैं मध्य प्रदेश के जलवायु अथॉरिटी में भी बिलकस्वी रखता हूँ। देश के कुएँ में धातु