

not taken any decision about bringing in a legislation under Entry 56. We have been consulting the States. That is a different matter altogether.

SHRI H. N. NANJE GOWDA: I wanted to know whether the Government would enunciate a national water policy fixing priorities. For example, if a dispute goes before the Tribunals, they do not have guidelines as such as on date. Do the Government of India want to enunciate a national water policy fixing priorities, like percentage on population-wise and so on, so that it could be a guideline for all the States? Are the Government thinking on those lines?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: Sir, the Government is thinking on those lines. The Karnataka Government has suggested that some national water policy should be there. We are considering that point.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: The idea of having a national water perspective plan is a very good one. But I would like to know from the Minister whether in view of the fact that the Southern States are at a great disadvantage vis-a-vis the Northern States, in the sense that the rivers in the Southern States are being utilised to the extent of about 90, 95% whereas the waters in the Northern States are being fairly utilised, the Government is still considering or has rejected the Ganga-Cauvery Link Plan that was presented some time ago?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: The national perspective plan is, as a matter of fact an improvement on the earlier two proposals made by Dr. K. L. Rao and Dastur's formula. There are two components in the national perspective plan. In the earlier two proposals, there was a suggestion of linking the Northern rivers with the Southern rivers. Now, there are some difficulties in developing storage sites in the Northern area.

Now, this National Perspective Plan has two components. One component

is to develop all the Himalaya-rivers—Ganga-Brahmaputra basin—and the other component is to develop the peninsular rivers. As far as the Himalayan rivers are concerned, an international angle is also involved in it. Therefore, if we take the two together, it will be unnecessarily delayed. Therefore, the National Perspective Plan has been so designed that we should first try to develop the Peninsular rivers, investigate them and try to divert water from the surplus areas to the scarcity areas. Then, we should take up the other component to develop the Himalayan rivers and we can link both of them.

Removal of Restriction on Cutting Forests for Laying Water Lines

*416. **PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have debarred all State Governments, except with prior approval of Central Government, from making any orders directing restrictions of dereservation of forests or use of forest land for non-forest purpose vide Forest (Conservation) Ordinance (No. 17 of 1980);

(b) whether use of forest land or cutting of trees even for laying down pipes of the Drinking Water Supply Schemes was objected to by the Forest Officers;

(c) if so, whether Government would take into account difficulties caused by this Order and exempt use of forest land or cutting of trees to the extent to which it becomes unavoidable for construction of Drinking Water Supply Schemes, in view of the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990);

(d) if so, when a decision would be taken in this regard;

(e) whether any rules, as contemplated in the said Ordinance, have been framed; and

(f) If so, nature and scope thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH):

(a) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, which has replaced the Forest (Conservation) Ordinance promulgated on 25th October, 1980, lays down that no State Government or other authority shall make, except with the prior approval of the Central Government, any order directing that any reserved forest or any portion thereof shall cease to be reserved or that any forest land or any portion thereof may be used for any non-forest purpose. For the purpose of the Act, 'non-forest purposes' means breaking up or clearing of any forest land or portion thereto for any purpose other than re-afforestation.

(b) The provisions of the forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, apply to use of any forest land or any portion thereof for any non-forest purpose. No report has been received by Government regarding objection raised by forest officers to any drinking water supply scheme.

(c) and (d). Government gives priority consideration to drinking water supply schemes. All proposals received so far under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, in which use of forest land for drinking water supply schemes has been considered unavoidable, have been accepted on merits.

(e) and (f). The Forest (Conservation) Rules, 1981, framed under Section 4(1) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, have already been laid on the Table of the House on 24th August, 1981. Another copy of the Rules is again laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-3163/81].

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: My question related to the difficulties caused in the laying down of the drinking water schemes. From my own experience, I can say that if there

is no total rejection, even then considerable delay is caused in the process of setting up of a committee at the district level; then, the State Government forwards the scheme to the Central Government and, finally, the committee as provided under rule 5 considers it and, ultimately, the whole thing is delayed, if not more, at least by one year. In view of the necessity to provide drinking water, may I know from the hon. Minister whether, in cases where drinking water supply schemes are involved and delay is likely to be caused, any time limit would be fixed by which the Central Government would clear such proposals as and when they come.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I do not know what difficulties are foreseen by the hon. Member. We have so far received only two proposals for water supply schemes and those two proposals are from Maharashtra only. Both the proposals have already been cleared speedily. There is no proposal at present pending with us. If there is any delay in consideration, that is at the level of the State Government itself. The State Government can lay down its own rules for speeding up the whole procedure. We have only provided for pro forma information to be sent by the State Government. How soon the State agencies can prepare that pro forma information and send to the Centre depends upon the State Government. So far as the Central Government is concerned, I assure the House that all development schemes and particularly, schemes relating to drinking water supply will not be delayed.

PROF. NARIAN CHAND PARASHAR: My question was specific regarding time limit, if it can be feasible.

Secondly, a Committee has been provided for as envisaged in sections (2) and (5) of the Rules. What is the composition of the Committee? Is there any particular State concerned?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: The rules have been laid on the Table of the

House. They were provided earlier also. The Committee at the Centre is headed by the Inspector-General of Forests; representatives from other Ministries like Environment are also members of the Committee. This is a Committee of officers, I have said earlier in the House while piloting the Bill. We have also provided that, wherever, after receipt of proposals from the State there are any queries raised by this Committee, the reply will be sent by the States within six weeks. That only means that we want to speed up the whole procedure so that it is not held up at the Central level. But I cannot lay down a definite time limit for drinking water supply schemes. It all depends on the merits of each scheme. All I can say is that they will receive the highest priority.

SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY: The Forest Conservation Act which has recently been passed by Parliament completely prohibits the State Governments taking up any irrigation projects or even rural electrification programme; the Forest Department started posing even laying of electric lines. In view of this fact I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is prepared to make an exemption in the Act itself to provide for taking up irrigation projects as well as electrification programmes.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: The whole purpose of the Act will be defeated if the States are allowed to exercise powers in this matter. This is why we have passed this legislation in Parliament—because we found that there was indiscriminate felling of trees and clearing of forests and it required some Central supervision. Even now we are not fully satisfied. We are thinking of a comprehensive legislation on the subject to be brought before Parliament.

श्री शिव कुमार सिंह ठाकुर: माननीय कृष्ण महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या कि उन्होंने

बताया है कि केवल महाराष्ट्र से दो प्रस्ताव आपके पास अनुमति के लिए आए हैं, लेकिन क्या यह सही नहीं है कि मध्य प्रदेश से एक को-ऑपरेटिव शुगर फैक्ट्री के लिए एक प्रस्ताव राज्य शासन की ओर से 4 माह पूर्व आया है ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: This question relates only to schemes for drinking water supply. I have got information about the total number of proposals received and the number of applications rejected and those accepted. But I do not have information with regard to any particular factory.

श्री कृष्ण वत्त मुल्तानपुरी : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि हिमाचल प्रदेश के पहाड़ी क्षेत्र में मिट्टी बट कर नीचे पंजाब और हरियाणा के इलाके में आती है, क्योंकि ऊपर पेड़ काट लिए गए हैं। इस मिट्टी में डैमों को नुकसान होता है और लोगों को परेशानी होती है। वहाँ पर ज्यादा से ज्यादा वन लगाने और धनों की कटाई रोकने के लिए राज्य सरकार को किस तरह मदद दी जा रही है ?

श्री बीरेन्द्र राव सिंह: स्पीकर साहब, यह तो हाउस में कई बार बताया जा चुका है कि हमारा फारेस्ट्री प्रोग्राम काफी तेजी से चला है। जहाँ टाइटो हम ने इस साल के लिए रखे थे, वे सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट ने प्रधान मंत्री के आदेश से फिर स्टेट्स में जहाँ कहीं कम ढरहते लगाने थे वहाँ फिर अपवर्ड रिवीजन के लिए काफी पैसा दिया जा रहा है और एफारेस्टेशन के लिए तो अब बहुत रकम बढ़ा दी गई है। पहले प्लान की निस्वत 10-11 गुनी तेज करने का फैसला किया गया है। कोई 10, 11 भुना हमने यह प्रोग्राम तेज कर दिया है। इस प्लान में देकर 100 मिलों को छांटा जा रहा है जिन में इंटेक्टिव फारेस्ट्री प्रोग्राम चलाया जाएगा। सांगन फारेस्ट्री पर बहुत जोर है, और हिमाचल प्रदेश में तो इसके लिये खास तौर से धनराशि दी गई है।