

gets into a terminal malaise, can we have an opportunity in this House to discuss it? It is far too serious a matter. The entire country, if it goes back again into 1991 and earlier days, will be in a very, very terrible situation, if these facts are anything, especially about five thousand crores, Five thousand crores is just nothing! Is it so? Therefore, Sir, I would urge through you whether there is likely to be an opportunity for us to discuss all these matters with the seriousness it deserves from our part and from the part of the Government. If you allow things to go on languishing, we are at the been-end of a collapse of the economy, and if we allow it to go on—I mean, it is not only to criticise, we are supporting the Government, we like to support it, but we have not bartered away our consciousness—it is necessary for us to take cognizance of the very serious situation existing in the country. Thank you, Sir.

**RE: HINDRANCE IN FLOW OF WATER IN ANDHRA PRADESH DUE TO COMPLETION OF ALMATTI DAM BY KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT**

SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am raising an important issue relating to the apprehensions and fears of the farmers of Krishna Basin of Andhra Pradesh, the inter-State river water dispute between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh relating to Almatti Dam. The United Front Steering Committee constituted a Committee of four Chief Ministers under the leadership of hon. Chief Minister of West Bengal. The Committee of Chief Ministers constituted an Experts Committee under the leadership of Engineer-in-Chief, Irrigation, West Bengal, comprising Chief Engineers of Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Assam. The panel of Experts has inspected the Almatti Dam and yet they have to submit their report to the Chief Minister of West Bengal who is the convenor to mediate the issue. Recently, the Government of India has released a grant of Rs. 140 crores for accelerating irrigation benefit programme and for completion of various canals under the Upper Krishna Projects. I fear that these funds may be utilised by the Karnataka Government to increase the height of Almatti

dam. I request the Centre to intervene so that the Karnataka Government may not spend these funds on Almatti Dam. I demand that the Union Government should intervene and ensure that the farmers of Krishna basin in Andhra Pradesh are not put to undue hardship by depriving them of their riparian rights. I once again demand that the Government of India should intervene and stop further work on Almatti dam till the expert committee gives its opinion. According to THE HINDU dated 6.11.1996, the Chief Minister of Karnataka and the Irrigation Minister of Karnataka have stated that erection of crest gates at Almatti dam will be completed by June, 1997 and the total completion of the dam will be over by 1999. So, I request the Centre to intervene and stop the work till the expert committee gives its opinion. Thank you.

DR Y. RADHAKRISHNA MURTY. Sir, I associate myself with the views expressed by Shri Yerra Narayanaswamy.

**RE: LEASING OF DIAMOND MINES BY MADHYA PRADESH GOVERNMENT TO BE BEERS**

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I am drawing, through you, the kind attention of the Central Government and the whole nation to an urgent matter of public importance regarding the attitude of the Madhya Pradesh Government in leasing out the Devbhog diamond mines to De Beers.

Sir, despite repeated denials, the Madhya Pradesh Government has made up its mind to lease out the diamond rich Devbhog mines in Chhatisgarh region to a South African multinational, De Beers, which has formed an Indian company in collaboration with the Reliance Industries. The State Chief Minister had led a small delegation in the recent past to South Africa where the deal was informally struck. No wonder, the ruling and opposition leaders and activists protested against the deal and stopped De Beers' representatives from entering Chhatisgarh. That was on the night of 5th December, 1996. Interestingly enough, one former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, a veteran ruling party leader, who is a vociferous opponent of De Beers, who was