

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, August 8, 1972 (Shravana 17,
1894 (Saka))

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Shortage of Power in the Country

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*122. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA :
SHRI JAGADISH BHATTACHARYYA :

Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state the reasons for shortage of power supply all over the country in the recent time ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The main reasons for the power shortage in the country in recent times are —

(1) Absence of generating capacity commensurate with the growth in demand occurring from time to time.

(2) Inadequate storage position at some of the major hydro-electric reservoirs due to failure of rains in the catchment areas resulting in reduced availability of power.

(3) Frequent outages to generating plants particularly larger sized thermal generating units due to teething troubles, use of inferior grades of coal resulting in excessive wear and tear of auxiliary equipment.

(4) Non-arrival of coal in time to the thermal power stations resulting in reduced output from the thermal power stations.

(5) Lack of adequate transmission facilities within each State and between neighbouring States,

(6) Delay in execution of projects due to delay in the delivery of equipment by the indigenous manufacturers, non-availability of essential materials such as steel, cement etc. to the required extent and delay in civil works.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : The main reasons have been given in the statement for the shortage of power. May I know what concrete steps have been taken by Government to remedy the causes of power failure ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : The various reasons for power shortage have been given in the answer. One of the most important reasons is that the load is going up and the demand is also going up much more than what we are able to install at the moment. Therefore, we have now drawn up in the Sixth Plan many more projects to deal with the matter. That is one very important step. For example, in the DVC the demand is much higher than what they have, so that there is frequent power shortage in Calcutta and so on. Another reason is that the operational efficiency has not improved. The efficiency of the maintenance and operational staff has to be improved, and we are taking steps for the proper training of these personnel.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA : The hon. Member had asked specifically the concrete steps taken by Government to remedy matters, but he is only telling us about the Sixth Plan. His question has not been completely answered.

MR. SPEAKER : Let Shri Ajit Kumar Saha put that question.

DR. K. L. RAO : I have given the most important reasons. A number of reasons have been given in the statement. The most important reasons are the excessive load and therefore there is necessity for installation of more power. There is also deficiency in the operation and maintenance staff and we are trying to make it up. There are also other reasons, such as want of equipment, want of material and so on. These are all things which are being made up.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : Will the hon. Minister state the reasons for the almost total failure of power in the State of West Bengal as a result of which the factories are facing serious crisis ?

DR. K. L. RAO : We find generally in Calcutta the main troubles are due to shortage of about 50 to 100 MW of power. We are trying to increase the power by setting up the power stations at Santaldi and Chandrapura more quickly and also install more transmission lines to Calcutta so that we could supply about 50 MW of power to that region which would make it very comfortable. That is what we are trying to do.

श्री नरसिंह नारायण पांडे : क्या मंत्री महोदय को इस बात का पता है कि बिजली की कमी होते हुए भी और इस बात के बावजूद कि किसानों को बिजली की सब से ज्यादा जरूरत है, उत्तर प्रदेश में हिंडालको को सरकार ऐडीशनल पावर देने जा रही है कास्ट प्राइस से भी रेट पर अगर है, तो इसका क्या कारण है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह तो आपने एक अलग ही सवाल कर दिया ।

DR. K. L. RAO : We have requested the Chief Ministers of all States to give preference to agricultural load even at the cost of making a cut in the industrial load. UP also will have to follow suit. As for the rate, it is fixed by various States in various ways. In UP the rate is a bit high. We have taken it up with that Government to have it reduced. We have not succeeded ; but I hope we will be able to do so in a few months.

श्री नरसिंह नारायण पांडे : मेरा क्वेश्चन बड़ा स्पेसिफिक है । मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जब पावर क्राइसिस इस देश में है और आपने एक कमेटी बना कर इस चीज का निर्णय कर दिया कि कास्ट प्राइस से नीचे पर किसी इंडस्ट्री को बिजली नहीं दी जायेगी तब भी क्या हिंडालको को कास्ट प्राइस से नीचे पर बिजली दी जा रही है और उसी जगह पर किसानों को नहीं जा रही है ?

DR. K. L. RAO : I think he is referring to a specific example, of Hindalco. The UP Government sought our advice. We gave the advice that power should be sold at the cost of generation plus a certain amount of profit.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : The shortage of power does not affect all parts of the country equally at the same time. Was it decided some time ago that there should be an inter-state grid on the basis of certain zones and regions so that if a particular State was suffering from a shortage for some particular reason at a particular time and the neighbouring State had surplus power, it could be shared like that ? Was such a scheme undertaken particularly in the eastern zone ? A recommendation was made on behalf of State Governments like Bengal, Orissa, Bihar and Assam, but nothing has been made because the Centre has not moved in the matter.

DR. K. L. RAO : We have an inter-state grid line all over the country. In the Bengal area too we have a fairly good length of that line. In the last six months, we have exchanged quite a large amount of power between one State and another. In fact, power from Mysore has travelled as far as Gujarat ; Kerala power has gone to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Like that, we have exchanged power from State to State.

Likewise, in the eastern zone, we have a large number of transmission lines. But unfortunately, the Machkund and Hirakud reservoirs were shut down so that Orissa which used to supply power could not supply any. Similarly, DVC was not able to give any extra power so that we could supply 100 MW to Calcutta. That was how this situation arose. As I submitted already, we are now trying to generate additional power in Santhaldi and Chandrapura. We are putting up more and more transmission lines. We are already engaged in that problem and are strengthening further the grid lines which already exist.

श्री राम नारायण शर्मा : माननीय मंत्री जी ने डी० वी० सी० की पावर के सम्बन्ध में बतलाया, लेकिन क्या सरकार के ध्यान में यह बात है कि इंडस्ट्रियल एरियाज में जो इंडस्ट्रियल

अन्डरटेकिंग्स हैं उनमें पावर शेडिंग और पावर शॉर्टेज की वजह से सारा प्रोडक्शन कम हो गया है ? इसकी ओर सरकार का ध्यान भी आकर्षित किया गया है । मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने इसके ऊपर क्या कार्यवाही की है ?

DR. K. L. RAO : It is true that a number of industries are having less amount of power. I visited Jamshedpur, and the load there is about 90 MW, whereas the supply is about 50 to 60 MW. The arrangements are that Bihar shall supply the balance. Likewise they are to supply power to other places. But unfortunately the Patratu power supply has not come up and one of the units which was expected to be commissioned is not yet ready, and so there is shortage of power for the industrial sector in that area.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY : One of the reasons cited for the shortage is delay in the supply of equipment by the indigenous manufacturers. May I know whether those indigenous manufacturers are in the public sector or in the private sector ?

MR. SPEAKER : You have given it a very big dimension. The question is very simple.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY : It arises from the statement.

DR. K. L. RAO : The main equipment is in the public sector, and there has been some delay. For instance in the Ukai project, the dam is ready, but the machines are not there, so that we were not able to supply power and the supply of machines is delayed. The equipment are indigenous. Of course, there are difficulties in the supply, and there will be a large number of teething troubles like that, and though they are mainly in the public sector, there has been some delay in the delivery of the equipment.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY : It is scandalous. (*Interruption*)

DR. K. L. RAO : There have been some difficulties in the supply, and we are sorting out some of the difficulties, but, nevertheless, we cannot say that we can guarantee the delivery of the equipment on time.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : May I know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the statement made by the Director of Mine Safety that unless power supply is made quickly to the Bihar and West Bengal coal mines area, the coal mines are going to be closed down very shortly ?

DR. K. L. RAO : It is true that we also received some representation in respect of the coal mines. It is not that the power is short ; but the supply is fluctuating ; the power supplied to them at different hours of the day is different, and I have drawn the attention of the persons concerned in the West Bengal Government, the State Electricity Boards, the DVC and the Bihar Government, to see that if they can try to assist in the supply. I think with the coming in of the monsoon, and the possibility of the reservoirs being filled up, it may be possible for us to combat these difficulties in the next fortnight.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : Just now, the hon. Minister has said that the demand for power is increasing but that there is not sufficient power to meet the demand. In this connection, may I know specifically from the hon. Minister whether this shortage of power and the inability to supply power for industrial and agriculture production, are due to inadequate finance, or due to ineffective planning of the schemes or due to the non-availability of the machinery or due to some other technical reasons ? What are the main reasons which have come in the way of meeting the demand of the public in the country ?

DR. K. L. RAO : I could not exactly follow the question. The hon. Member wants know the reasons why there is shortage of power equipment and so on.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : The demand is increasing, as the hon. Minister said, and I wanted to know what are the specific reasons : whether it is due to inadequate finance, or whether it is due to the fact that adequate number of persons are not available, or whether the schemes of the Planning Commission are not properly being implemented, etc. What are the main reasons ?

DR. K. L. RAO : There had been some restraints on finance in the past, and we were not

able to get as much as we wanted in the Fourth Five year Plan, but now, in the Fifth Five year Plan, we have planned out, and we are going to have double the power at the end of the Fourth Plan; that is, we propose to add as much as 20 million kw. of power in the Fifth Plan: 20 million kw. of power will be there in 1974. I am happy that the Planning Commission also has accepted it this time. But in the past there has been a certain amount of difficulty; these power stations, unfortunately, take five years before they are put into commission. The present shortage is the result of inadequate power provision made four or five years back.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : During the Fourth Plan period, what was the projected power demand? During the current year what had been the actual power generation? Is it a fact that only fifty per cent of the built-in capacity of power generation in West Bengal is being utilised at this moment?

DR. K. L. RAO : The power target at the end of the Fourth Plan is 23 million kws; the demand is of the same order almost. The installed capacity of 23 mkw. will not be able to cope with the demand. Another difficulty is that on account of various reasons some of the important power stations are not going to be commissioned during the Fourth Plan period and the shortage will be as much as 2 million kws during the next two years, 1973 and 1974. It is only towards the end of 1974 that some of the projects like Idiki, Kalpakkam, etc. will come up. I am afraid country has to be prepared for a shortage of 2-3 million kws of power in 1973-74. The actual generation now is about 17 mkw. We will have 20 mkw in 1974.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : उत्तर बिहार में बिजली की भी कमी है और जो बिजली है उसका रेट भी अधिक है। वहाँ बिजली पैदा करने के लिए कोयला भी नहीं मिलता है। वहाँ बिजली अधिक मिले और रेट भी कम हो, इसके लिए सरकार क्या प्रबन्ध कर रही है? रेट को कम करने के बारे में क्या आप सोच रहे हैं?

श्री के० एस्० बाबड़ा : गुजरात में सब से ज्यादा रेट्स हैं भारत में।

श्री विभूति मिश्र : आपको पता है बिहार का?

DR. K. L. RAO : It is true in North Bihar power is short. The annual per capita power consumption is of the order of 10 kwhr. compared to the all-India average of 90 kwhr. That is why the Technical Advisory Committee has approved the setting up of a power station at Muzaffarpur, extension at Barauni and also the Dalkola project. They await approval by the Planning Commission. I shall try to accelerate these projects . . . (*Interruptions*).

श्री ईश्वर चौधरी : 25 वर्ष के बाद भी हम बिजली के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर नहीं बने हैं। इसका नतीजा यह है कि मांग की अपेक्षा सप्लाई कम है। इसका प्रतिकूल असर कृषि और इंडस्ट्री पर पड़ रहा है। आप कौन सा पग उठाएंगे ताकि निश्चित समय में सम्पूर्ण भारतवर्ष की बिजली की आवश्यकताएँ आप पूरी कर सकें और बिजली के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर हो सकें?

DR. K. L. RAO : Electricity is one of the items which creates its own demand very much. It is an interesting factor. At the time of Independence our consumption was only 2 mkw and now it has gone up to 17 mkw. It is a good performance. In the Fifth Plan we want to double our output. Even then the per capita consumption here will be 200 against 10,000 in the United States and 2,000-3,000 in Europe. We shall not be anywhere there but we cannot help it. As I said power creates its own demand. I am sure power generation and demand will go on multiplying very rapidly.

We are planning in a big way and we hope that the necessary funds will be provided and it will be possible for us to fulfil our target.

SHRI AMRIT NAHATA : In our country, we need electricity for reducing our dependence on monsoons. So, is it advisable to keep electricity also dependent on monsoons by basing most of our electricity projects on water resources? Is it not possible to utilise our thermal resources for generating power?

MR. SPEAKER : It is a suggestion for action, but I think he will reply.

DR. K. L. RAO : The hon. member is not entirely correct. Hydro power is the best and cheapest in the world and available very easily. It is also flexible for meeting peak demands. It is one of the first class sources of power, but unfortunately in our country it is concentrated only in the Himalayas and western ghats. It is not a question of hydro versus thermal ; it is a combination of both.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA : What are the reasons for the acute shortage of power in Gujarat during the current year ? Six reasons are given in the statement, but what about Gujarat ?

MR. SPEAKER : They are for all.

DR. K. L. RAO : In Gujarat the reason for power cut is that Tarapore equipment has failed and Dhuvaran, which was expected to be commissioned much earlier, is being delayed. Now both of them are operating and there is no power cut now in Gujarat.

SHRI S. A. KADER : If I heard the Minister aright, he said that power shortage is also due to the closing down of power stations due to inefficiency. May I know how much percentage of power has been reduced on that account ? What steps have Government taken to remove this inefficiency among the administration ? What steps are taken against those persons who are inefficient and responsible for the closure of power stations ?

DR. K. L. RAO : One important reason is the inefficiency of the operation and maintenance staff. I am afraid we have got to accept this position because we have just started power development in a big way. Apart from engineers, we do not have experienced technicians who should be able to smell out difficulties in advance. This class, I am afraid, we have not got in the country and we have got to develop that class. Delhi power station is now being operated by persons having six years' experience in Delhi itself. But people should have experience all over. That sort of people are required. At DVC and Neiveli we have some training classes. We want to open some more training classes and make up the deficiency.

श्री सरजू पांडे : अभी अभी हाल ही में उत्तर प्रदेश की सरकार ने 25 प्रतिशत पावर कट कर दिया। इससे बहुत सारे उद्योग धन्धे बन्द हो गये। तो क्या यह बात मंत्री जी की नोटिस में आई है और उस 25 प्रतिशत को पुनः ठीक करने के लिए ताकि उद्योग धन्धे फिर से चालू किए जा सकें, केन्द्रीय सरकार क्या कर रही है ?

DR. K. L. RAO : UP has been experiencing power-cut for the last one year. It is one State where the shortage is maximum in the country. While other States have reduced the cut, UP could not do it because of perpetual shortage. We are trying to get power from wherever it is possible like DVC, Bihar and something from Delhi also, but that is a very small amount. The only way to meet the shortage there is to accelerate the construction of the power stations in that area and try to commission them as quickly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER : We have spent half an hour on this question. I think we should stop here. Next question.

Trade relations with Formosa

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*123. SHRI SAMAR GUHA :
SHRI ISHWAR CHAUDHRY :

Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India is having trade relations with Formosa through both public sector and private sector channels ;

(b) if so, the nature, extent and volume of trade between the two countries ;

(c) the names of the officers of his Ministry or public sector bodies under his Ministry who visited Formosa during the last three years ; and

(d) the expected scope for expansion of trade with Formosa ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.