

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

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## LOK SABHA

Wednesday April 14, 1976 'Chaitra  
25, 1898 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the  
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

### OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Shri H. K. Veeranna Gowdha who passed away at Bangalore on the 7th April, 1976 at the age of 77.

Shri Gowdha was a Member of Third Lok Sabha during the years 1965-67 from Bangalore Constituency of the erstwhile State of Mysore. Starting as a Member of the Mysore Representative Assembly before independence, he was a Member of the State Legislature for a number of years. He was a member of the Mysore Constituent Assembly during the years 1947-48 and of the Mysore Legislative Assembly during the years 1949-62. He also served as Minister twice in the Government of Mysore during the years 1956 to 1958 and then during the years 1960 to 1962. He was associated with various students' organisations and educational institutions.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

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11.03 hrs.

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Probe into Periodic Power Failures at Tarapur Atomic Power Plant

\*482. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have investigated into the reasons for periodic power failures at Tarapur Atomic Power Plant;

(b) if so, findings thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) The Department of Atomic Energy keeps a close watch on the performance of the Tarapur Atomic Power Station Defects noticed are being promptly attended to and remedial action taken. There has been no necessity of any special investigation.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I would like to know from the hon. Minister if his attention has been invited to the report which appeared in *Clarity* dated 20-3-76 which says:

"An American newsman, Paul Jacobs, in the February-March issue of 'Mother Jones', a newly launched magazine in New York has exposed the sinister role played by the US multi-nationals which set up nuclear plants abroad.

Jacobs focus is on the Tarapur nuclear plant... Tarapur was built jointly by two American compa-

nies; General Electric and the Bechtel Corporation, the world's largest privately owned construction and engineering firm.

In December 1972, Clifford Beck, an officer of the US Atomic Energy Commission, visited the Tarapur plant on what Jacobs describes as a 'routine protocol tour' of nine nations.

Further, this Report goes on to say that it was because of leakages kept in the construction of the system that condenser leaks. There are three or our reports which this Reporter has quoted and it says: "Walker, however, did not perform the whitewash that Bechtel was angling for." He reported, "Condenser leaks cause a very serious problem. Some reluctance to inserting also exists due to the suffocation death which occurred in the suppression chamber. Leakage from the primary systems in the drywells is a continuing problem at Tarapur which is responsible for periodical shutdowns." I would like to know whether this report based on reports made by these various authorities, has come to the notice of the hon. Minister and whether any action has been taken to make further investigation of our own?

SHRI K. C. PANT. This is an old plant—03 MW. Since then, technology has evolved in this field which is a fast changing and fast developing field. In the course of the last few years—this went into commercial operation in October, 1969—We have found that while in the first year, the growth generation was high and afterwards it fell. Then it rose and fell again. It has been the second highest since 1970-71 because as the years passed, the defects have been identified. The original design inadequacies of which my friend spoke, of which condenser tubes are one, a study has been undertaken to replace the original brass aluminium condenser tubes by titanium tubes. That is,

for instance, one specific problem. Similarly, he mentioned about leakages. I think, he means leakages from the fuel bundles. That again has been identified. Fuel bundles have been changed and all of them are being replaced. The improved operational procedures have greatly reduced the number of power failures in the last one year. I have figures here of the number of outages which were 29 in 1973-74, 19 in 1974-75 and only 4 in 1975-76. Thus with the passage of time and improvements brought about by our technicians, there has been definite improvement both in generation and in reducing the number of outages. I have not seen the Press item which he has mentioned

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I am happy that we are taking care to remedy the mistakes. I am particularly concerned because the reputation of Bechtels who has, as the House knows, messed up with our pipelines in Baraun, about which Takru Commission has shown that the alignment was not proper, is not upto the mark. Now, it has been shown that Bechtels were connected with CIA operations in various other countries. According to Jacobs Walker discovered that, leakages are causing unscheduled shutdowns, that the vital radioactive waste systems are being overloaded, that electrical insulation problems have developed in the reactor's drywells". These are scientific reports of experts. If this is only a natural defect, then our engineers who are worthy may correct them. But if there is a mischief in the whole thing, then that is something more serious. That is why you may do at least an internal investigation—I can understand they are delicate parts, but you can do at least some internal investigation—to see if some mischief was involved in this. In that case, I would like to know what remedial measures we are going to take about it

SHRI K. C. PANT: This is not the first time that this problem has come

to our notice. It was gone into several times. If my hon. friend sends me the specific article he quotes from, I shall certainly pass it on to the department to have another look at the problem. But this is not a new problem; that is all I say. We are aware of the leakage and reduction in output. Our technicians are well able to take care of the problem.

Secondly, in order to compare the functioning of this station with other stations, the department carried out an evaluation in the year 1973-74. They say that the station's performance compared favourably with thermal stations in the country and also with similar nuclear power stations in the United States in regard to break down and outages and that its output per kw compared satisfactorily with corresponding modern thermal stations in the country etc.

The only point I am making is, whereas there are defects which have been identified, which I have mentioned in the beginning and which have been stated in the House, which we shall certainly be prepared to look into if necessary, our technicians are well able to take care of the problems which he has pointed out.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:** Recently some reports had appeared in the press to the effect that the time is now approaching when this plant will require fresh supplies of enriched uranium from the United States to replenish its fuel, but the United States' authorities were contemplating whether they should supply any further amount of fuel or not in view of their well-known hostile attitude to the peaceful nuclear explosion which we carried out last year. If such a contingency arises, when these supplies are cut off or delayed or reduced, what impact would it have on the working of the Tarapore plant?

**SHRI K. C. PANT:** The United States' authorities, that is, the United States Government, is committed to the fulfilment of its contractual obligations, so far as the supply of fuel

element is concerned. But a group of citizens in the United States have raised objection before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission of that country to the supply of enriched uranium to the Tarapore atomic power station. This resulted in delay in the export of enriched uranium, not only to the Tarapore atomic power station but also to some similar plants in some other countries. The Government of India's position has been fully explained, suitably explained, to the Government of the United States. This is where the matter stands now and the question of further supply is presently under the consideration of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. We shall watch the development there and, at the moment, I would not like to say anything beyond that, for reasons which I think my friend knows.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:** Is it possible within the terms of the agreement for one party to unilaterally cancel the agreement?

**SHRI K. C. PANT:** The United States stands committed to its obligations. Beyond that, at this stage I hope my hon. friend would not ask me to say anything.

**SHRI K. S. CHAVDA:** Gujarat has suffered the most due to repeated power failures at the atomic power plant at Tarapore. May I know whether Government intends to set up another atomic plant somewhere in Gujarat, and if so, where?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Next question.

सीमेंट के छोटे कारखाने

\*490. श्री मूल चन्द्र डागा : क्या उद्योग और नागरिक पूर्ति मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या देश में ग्रीर विशेषतया राजस्थान में सीमेंट के छोटे कारखाने स्थापित करने के लिये प्रोत्साहन देने हेतु