

Completion of Idikki Power Project

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*124. SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA:
SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD
MANDAL:

Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether revised targets for the completion of Idikki Power Project are not likely to be achieved; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA): (a) and (b). It is likely that the first unit will be commissioned in March 1975 instead of December, 1974. This slight delay is anticipated due to labour unrest.

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA: May I know from the Government if this delay in the completion of the project is only the first delay, because, previously to that also, there was a delay, since it was envisaged that the project should be finished by 1973? Then there was some delay for six months; then again this is the third delay, not the first delay. May I know from the Government if they are very definite that this will be the last delay and not the first, second or the third delay?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO): Actually, this project must have been completed in 1971. There has been a delay of three years. It has been unfortunate; and it was mainly due to labour unrest. (*Interruption*). Essentially it was due to labour unrest, and possibly some financial strain. But we have been trying to watch this very carefully and we hope that this project will be completed—this is a very useful project—in time by 1975 March.

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA: I would like to draw the attention of the Chair to the original reply which says:

"It is likely that the first unit will be commissioned in March 1975 instead of December 1974."

The reply now given is that it should have been completed by 1971 and not in December 1974. It is a mis-statement of fact. Along with the delay in the completion of the project, there has been a revision of the estimate amounting to Rs. 85 crores or a little more than that. So, I wanted to know if there is likely to be delay in the completion of the project and also whether there is likely to be some more cost added to the project as has been done previously.

DR. K. L. RAO: The original date fixed for the completion of the project when it was sanctioned was 1971, but due to the several reasons that I have mentioned the date was postponed from time to time; it was first 1973, and then again to 1974. Now, we hope it will finally be finished by March, 1975. About the estimate, the last estimate was put at about Rs. 80 crores.

श्री यमुना प्रसाद मण्डल : मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि फर्स्ट यूनिट मार्च 1975 तक कमीशन हो जायगी, जब कि पहले अनुमान था कि दिसम्बर, 1974 में पूरी होने वाली थी।

It says instead of December 1974, it is going to be commissioned in 1975. So, there is a slight delay of some three or four months due to labour unrest.

तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि अब मार्च 1975 से आगे फिर तो नहीं इस को बढ़ाया जायगा ?

श्री बालगोविन्द वर्मा : अभी तो यही आशा है कि 1975 से आगे नहीं बढ़ने दिया जायगा।

SHRI H. M. PATEL: The Minister's reply is to the effect that 1971 was not the correct date for the completion of this project and that the real date is 1974, and, therefore, the delay is only of a few months. If I have understood him aright, then, I say it seems to me to be a misunderstanding because the project has been delayed as a result of labour troubles repeatedly for the last three years. The project, which should have been completed in 1971 has, in effect, been delayed by four years, and it may considerably be

delayed further because the labour troubles are not over. Will the Minister kindly elucidate the position audibly?

DR. K. L. RAO: It is true that I submitted that according to the original plan, it should have been completed in 1971. This is one of the very useful projects which gives plenty of power and had it been completed Kerala would have gained a lot of money, because it is a surplus State and it could have sold it to Tamil Nadu and Mysore and earned a lot of money. But unfortunately I must accept that there has been a certain amount of labour trouble. We have got a review of the project every three months. No other project was paid so much attention as this one. But in spite of that, it has been found that every time there is some trouble or other. There is go slow now. This is very unfortunate, because it is an extremely good project. Government of Kerala is very anxious about it and it is doing its best. I would appeal even now to the various members concerned to see that a little more activity is put in. If that is done, we can do it even before 1974 itself.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Will the Minister be good enough to indicate what has been the extra cost as a result of this delay to the Government of India or Government of Kerala?

DR. K. L. RAO: I would not say extra cost due to the delay. But the extra cost over the revised estimate due to various circumstances like the devaluation, the conflict with Pakistan, the general price rise, etc., is about Rs. 12 crores.

श्री राम कंबर : श्री मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि श्रमिकों की वजह से इस कार्य में बाधा पड़ी। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उन श्रमिकों की समस्या मूल रूप से हल हो गई है जिस में, जैसा आप ने कहा, यह योजना 1975 तक पूरी हो सके ?

DR. K. L. RAO: As I said, the Government of Kerala is very anxious and they are doing their best in this direction. Now of course the monsoon season is there and no work can be done now.

The work will be resumed in October. I feel, as I said, the project could be completed even by 1974 if there is a little more activity.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: The Minister says that the delay in the completion of the project is entirely due to labour trouble. May I know whether there have not been cases of disputes between the contractors and the Government and this has also contributed to the delay in the completion of the project? May I know whether the stubbornness of the Government in not granting to the labour some rise in the wages as a result of the rise in cost of living is also responsible for the delay and this could have been avoided? In one word, I want to know whether the disputes between the contractors and the Government have been a greater contributory factor to the delay in the completion of the project and that the contribution to the delay by the labour is only fractional?

DR. K. L. RAO: I submitted there may be many other factors. But, according to my judgement the major factor was the labour trouble.

Deposits Collected by Maruti Limited

*125. SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maruti Limited has collected deposits worth Rs. 4 crores from 200 agents/depositors;

(b) if this figure is not correct, what is the actual figure of the deposits collected;

(c) what is the rate of interest, if any, on these deposits; and

(d) whether permission from Government to collect deposits from would-be agents was given by Government to Maruti Limited?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI DEBARATA BARUA): (a) to (c). The latest balance sheet of Maruti Limited filed with