

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK : Since this is a special Ministry with a special task I would like to know in case a project is not implemented as per the schedule what action are you going to take against your colleagues ?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY : I have already said that the flash report goes to no less a person than the Prime Minister every month. The Prime Minister is there on our neck to take effective action and we take effective action.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASS MUNSI : Sir, there are certain projects which are definitely being monitored by the Government of India in respect of States and for their successful implementation Government needs total participation and cooperation of the respective State governments. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he will take personal and effective steps to see that the Tube Railway Project, circular Railway Project and the second Hooghly Bridge project of Calcutta which are taking long time for completion because of the non-performance and totally hostile attitude of the State Government get completed ? Will the Minister examine the matter and take steps accordingly ?

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY : The hon. Member knows the reason of the delay of Calcutta Underground Railway. The main reasons of the delay are : problems of land acquisition ; learning process because it is a first project of its kind and inadequate construction performance. (*Interruptions*) Only the other day I had a meeting with the Chief Minister of West Bengal to remove certain bottlenecks. Well I would not say—now they will all be getting up and shouting—that we are not getting any cooperation from the State Government but I will say that we are not getting cooperation to that extent. (*Interruptions*) Our people who want to work are not allowed to work.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Sir, many projects are pending from Andhra Pradesh. We are marching towards the 21st century. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister is going to clear those

projects during this century ? The projects are—Ichimpalli, Pollanaram, Telugu Ganga and Vizag steel plant. I want a categorical answer as to when you are going to clear these projects.

SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY : Sir, the clearance part is not on me. It is for the Planning Commission. The hon. Member should ask the Planning Commission.

[*Translation*]

Clearance to Bhensatori Irrigation scheme in District Guna, Madhya Pradesh

*250 **SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bhensatori Irrigation Scheme in District Guna (Madhya Pradesh) has been pending clearance of the Union Government (Ministry of Environment and Forests) for about nine year ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ; and

(c) when the requisite clearance would be given to the scheme ?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The proposal for diversion of 295.146 hectares of forest land for the Bhensatori Tank Project which was received in the Department on 11.1.1984, was rejected on 24.6.1985.

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : According to the National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad, forest coverage in Madhya Pradesh has gone down by 17 per cent and the forest area has come down from 10.86 million hectares to 9.02 million hectares,

However, the officers sitting at Delhi in their airconditioned rooms accept or reject certain schemes taking the forest areas indicated on the maps published many years ago. I know that this particular area is totally barren. There are no forests, but they have rejected this scheme just on the basis of the old maps. Will the hon. Minister kindly check up again on the basis of the survey of the National Remote Sensing Agency and by sending some officers at the spot and find out the correct position? This is specially so, because this interior area of my Parliamentary Constituency, Guna, is a place, where there is not only irrigation problem, there is shortage of drinking water also. In view of this, people refuse to negotiate the marriages of their daughters in this area, because they will have to walk for miles to fetch drinking water. Will the hon. Minister kindly send some officers on the spot to find out the correct position before rejecting my request?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : I do not know about the information which the hon. Member has got. According to the information which we have, we have to sacrifice 36,907 trees if we just clear this project. As the House is aware, we passed the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 only because the forests were being cut indiscriminately affecting the ecology of this country and endangering the whole civilization of this country. We had to bring that Act. Since 1980 the rate of deforestation and conversion of forest land for other usages has come down.

The Forest Conservation Act was passed in 1980. Cases which had been cleared by the State Governments and where notifications had been issued for converting the forest lands for some other usages, projects etc., and actual orders had been passed for deforestation, those cases were not covered under the purview of this Act of 1980. This particular case came to us in 1984 after the Forest Conservation Act was passed. But the work on this project started in 1980 without bringing this to our knowledge and without taking our clearance. It is just by passing the authority of this Parliament and getting no clearance according to the Act from the Forest Department of the Government of India. Therefore, the Prime Minister

has taken a decision and has also given a directive that all those cases in which just by passing the clearance, without taking the clearance, the work has been started, should be rejected outright and should not be cleared.

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : In view of the new fact conveyed to you by me, will you kindly reconsider this case because there is actually no forest and this area is a totally barren land? I request the hon. Minister to send his officers for an on-the-spot study to see whether any forest is left in the area before finally rejecting it. Secondly, keeping in view the survey of the National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad, will the Minister see that new maps are drawn so that the future schemes will not suffer the fate which my scheme has suffered? First of all, the State Governments will not be required to send those schemes when there is no forest. If the maps are redrawn, the question of rejecting clearance does not arise in such cases where there are no forests.

(Interruptions)

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : May I most respectfully inform the hon. House member that wherever there are such projects, our officers inspect the areas on the spot and a decision is taken only after the matter is reported to the Committee. In this particular case, according to the reports which we have got, it is they who have reported that the work had already started in 1980 and it came to us for clearance in 1984 and again it is they who have reported that we have to sacrifice 36,709 trees.

MR. SPEAKER : He is saying that it may be reviewed.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : In view of the submission made by the hon. member, the Minister may clarify.... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : Officers are not sent there.

MR. SPEAKER : You have pointed it out.

(Interruptions)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : You get yourself satisfied.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a debate.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : I quite appreciate the suggestion made by the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER : You send a man there and find out. That is all.

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : Thank you Sir.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL : The hon. Prime Minister is here and I would like to bring to his kind notice this important matter. Forests are very useful to the country and there is no doubt about that. But irrigation dams are more useful to the nation. Many useful proposals from the State Government to construct dams are pending with the Central Government and due to disagreement by the Forest Department, these useful proposals could not be taken up. If these dams are constructed, thousands of hectares of land could be irrigated. So it is necessary to rethink about these long-pending proposals. In my constituency, for instance, there are two proposals pending for the last 20 years.....

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRATAP BHANU SHARMA : Sir, let us have an Half-an-Hour Discussion on this. There are hundreds of projects lying like this.

MR. SPEAKER : We have talked about it. What more can we do? Mohanbhaiji, you put the question.

SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL : I request the hon. Prime Minister to take into consideration these very useful proposals and also to explain his views on this issue

which is of national importance. In Saurashtra, there is scarcity of drinking water also and these dams will be very useful, if constructed.

MR. SPEAKER : The request will be given due consideration.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : This particular question is regarding one project. I would like to state that not only for this project, but for all those projects, when the Committee takes a decision and recommends certain things either for rejection or for giving clearance, all the facts are taken into account as to what benefits would be derived by the completion of that project and as to what sacrifices we have to make. In this particular project, the benefits that we may derive are very low in comparison to the sacrifices that we have to make.

SHRI HAROOBHAI MIHTA : There are certain projects where there does arise an unavoidable competition between the ecological requirement and the economic development. As for example, in Gujarat, many sensitive works are suffering for want of clearance from the Forest Department. Will the hon. Minister consider to take a little more elastic approach where the question of economic relief comes unavoidably with the ecological requirement?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : As a matter of fact, there is no conflict between the two. The economic development is a must. But, the economic development should not be such so that it may spoil the whole ecology of the country, otherwise it is very difficult to live in this country. Because of this degradation of forests, droughts, floods and all sorts of things just happen which bring more losses to our country, than the benefits by these so-called economic development programmes.

Allocation of Funds to Karnataka for Wasteland Development

*251. SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :