

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: They want to flout the rules....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is my ruling. I am not prepared to take a final decision until this matter has been discussed in the Rules Committee. Then, I will come to the House. You will have an ample opportunity to speak on that....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Sir, I bow my head before your ruling. I want to ask this before the House...*(Interruptions)*

श्री एस० एस० ग्रहनुवाल्या : बंठिए ।

DR. BAPU KALDATE: Why did you not sit down when the Chairman had given the ruling?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will come back to the House. Tomorrow, we are having the Rules Committee meeting. I will come back to the House. Everybody will have an opportunity to discuss and differ or agree with it at that time....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: I am asking this of the Leader of the House. He has been making statements outside the House. Why is he so panicky about it? He is making statements outside the House even before answering questions before Parliament....*(Interruptions)*

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: This is a baseless allegation that the Government is afraid of anything.

Creation of City Forest

*322. **SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL:** Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal under their consideration to create City Forest;

(b) whether any such scheme has been sponsored by the Central Government;

(c) if so, the details of the scheme and the funds earmarked therefor;

(d) whether any such scheme is being implemented in Gujarat; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Some of the State Governments had approached the Government of India for financial assistance to enable them to take up programmes for creating City Forests in certain towns and cities of those States. The Ministry of Environment and Forests also felt that the national afforestation effort requires action in urban and semi-urban areas, along with the on-going efforts in rural areas. The National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board (N.A.E.B.) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests forwarded a proposal to the Planning Commission for a new Plan Scheme for providing central assistance to the State Governments in this behalf, but this has not yet received final approval.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

श्रीमती आनन्दीबेन जेठाभाई पटेल : सभापति जी, दुख की बात यह है कि इतने सालों के बाद भी केन्द्र सरकार ने सिटी फोरस्ट क्रिएट करने के लिए कोई राष्ट्रीय नीति तय नहीं की है। शहरी क्षेत्रों में पर्यावरण की समतुल्यता के लिए सिटी का सामाजिक वर्गीकरण आवश्यक बन गया है। बड़े-बड़े शहरों में रेलवे लाइन हैं। रेलवे लाइन के आसपास जमीन है जिसमें हाण्ड पट्टी बन जाती है। शहरों में बड़ी-बड़ी बिल्डिंग बनती हैं और तब वृक्ष काट दिए जाते हैं। उसको रोकने के लिए और फैक्टरियों में प्रदूषित हवा निकलती है, जिसकी वजह से हवा में प्रदूषण फैलता है, जिससे शहरीजनों में

गंभीर बीमारी होती है। दुनिया के प्रदूषित शहरों में सबसे प्रथम नम्बर पर ग्रहमदाबाद शहर आता है। तो क्या ऐसी परिस्थितियों में पर्यावरण की समतुल्यता बनाए रखने के लिए केन्द्र सरकार ने कोई कदम उठाए हैं? सामाजिक बर्नीकरण में कितनी स्वीकृत सस्थाएं काम कर रही हैं? इन सस्थाओं को केन्द्र सरकार कोई आर्थिक सहायता करती है? यदि करती है तो कितनी सहायता करती है? यदि कोई सहायता नहीं करती है तो केन्द्र सरकार को इसके बारे में सोचना चाहिए?

श्री कमल नाथ : माननीय सदस्य का कहना सही है कि जो बड़े-बड़े शहर हैं, बड़े-बड़े नगर हैं, वे आज प्रदूषण से पीड़ित हैं। इसमें कोई शक नहीं है। जहां तक इनके वनों का प्रश्न है, यह नगर निगम के कार्यक्षेत्रों और जो अरबन डवलपमेंट योजनाएं राज्य सरकार की हैं, यह योजनाएं उसके अन्तर्गत आते हैं और उनमें सम्मिलित रहे हैं। यह गंभीरता देखते हुए हमारे ही मंत्रालय ने प्लानिंग कमीशन को, जिस तरह मैंने अपने जवाब में कहा, प्लानिंग कमीशन को ऐसी योजना भेजी है क्योंकि इसकी आवश्यकता हम भी महसूस करते हैं और मैं माननीय सदस्य से सहमत हूं। जहां तक एन०जी०ओ० का प्रश्न है और सामाजिक सोशल फॉरेस्ट्री का प्रश्न है, इस प्रकार की योजनाएं इसमें सम्मिलित करने के लिए राज्य सरकार अगर ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव भेजे, तो उस पर विचार किया जा सकता है पर जहां तक ग्रहमदाबाद की बात है या गुजरात की बात है, मैं स्पष्ट करना चाहता हूं कि गुजरात सरकार ने ऐसी कोई योजना नहीं भेजी, ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं भेजा और ग्रहमदाबाद की आज के दिन तक कोई ऐसी योजना या प्रस्ताव नहीं है।

श्रीमती आनन्दोबेन जेठाभाई पटेल : शहरों में बड़ी-बड़ी फैक्टरियां बनती जा रही हैं। फैक्टरियों में से सल्फर डाइ-ऑक्साइड, कार्बन डाइऑक्साइड, हाइड्रोजन सल्फाइड, नाइट्रिक ऑक्साइड जैसी जहरीली हवा निकलती है। हवा प्रदूषित होने से कैंसर, टी०बी० जैसी बीमारियां फैलती हैं।

इस प्रवस्था को रोकने के लिए केन्द्र सरकार हर फैक्टरी को पर्यावरण का संतुलन रखने की जिम्मेदारी सौंप सकती है जैसे कि फैक्टरी की परमीशन देते समय फैक्टरी के साथ-साथ कम से कम इतने वृक्ष फैक्टरी के आस-पास लगाने पड़ेंगे, ऐसी कोई योजना क्या केन्द्र सरकार ने सोची है? अगर सोची है तो जामनगर जिले में मोतीखांडी विस्तार में रिलायंस पेट्रो केमिकल फैक्टरी बन रही है। पर्यावरण संतुलन के लिए इस फैक्टरी में वृक्ष लगाने की योजना रिलायंस पेट्रो केमिकल रिफाइनरी को लागू करवाना चाहती है?

श्री कमल नाथ : सर, पर्यावरण स्वीकृति देने का दायित्व जो ज्यादा प्रदूषण करने के उद्योग हैं, करीब 18 या 19, वह एक अधिकार केन्द्र सरकार के पास है, बाकी राज्य सरकारों के पास हैं। जो योजनाएं ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्रीमती आनन्दोबेन जेठाभाई पटेल : पेट्रो केमिकल तो आपके पास है।

एक माननीय सदस्य : आपने क्या किया है?

श्री कमल नाथ : मैं जवाब दे रहा हूँ। अगर आप सुनें तो शायद संतुष्ट होंगे। जहां तक ये जो दायित्व केन्द्र सरकार के पास है, वैसे जो कारखाने जिनकी स्वीकृति दी जाती है, उनमें ग्रीन बेल्ट का प्रावधान रखा जाता है और स्वीकृति की यह एक शर्त भी रहती है। जहां तक एक खास कारखाने की बात है, रिलायंस की जो पेट्रो केमिकल यूनिट है, मैं इस की जांच करा कर जैसे ही आवश्यकता पड़ेगी ग्रीन बेल्ट की, मैं वह आवश्यक कार्रवाई करवाऊंगा।

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : Sir, our cities are becoming 'more and more' concrete forests than green forests. Therefore, it is necessary that all efforts are made by the Centre and the States along with the efforts of the NGOs. In this connection, may I know from the Minister whether

any kind of 'Environment Brigade' has been formed in the country and also in the districts? May I also know from him whether this Environment Brigade will be used for protecting the forests and also creating more city forest awareness? Will he do that with the help of the Environment Brigade?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Environment Brigade, also known as *Paryavaran Vahini*, have been set up in 130 districts in the country. Out of these, they have been set up in five districts in Kerala. These Environment Brigades consist of youths and NGOs. These Environment Brigades, I would not say have responsibility, but have an involvement in all aspects of environment which include pollution, preservation of forests and spreading awareness amongst the people. So, *Paryavaran Vahinis* are actively involved in these 130 districts where these districts within them have large towns, I have no doubt that *Paryavaran Vahinis* will also involve themselves in the preservation and in the promotion of awareness with regard to city forests.

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा : मंत्री महोदय ने यह कहा है कि यह विषय हमारी नगर पालिकाओं या स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स के अंदर है। दिल्ली की जो रिज है वह सीधे-सीधे सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट के अंदर आती है और इन्होंने इसका 70 प्रतिशत भाग पूरी तरह से वर्बाद करके रख दिया है। उसके अंदर बी०एस०एफ० के कैम्प हैं, सी०आर०पी० के कैम्प हैं, आर्मी स्कूल बने हुए हैं, और स्कूलों को जगह दे दी है, ट्रांसपोर्ट वालों को जगह दे दी है। जितना मिस यूज यह कर सकते हो क्रिमिनल तौर पर इन्होंने दिल्ली रिज के साथ किया है। जब यह सीधा-सीधा सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट के अधीन है और इसकी यह हालत है तो आप किस हिसाब से सारे देश को, स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स को उपदेश देते हैं कि इसका ध्यान रखो। दिल्ली के दोनों रिज पर जितना एन्क्रोचमेंट हुआ है या जितना मिस यूज हुआ है उसको रोकने के लिए और उसको जो लगातार बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है उसको रोकने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं ?

श्री कमल नाथ : जहाँ तक दिल्ली रिज का सवाल है माननीय सदस्य की बात सच है। दिल्ली रिज इज लर्ज आफ दिल्ली। इसमें काफी विवाद था कि वह कौन सी एजेंसी के माध्यम से इसको कंट्रोल किया जाए। अब इसका नोटिफिकेशन भारतीय वन अधिनियम के तहत हो गया है और इस पर दिल्ली एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन से चर्चा हो गई है ताकि जो भी इस पर अतिक्रमण हुआ है उसको ठीक किया जा सके। यह बात सही है इसमें कुछ कैम्पस लगे हुए हैं, पुलिस का कैम्प लगा हुआ है और कुछ इसका हिस्सा सालों से ऐसे कामों के लिए उपयोग होता रहा है जिससे दिल्ली रिज के ऊपर कार्फ, प्रेशर पड़ा है। अब जो भारतीय वन अधिनियम के तहत नोटिफिकेशन हुआ है इसके संरक्षण के लिए, मैं समझता हूँ भविष्य में कोई समस्या नहीं होगी।

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम : चार बार नोटिफिकेशन हुआ है ?

श्री कमल नाथ : नोटिफिकेशन केवल एक दफा होता है।

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा : जितनी सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट की एजेंसीज ने उस पर अतिक्रमण किया है उसको आप कैसे रोकेंगे ? Will they be removed or not?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, once the land is notified under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the question of trespass or any unauthorised occupation by any police camp or by anybody does not arise. They have to move, unless and until permission for diversion of the land under the Forest (Conservation) Act is obtained. So, no such permission is being given. The Ridge of Delhi, as I said, is a very important part of Delhi's environment, and all efforts are being made to protect this.

SHRI VIREN L. SHAH: Is there any plan to start any afforestation programme?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, there is an afforestation programme of the Ridge. Efforts are being made in this direction. I have already admitted that there has been some kind of pressure for diversion of the Delhi Ridge. But after the notification under the Indian Forest Act, up till now, various agencies like the DDA, the MCD, the Urban Land Department were all involved in the supervision of this. We are in the process of setting up of a nodal agency to protect it. Now, the Forest Department of Delhi Government which is the authority under the Indian Forest Act for protection is fully seized of the matter. I believe that there shall not be such a problem as we have encountered in the past.

SHRI SOM PAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are large stretches of roads, National Highways, State Highways, streets and roads within the cities and large areas of fallow lands within the cities and on the periphery of large cities. May I know from the Minister whether he would consider bringing forward a legislation to make a certain minimum plantation of trees compulsory for those areas and make the local bodies including the States and the agencies managing the State Highways, the National Highways and the Railway track sidelines responsible for that? I would like to know from the Minister whether he will come out with some legal provision for that and enforce it and make them responsible to have a minimum number of trees planted because I have seen in Delhi many places including colonies which are heavily planted like the Lodi Estate, where I live. The main roads have been crowded. But on the sideways, all, the trees have become dead wood and no replacement is being done. That is why I have put this question.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, there are various types of lands. There are lands owned by private people. There are lands owned by the cooperative societies. In these various lands to have some Omnibus kind of legislation with a mandate to have obligatory plantation, I do not

know whether it is possible. But I agree with the hon. Member that there is a need and requirement for some kind of a mandate. Now, the question whether this is to come by way of legislation at the Central level or at the local self-Government level or whether the Railway would like to frame such kind of rules themselves, is a matter which requires consideration. The Railways has done some good plantation work on the sides of the railway lines. Then, there is the question of irrigation canals. This is a very large spectrum of area which the hon. Member is talking about.

SHRI SOM PAL: Would you like to initiate a discussion to find out the possibility? That is what I want.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: I entirely agree with the Member that there is a need for such a mandate. But, what shape this is to take, is a matter which has to be considered.

SHRI T. A. MOHAMMED SAQHY: I would like to know whether the Government has any proposal to develop the private forests. There are people who are having vast tracts of land which are not being cultivated by them because of its nature, that, hillylands and so on. I would like to know whether the Government will come forward with a legislation to assist them in developing forests in the private lands.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, there is no need for a legislation. There are various schemes of plantation on private lands. Farm forestry is one of them and now for providing credit to this, discussions have been held with NABARD so that financing of farm forestry on private lands can be done. In fact, this is something which is picking up and because of that, we have been able to do very large amount of afforestation in the last three years. So far as private lands are concerned, with the new developments in plantations and the kind of saplings we were able to have where plants are ready for harvesting in almost six, seven

years, it is also becoming more economically viable, especially in marginal lands and lands which do not have adequate irrigation facilities. So, this is something which is catching on, and even financial institutions, including banks, are looking into this matter very seriously.

SHRI T.A. MOHAMMED SAQHY: I would like to know whether there is any subsidy for this purpose. If so, whom should the private party approach for this purpose?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: As I said earlier, there is a scheme of farm-forestry and NARBARD is the right agency to be contacted for this purpose. In the co-operative sector, there are banks which are believed to be happy to fund such schemes.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, about the city forestry, the hon. Minister has been telling us what plans the Ministry is having. We have two very picturesque and beautiful hill stations in Tamil Nadu—Kodaikanal and Ootacamund and the deforestation that is occurring in those hill stations, is a matter of serious concern to all of us, all over the country. In addition to creating city forests, will the Ministry of Environment take steps to stop the deforestation that is going on, practically making these places inhabitable, that is, Ooty and Kodaikanal? Secondly, will the Ministry of Environment consider coordinating with the State Governments to see that unregulated planning permission is not given in places like Ooty and Kodaikanal which is also destroying the trees which are already existing in those places, particularly in view of the High Court judgment in Madras, passing severe strictures against the State Government for allowing a private party to build a multi-storeyed hotel over there. Severe strictures have been passed by the High Court from the environmental angle on the basis of a writ petition filed by an NGO organisation against the hotel. Will the Minister consider co-ordinating with the State Governments to prevent the construction of such buildings in the hill stations?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, deforestation has been a problem. But I am happy to tell the House that as on today, we have access to Satellite imagery and each district is, in fact, on a map picture taken by Satellite by remote sensing. I am happy to state that by the latest Satellite, for the first time, our forest cover is showing an increase. All these years, there was a decline and now that we are seeing the increase in green cover, I hope the momentum of this will increase. Added to this is the enormous environment awareness which we have been successful in building up in the last couple of years. What the hon. Member has said, I think, arises out of this awareness. Acting upon that concern, members of the public have been going to courts, have been going for litigations and have been able to intervene to stop such environmentally destructive projects. I will be happy to coordinate with the Government of Tamil Nadu for any assistance in the matter. We have the Environment Protection Act. Under a notification... *(Interruption)*.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: The building was constructed with the connivance of the State Government. That is the problem actually.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: As per a notification issued by my Ministry last year—I think, in February—all constructions above a certain limit, above a certain height—I do not, off-hand, remember what it is—require approval under the Environment Protection Act. There are State Governments which come to us for protecting such eco-sensitive areas, especially some of our hill stations, which are places of pride for us.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Please take action against the erring State Governments.

323. [The Questioner (Shri V. Gopalsamy) was absent. For answer, vide column...infra.]