

[22 August, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Erosion of Ganga and its tributaries

*373. SHRI MUKUL ROY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Farakka Barrage Authority is mainly responsible for the serious and continuous erosion by the Ganga and its tributaries like Mahananda, Fodhar, etc., in the districts of Malda and Murshidabad during the last three to four years;

(b) how much fund has been released by the Central Government and actually utilized by the Farakka Barrage Authority (F.B.R) during the last three years for erosion-protection work; and

(c) what are the plans for rehabilitation of the families who have lost their homes and lands due to the erosion?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir. The Farakka Barrage Project was constructed in 1975 mainly to ensure availability of water to Calcutta port for its navigability. Anti-erosion works required in the vicinity of barrage from 11.5 km in upstream and 6.9 km in the downstream of barrage were initially carried out by the Farakka Barrage Project.

Flood Management being within the purview of the State Government, the Government of West Bengal is responsible for anti-erosion measures on all rivers in the State of West Bengal including Ganga and Fodhar (Fulahar). However, on the concurrence of Government of West Bengal, the jurisdiction of FBP was extended in 2005 for execution of anti-erosion works in the 40 km upstream and 80 km downstream of the barrage. Accordingly, anti-erosion works have been undertaken by FBP in the extended jurisdiction on river Ganga and Fodhar (Fulahar).

(b) An amount of Rs. 71.00 crore was released for the period 2003-04 to 2005-06 to Farakka Barrage Project by Ministry of Water Resources out of which Rs. 53.60 crore has been utilized up to March, 2006 towards execution of anti-erosion works in Murshidabad and Malda districts.

(c) Farakka Barrage Project has not been assigned the works of rehabilitation of the families who lost their homes and lands due to erosion. This falls within the purview of State Government.