

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

## LOK SABHA

Monday, August 7, 1995 / Shrawana 16, 1917 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at four minutes past Eleven of the Clock

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM MOROCCO

[English]

Mr. Speaker : Hon'ble Members, at the outset, I have to make an announcement.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the Hon'ble Members of the House, I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Mohamad Jalal Essaid, President of the House of Representatives of Morocco and the Hon'ble Members of the Parliamentary Delegation from Morocco who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests.

The other Hon'ble Members of the Delegation are:-

1. Mr. Mohamad Dabach
2. Mr. Abedelkebir Ben Zouina
3. Mr. Arrtara Haj Amara
4. Mr. Mohamed Moussaoui
5. Mr. Mohamed El Basri
6. Mr. Idriss Lachgar
7. Mr. Mohamed Ben Zaroual
8. Mr. Ait M'barak
9. Mr. Abdeljalil Amrana

The Delegation arrived Delhi on 6 August, 1995 evening. They are now seated in the Special Box. We wish them a happy and fruitful stay in our country. Through them we convey our greetings and best wishes to His Majesty the King, the House of the Representatives, the Government and the friendly people of the Kingdom of Morocco.

## ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### Tehri Dam Project

\*101. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government are continuously carrying out the construction of Tehri Dam Project;
- (b) if so, the total expenditure incurred on the construction thereof upto July, 1995;
- (c) whether the Union Government have now finalised the size and nature of this project;
- (d) if so, the total estimated cost of this project as per final decision taken regarding its construction; and
- (e) the time by which it is likely to be completed?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

### STATEMENT

(a) The construction work of Tehri Dam was suspended in April, 1992 on account of agitation and after a comprehensive review of the entire matter in the light of all the objections, it was decided to resume the work from March, 1994 onwards and since then the work is continuing with some interruptions.

(b) The total expenditure incurred on the Project until July, 1995 is Rs. 932 crores (provisional).

(c) & (d) Yes, Sir. The Tehri Hydro Power Complex comprising of the following at an estimated cost of Rs. 5583 crores is envisaged:

- (i) A rockfill Dam with (4x250 MW) Hydro Power Plant.
- (ii) A concrete Koteshwar Dam downstream of Tehri with a (4x100 MW) Hydro Power Plant.
- (iii) A (4x250 MW) Pump Storage Plant at Tehri.
- (iv) Associated Transmission System.

However, the Union Government have finalised the size and nature of the Stage-I of the Project as under :-

	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Crores)
I. Tehri Dam and Hydro Power Plant Stage-I (1000 MW)	2815.00
II. Minimum essential works of:	
(i) Koteshwar Dam & BPP (400 MW)	34.36
(ii) Pump Storage Plant (1000 MW)	114.30
III. Associated Transmission System for Stage-I.	371.00
Total :	3334.66

(e) It is now estimated that if the work is not interrupted, the Stage-I of the project should be ready by the year 2000 A.D.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Tehri Dam Project was envisaged in 1950 and the Planning Commission gave its approval in 1972. Since then, its construction work is being carried out at times and suspended at others. In between, the construction work was suspended for two years. Its cost was estimated at Rs. 194 crores when the decision of its construction was finalised. Today, its cost has escalated to Rs. 5583 crores. This dam project was first envisaged to be constructed with the collaboration of Russia which later backed out. Now the Central Government is going to construct this dam with the collaboration of Hydro Project. In the recent past, Shri Sunder Lal Bahuguna went on a fast unto death in protest against construction of this project when the hon. Prime Minister gave him an assurance of reviewing it afresh. After the Prime Minister's assurance, the hon. Governor met Shri Bahuguna and told him that a total review of the dam will be carried out and a committee will be set up

for the purpose. He also listed the names of the Members to be included in the committee. But, the hon. Prime Minister subsequently stated in a meeting of the leaders of the opposition parties that no review of the dam will be carried out but the new questions raised will alone be discussed. My supplementary is that after a lapse of so much time when a review has been made three times—the hon. Prime Minister gave an assurance in 1992, he gave another assurance when Shri Bahuguna went on a fast - will the issue of environment, besides earthquakes be included in the list of issues for review when repeated reviews are being undertaken?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : In his meeting with Shri Sunder Lal Bahuguna, the hon. Prime Minister had given him assurance saying that there was no need to reconsider the issues whose review had already been conducted because they were fully investigated and scrutinised. He said that the new issues if raised by Shri Bahuguna, will be investigated into. Shri Bahuguna has not raised new issues as yet.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : No, the issues of quakes and environment?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : She has fully replied to your question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Another important issue associated with it is that the whole country has been protesting against the construction of big dams. People have launched agitations against all the big dams envisaged so far in the country - be it the Sardar Sarovar Project, Narmada Sagar, Indravati or Both Ghat Project or Koel Karo Project of Bihar or Mohan Ghati Project of Kerala. Some projects have been left at the mercy of the Government of India and some are lying suspended.

In view of this large scale protest against the construction of big dams, will the Government of India reconsider its concept of big dams and instead, construct small dams which are capable generating equal power capacity?

Rehabilitation has always been a contentious issue. Under the rehabilitation policy of Sardar Sarovar Project to be constructed on river Narmada every adult has been considered as one family whereas it is not so in case of Tehri Garhwal. Will the Government consider formulating similar rehabilitation policies for both the projects?

A survey of Tehri dam was conducted in 1985. Some people, who are not adult at that time have become adult in 1995. Will such adults also be given compensation under the rehabilitation policy in the same fashion?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : I do not visualise any need of reconsidering the policy of big dams because there are two aspects of everything. Similarly, there are both positive and negative factors of big dams. While constructing big dams, their cost benefit ratio, environment and its requirements and all other factors are kept in mind. It is not in the interest of the country to decide that big dams are not necessary. Therefore, I do not think that there is any need to reconsider this issue or formulate a policy for the

purpose.

In reply to the hon. Members' query of the rehabilitation policy, I would like to say that the rehabilitation policy with regard to each dam is formulated keeping in view of the socio-economic conditions of that particular area where the dam is proposed to be constructed and dams are constructed in different states of the country. Hence, different rehabilitation policies are formulated with regard to every dam and there are different aspects of it.

Therefore, having a uniform or a national policy in this regard is not beneficial. This is what I think.

The third thing the honourable Member has said is that there is a separate policy for the evacuated adult people. Each state has to take its own decision. Therefore, to take a similar decision for Tehri or other project as taken for Sardar Sarovar Project will create complications. The decision for Tehri has been taken keeping in view its socio-economic conditions. And I think it has been a correct decision.

SHRI RABI RAY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a very important question. While replying to Shri Patidar's question, the Finance Minister had mentioned a fact. I challenge the veracity of the facts stated by him. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in fact you are aware of this, and I want to know from the Minister, whether it is a fact that the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Motilal Vora had gone there to break Sunderlal Bahuguna's 45-46 days old fast? Is it not a fact that the breaking of his fast was a sequel to their talks? I want to know from the Minister regarding this unambiguous statement of Shri Bahuguna whether it is a fact that the Government had assured him through the Governor that work on the dam would be suspended and a thorough review would be carried out by one expert committee. In his reply the Minister has already accepted that in 1992, the work on this dam was suspended against the backdrop of Shri Bahuguna's fast. Keeping in view the controversy in this regard, I would like to know from Mr. Minister whether the Government would place on the table the tape in which the conversation between Shri Motilal Vora and Shri Bahuguna was recorded?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : No decision was taken to stop work on the dam during the talks held between the U.P. Governor and Shri Bahuguna, during his fast. What transpired during the talks was that Shri Bahuguna's views on Tehri dams construction were not taken into consideration. This aspect would be reconsidered and reconsideration would be done on new and crucial aspects. An expert committee would be constituted to go into such aspects. Till now, Shri Bahuguna has not thrown light on any such new aspects concerning the dam. The moment he does so, the expert committee would be constituted.

As far the suspending the work on the dam, is concerned, this is not necessary. However, this being the monsoon season, the work on the dam is not taking place, only peripheral construction work is going on.

SHRI RABI RAY : I was saying that there is a controversy on both the sides about the talks. My question was, whether the tape of the talks would be placed on the table of the House?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : The Ministry is not aware of any such tape.

SHRI RABI RAY : You get it ascertained.

[English]

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA : The hon. Minister, in her oral reply, said that the Government had considered the cost-benefit ratio of the scheme. Now, I would like to know whether it is true that the original scheme which was to cost about Rs. 2 billion has now been escalated to a great extent and whether or not this has been done without adding to the power benefits and by reducing the projected irrigation schemes. So, there have been these two things. Firstly, the power benefit has not increased; secondly, the irrigation schemes have been reduced by half. And at the same time, there is escalation of cost to a great extent. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they would order an enquiry into the possible misappropriation of funds and looting of funds by the contractors.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : The honourable member has posed a very good question. When the dam was sanctioned in June 1972, its cost was estimated at Rs. 197 crore. Price escalation is inevitable after nearly 22 years.

[English]

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA : The scheme is nowhere near completion.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : It is far from completion.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : Project's price escalation is inevitable. The paper price does increase. When we start after its implementation, and if it goes on for 10 years more, the cost would naturally escalate, we cannot freeze the cost. Regarding cost benefit, that time cost was 78 paise, it too would go up. Due to this the cost benefit ratio also changes. Therefore, it would be futile to determine the present cost benefit ratio and discuss it. I believe that Shri Bahugunaji is causing a great loss to the nation by repeatedly trying to stop the construction of the dam. Because, later, the cost benefit ratio would decrease. The House should therefore think over this.

[English]

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA : Sir, my questions are not answered. I had asked about the possible misappropriation of funds and I had also asked about the reduction of irrigation projects.

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : There is no misappropriation. It is price escalation.... (interruptions) If you have any specific information, you may please pass it on to us.... (interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I think, these two things are not connected. Cost-benefit ratio and misappropriation do not go together.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI N.K.P. SALVE) : Sir, as a matter of fact, on receiving complaints about corruption in the execution of the project, we had constituted an expert committee. Top most people were appointed to this Committee.

Somebody had reported to us because the matter was very serious. They said that sub-standard material was being used. If sub-standard material is being used, that means it is a serious potential danger to the safety of the Dam. Sir, that Committee has reported that there is absolutely no question of corruption; standard material is being used. I am talking of the report of that Committee, Sir, It has given totally a clean chit in the matter.

[Translation]

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are several aspects to be reckoned with regarding the controversy concerning the pro and anti views on the construction of Tehri dam. One is regarding the design specification. Governments stand has not been clear on this. My question to the Minister regarding design specification has three parts. First, at what peak ground escalation is the dam being constructed and what is magnitude of MQ on the Richter scale? When you talk of 1972, these values then stood at 6 and .25 respectively. But after the earthquakes etc., these values are considered to have increased. The Minister should clarify the values for which the design has been made.

Second part of the question is, whether the dynamic test, known as the 'gazelle' test has been conducted to determine these values. If so, what is the result? If the result has been favourable, why has this not been made public. What steps are you taking to allay the doubts of the people of the area that in case breach occurs in the dam, then the area upto Haridwar would be submerged under 100 feet of water.

The last part of my question relates to environment. Has the dam been environmentally cleared? If so, then whether any disaster management plan has been formulated? If not, the reasons therefor?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : The design of the Tehri dam has been revised. Now from 6 it can withstand earthquake upto 8 on the Richter scale. The peak ground escalation has been raised upto .5 .... (interruptions)

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI : Have you raised it to .5?

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : Yes.. (interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This is very technical; if you have the information, you may please give it.

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL : I have got the information. It is on eight and the peak ground escalation is 0.5 G.

[Translation]

Gazelle test was carried out. It was previously 1.36 and .72 G units. We had this checked thoroughly to leave no scope for any danger. The report has been submitted. Regarding

your query on the disaster management plan, it has been formulated and it is being implemented there.

The committee which was set up in this regard has opined that the work is going on satisfactorily.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :** The hon. Minister has just now told about the first report of this dam that no new issues will come up. I would like to say that in 1980, when a movement was launched for the first time on this issue, the then Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi had given orders for an enquiry into it. I would like to read out whatever she had said at that time -

[English]

"It seems that larger areas of very fertile land are being submerged without any commensurate gains. It is true that these decisions have been taken over a period of time but there is great local distress and a feeling that the contractors and other such groups will be the gainers".

[Translation]

These are the words of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, which she had written with her own hand.

At the end, she had asked the officials of the Department of Science and Technology.

[English]

"Have another look, in-depth, on this project."

[Translation]

The report of the committee was received in 1986.

The committee had advised to stop the work. Although Rs. 206 crore had already been spent on this work yet the committee advised to stop work on it. However the Government did not accept it. Moreover the report was also left unimplemented.

I would like to quote a sentence of the report of the Environmental Appraisal Committee of the Ministry of Environmental submitted in 1990 -

[English]

"Taking into consideration the geological and social impacts accompanying the Project, the cost and the benefits expected and after a careful examination of the information and data available, the Committee has come to the unanimous conclusion that the Tehri Project as proposed should not be taken up as it does not merit environmental clearance."

[Translation]

I would like to know whether the Government is ready to put forth the reports of all the enquiries conducted so far with full transparency? Otherwise the need of setting up of a committee like that set up in the case of Enron may arise to place the facts before public.

**SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL :** Keeping all these things in mind, it was decided to construct this dam as rock field type. First of all, I would like to inform you that an expert of U.N. Mr. Yokolo had visited here in 1967 and he had given his report after carrying out the study of this dam. After this, report, James Berry Cook, who is an engineer and Geologist and is considered a renowned consultant of big

dams, was consulted. He submitted his report in 1972 and later stated -

[English]

"The site, geology and topography and the available materials combined together to make 800 feet high dam is feasible."

[Translation]

After that, a high level committee was set up in 1990. This committee also reviewed it. The Director General of the Geological Survey of India, Member of the Research Institute, Head of the Earthquake Engineering Department and the eminent scientist like Shri V.K Gaur from Roorkee were in the committee. They said :-

[English]

"There is no danger to this dam. The Committee has also noted that there will be no additional threat posed to this reservoir in this seismicity to the dam and the civilian structure in the vicinity.

[Translation]

Later on, James Berry Cook was apprised of the views of Shri V.K. Gaur. Who submitted his report after two months. The high level committee examined that report again. After its study, this report was referred to Prof. Jaikrishan, who is considered the renowned seismic expert of the world. He added important thing :

[English]

"I have no hesitation to recommend that the proposed dam sanctioned for the Tehri Project is safe from the point of view of the seismicity of the region. Since the conservatism has entered almost every strata of the decision making, the overall factor of the safety of the dam is high enough to eliminate any risk from the earthquake of the future.

[Translation]

Thereafter, on the advice of Department of Mines this report was shown to an Expert Group. Then followed an independent survey by the experts of the U.S.S.R. Who gave a clear indication about the environment as under :

[English]

"The dam has been tested in a peak ground acceleration of .5g for a magnitude 8 earthquake and is found to be safe. With these studies the geometry of the core has been optimised and with the outer source the top width and the base width remain the same as proposed earlier by the engineers."

[Translation]

In the end, study in respect of Gazelle earthquake was carried out and it was stated in the report that in case any damage takes place, it will not cause any devastation.

#### Visit of Deputy Prime Minister of Russia

[English]

\*102. **SHRI RABI RAY :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia had visited India recently;