

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday the 3rd December, 1981/
12th Agra-hayana, 1903 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock. Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant

*161. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR:†
SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO
DHABE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant (RAPP) is now fully operational and there is no leakage of coolant water or any other operational defect;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the office of the Chief Engineer of RAPP and that of Narora plant is held by the same incumbent if so, what are the reasons therefor and to what extent this fact is responsible for inadequate maintenance of the RAPP; and

(c) what is the total installed atomic power capacity in the country and what is the total atomic power actually generated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ELECTRONICS AND ENVIRONMENT (SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH): (a) Unit-I of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant is undergoing a maintenance shut-down during which the leaks will be attended to. The second unit of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station is in operation.

(b) No Sir.

(c) The total installed atomic power capacity in the country is 860 MW (e) and the power level generated is approximately 600 MW (e).

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Bhai Mahavir.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, we are unable to hear it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we are unable to hear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Mahavir, you want to hear the first part?

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, it was not audible. Will the hon. Minister take the trouble of reading it out again?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN: I will read:

"(a) Unit-I of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant is undergoing a maintenance shut-down during which the leaks will be attended to. The second unit of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station is in operation.

(b) No, Sir."

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, to take the less important part of the question, he says, "No, Sir" for part (b). I think he should be sure of his facts because my information is that for virtually eight years the same Chief Engineer was looking after the Kota Plant and the Narora Plant and that has delayed and caused indecision at the level of the Narora Plant. In any case, that is about part (b). About Part (a), I would like to ask him if it is a fact that this unit-I of the RAPP (Rajasthan Atomic Power Plant) has never worked even for three months continuously without some trouble ever since it was commissioned and if it is not also a fact that it is working around 24 per cent of the capacity. Sir, will the Minister kindly confirm or deny this report which has appeared in the *Sunday* of whatever date it is...

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: November 8.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does it really matter?

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: It does be-
cause I wish to draw attention to cer-
tain very important things raised in
this article carried by this weekly; it
says that one month earlier the unit
was shut down and it was not dis-
closed till the 26th of October per-
haps, and he refers to it saying that
on the 27th of September it closed
down, and it was disclosed only on
the 26th October when some news
agency flashed the report. And he
says that it was the best kept atomic
secret in our country that the unit
was not working. If that is so, has
the Government any mind to set up
an independent inquiry into the work-
ing of not only the Kota Plant but the
other atomic projects also, because it
is not only a question of...

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is all right.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: ...some
money being lost, but also it is a ques-
tion of radiation hazards; and Sir, an
enquiry is necessary. This report says
also that we also look into the ques-
tion as to how many of our atomic
workers and atomic scientists have
already been exposed to radiation
hazards because of the defect since
this defect between the endshield and
the calendria is of a type which can-
not be easily probed. So, I would
like to know if he has gone into the
matter deeply and if he is in a posi-
tion to satisfy the House that really
everything that is possible is being
done, and the failure of this parti-
cularly...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said it.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I have said
it. Dr. Sethna is on record having
said that the defects in the RAPP
are manufacturing defects when
part-I of it was manufactured in
Canada. If he is aware of that, what
steps have been taken to rectify
them?

श्री सभापति : आपको छोटा करके
अपनी बात कहनी चाहिए ।

डा० भाई महावीर : श्रीमन्, इतनी
सारी बातें छोटा करके नहीं कही जा
सकती हैं ।

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NA-
RAIN SINGH: To the initial question
of the hon. Member regarding delay,
my answer in (b) is absolutely right
for the simple reason, as the hon.
Member and this august House are
aware, that the construction of an
atomic reactor and the various other
allied mechanical and civil works do
not really require an engineer at a
very senior level initially. This is what
happens in all the projects that we
have.

The delay in Narora has not been
because, as the hon. Member said,
there is no placement of a senior
officer. If it is necessary to post an
officer for the reactor itself and for its
highly technical work, that person is
posted. This has already been done.
Mr. Pardiwala has now taken over
the Narora project because work at
RAPP has ceased to be of that cate-
gory where his services would be
necessary, and would be detrimental
for the work if he has two charges.

Coming to the second part, the hon.
Member said that it is a fact that
RAPP-I and RAPP-II have not been
functioning to capacity. I would only
like to state that during 1974-75 in
RAPP-I there were certain problems
initially in the machinery we got
from Canada. The moderator heat
exchangers and even turbine blades
showed defects. As far as turbines are
concerned, there were some construc-
tion problems that we were facing.
They were rectified. But unfortunately
in 1977 we had a very long labour
strike and this particular unit did not
function very well and the poorest
performance was in 1977-78.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Does it
break down every three months. Is
it a fact?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: I think there is a fallacy and we have gone in for newspaper reports. The problems of Rajasthan are slightly different. Rajasthan's entire electrical needs are today not being fulfilled for the simple reason that there is too much dependability on RAPP-I and RAPP-II. As the House is aware, RAPP-II has just got on to the grid and 50 per cent of the power needs of Rajasthan are provided by RAPP-I initially. As the hon. Member would know, the slightest fluctuation in the grid system leads to tripping. This is a precautionary measure with the atomic reactor we have. We have not even been able to have the plant outage for repair from 1978 onwards. What happens then is that if there is some fluctuation it trips...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid, Mr. Minister, you are really straying away from the question. The question that was asked was that in view of the reports of leakage from this plant, are you going to institute an inquiry as to what it is? You have given the cause saying that it is due to mechanical defect in the Canadian equipment. But the question of inquiry is the only one that has to be answered.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, this was raised in the last session of Parliament also and I had specifically answered that this was being looked into and we gave, in fact, a chart showing as to how many outages we had. The problems faced were not really every three months but sometime more often, because we would not have the outages. But then, Sir, if you see the working of this particular unit, you will see that we have had more working days than what we did have in 1977. (Interruptions). Unfortunately, Sir, what happened was (Interruptions), as I was explaining—it is a very important thing which nobody seems to take note of—this particular atomic reactor and RAPP-I and RAPP-II are supplying power to Rajasthan. Now this cannot be done

unless there is also an additional source. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, you will forgive me if I say that you have not followed what the question was. The question was that there are workers who have been affected by radiation due to leakage.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is what Dr. Bhai Mahavir asked.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, he has asked so many questions and I would request for an opportunity of explaining in a more detailed manner because his questions have covered three very important aspects, namely, (1) the aspect of the officer, (2) the aspect that the unit is not working, and (3) the aspect of the radiation hazard. I am still at No (2) and I am yet to come to the question of the radiation hazard. I have not yet finished (Interruptions). Sir, regarding the outages, we have given detailed replies earlier saying that the problems faced were because of labour problems, grid fluctuations, mechanical problems and also because of this leakage that we have. But I can assure this august House that there have been no radiation hazards and nobody has been affected by this particular leakage in the atomic reactor. They have taken steps to secure and get back the radio-active water. We always have a period for a normal outage so that we can look into it. But, as I said earlier, because of the power requirements in Rajasthan and the failure of the rainfall there, we could not have an outage.

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : महापति जी, एक मिनट मेरी बात सुन लें।

मंत्री जी से यह कहिये कि वे तैयार हो कर आयें।

श्री चन्द्र प्रताप नारायण सिंह : मैं बिलकुल तैयार हूँ।

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : : संधार होकर
आइये आप लोग ।

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, you were good enough to advise the Minister to stick to the questions that I had asked. But they have still been missed. Sir, I would like to repeat what I said earlier, just two or three points. Is it a fact that 24 per cent is the capacity at which RAPP-I is working at present? Secondly, have they looked into this aspect that the leakage of heavy water is flowing into the Rana Pratap Sagar because of which there is the possibility of radiation hazard being carried through the water supply? Now, Sir, have they looked into this aspect? Thirdly, this leakage means a loss of Rs. 7.5 crores because of the loss of heavy water. What about that? And, fourthly, Sir, why is it that, when it was defective at the manufacturing stage itself, we accepted this defective equipment? I am asking this question because it is something, as this report has said, dangerously serious. Why have we accepted such a defective equipment from Canada?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, whatever percentage the hon. Member might have quoted, I have got a paper here stating a different percentage, different from what he has given... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have the paper on what?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, it is about the percentage of operating factor. The percentage for RAPP-I of operating factor has been 51.15 up to the end of 31st October 1981 and, for RAPP-II, from April to 31st October 1981, it is 79.29. The first one is 51.15 per cent and the other... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PILOO MODY: There is 100 per cent deviation

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: ...Well, Sir, I would only say to Mr. Piloo Mody that...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not bother about Shri Piloo Mody. (*Interruptions*) Leave him strictly alone. Mr. Dhabe.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Regarding the faulty equipment that we got...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already answered it.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: About the other thing that he said about Canada, initially, at that stage, there were not many countries that were willing to give us this atomic power reactor, and this was...

श्री रीतू मोदी : मजबूरी से लेना पड़ा ।

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: But it was also experimental and something more of a pilot project in Canada. They are facing some problem, but...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have replaced these things?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Yes.

SHRI PILOO MODY: What about radiation? (*Interruptions*)

श्री सभापति : आपने चार क्वेश्चन तो उठाते हैं पूछ लिये ।

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: This is my second question. I did not ask irrelevant things. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister if it was a fact that regarding RAPP-II also there are complaints that the MHE which has been fabricated by Larsen and Toubro is defective and there was an engineer who was then supervising objected to it. The result was that he was transferred. Some defective equipment has come from Larsen and Toubro. Sir, this is important because Larsen and Toubro have been given the contract for the Madras atomic

power plant also. It is again a very large project. If some defective equipment is being taken from Larsen and Toubro, what are the reasons, because, as this Report observes that defective equipment was accepted from Canada?

Then, there is something frightening. Then he goes on to say that the attention of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, who holds the portfolio has time and again been drawn to this fact. Since she happens to be here, we would like to know whether she has applied her mind to see if this Department deserves the attention of a separate, full-fledged Cabinet Minister. Of course, it is her discretion. But these are serious charges that defective equipment is being bought from Larsen and Toubro and there from charges that the Atomic Energy Commission in Bombay are financing the Nehru Centre there... (*Interruptions*)

AN. HON. MEMBER: This is irrelevant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You asked about ... (*Interruptions*)

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I am asking. Will she kindly assure the House that she will give consideration at least to the need for separating... (*Interruptions*) The question is that defective equipment is being procured from Larsen and Toubro in RAPP-II.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Similarly, some defective equipment is being ordered for Madras power plant. If so, would it not be advisable to order an independent and objective inquiry into the whole working of...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want the whole Cabinet to be overhauled. (*Interruptions*)

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: The Prime Minister may consider whether the Atomic Energy Commission is being well looked after and...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not spend too much energy on it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: The hon. Member has already asked this question. I do not know how many more he wants to ask.

Sir, the Department of atomic energy is very important to us and there is no question of not devoting full time attention to its needs. The Department has had some problems as all departments and all spheres of activity have. I do not know of any which has no problems. But as they arise, we naturally look into them. So far as the question as to who should be in charge of the department. I do not think I am expected to answer this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: That is not my question. My question is about the defective equipment from Larsen and Toubro.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: In such matters we go according to the opinion of the Expert Committee. I do not know anything about the equipment. But if complaints are sent, they are looked into. Experts Committees advise us on what to accept and what not to accept.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: Sir, because of this low generation of the atomic power plant in Rajasthan where the normal demand is 160 lakh units, it is giving only 40 per cent of electricity resulting in unprecedented cut of 100 per cent in some industries. Even the agriculturists are not getting the power for the...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: I am asking the question. Sir, the reasons which were given in reply to a question in the Lok Sabha

on 26-11-1980 were that apart from mandays lost in 1979-80, the mandays were not lost due to labour unrest but due to grid problems, equipment and failure of human errors. 64 working days were lost in 1979 and 89 working days were lost in 1980. In his reply of 16th September, 1981, the Minister said that the shortfall is due to various causes like the instability of the grids—Sir, I emphasise this point—and unforeseen problems relating to equipment. May I know from the hon. Minister whether there is any indigenous arrangement in our country to remove the defects or every-time you are required to call the foreigners for removing the defects? For how many days these atomic power stations in the country are stalled because of defective equipment and there is no arrangement for repairing the equipment?

Sir, the last question asked was about the power generation in the country as to what is the total atomic power generated. May I know from the hon. Minister whether with this experience of foreign equipment, any effort will be made to have indigenous equipment manufactured in our public sector undertakings and whether you will rephase your programme—not giving a rosy picture alone but rephase your programme—in view of the difficulties experienced up till now and relief given to the Rajasthan people?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, as far as the problems that the hon. Member has spoken about, I still maintain that the breakdowns have been because of grid equipment and human error....

SHRI PILOO MODY: And mismanagement.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: ... and as regards the second part of his question regarding our capability, I can assure the hon. Member that our future reactor and

atomic energy generation in his country is more or less indigenous. We do not, as the hon. Member stated, depend on foreign technology for repairs.

SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO DHABE: What about rephasing the programme of power generation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: For 22 minutes, we have been on this question.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: A proper functioning of RAPP-I and RAPP-II is very crucial for the power situation in Rajasthan because that State depends very much on how the two units work. Even now, Sir, there is an industrial cut of 50 per cent of power; sometime back it was as much as 100 per cent, not only for a few days but for weeks on. I don't think any State has suffered that badly. So, Sir my question to the hon. Minister would be, when will the Unit II come for full commercial production and when can we hope that the defects that have been detected in Unit I have been rectified and these two units give satisfactory service? My question number two would be...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are entitled to only one question.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Then, Sir, part (b) of my first question would be....

MR. CHAIRMAN: First hear the answer. I cannot enter into a debate with you. You must know that everybody is entitled to only one supplementary. Dr. Bhai Mahavir included four. You are including two.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Sir, I will only ask the hon. Minister to clarify his reply regarding the leakage of the radio-active water into the streams and canals and rivers. It is a very crucial matter. We are greatly concerned there and we want a cate-

gorical assurance from the hon. Minister that no radio-active water is leaking into the water there.

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, I said right in the beginning that there was no leak of this water into any river or stream. It is a leak which has been detected and will be closed by about the middle of this month. On this point, I would just like to read a portion of a press note issued by the Department of Atomic Energy because I feel that this would certainly to an extent clarify...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it a very long one?

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: It is, Sir. May I place it on the Table of the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it will be better if you lay it on the Table.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA: Sir, it will avoid many questions; let him read it out

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, read it out. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH: Sir, I will read a portion of it. Sir, in this Unit-I when the maintenance activities were in progress, it was observed that there was a leak of light water from one of the end-shields. Since the leak was suspected in an area of the end-shield that is not normally accessible, various specialised detection methods had to be used to pinpoint the exact position of the leak. The location of the leak has now been identified and although the size of the leak is very small it is proposed to close this leak prior to restarting the Unit. Necessary laboratory and other activities to close the leak has been worked out. It is expected that the work for closing this leak would be completed in about 2 to 3 weeks from now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I think it is enough. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI J. K. JAIN: Sir, one question only.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I think we cannot just linger over one question.

SHRI PILOO MODY: The leak has been stopped. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we will go to Question No. 162.

श्री जे० के० जैन : सभापति महोदय,

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I give you a chance, I will have to give to six others.

श्री जे० के० जैन : आपने कहा था कि इन के बाद मैं आप को बुला रहा हूँ।

श्री सभापति : मगर स्टेटमेंट उस हद तक पढ़ा नहीं गया था। वह स्टेटमेंट हो गया . . . (व्यवधान) . . . क्योंकि सारी बातें स्टेटमेंट में कवर हो गई हैं।

श्री जे० के० जैन : आपने कहा था मेरा नाम पुकारेंगे। इस लिये मैं निवेदन करता हूँ कि मुझे अवसर दिया जायें।

श्री सभापति : इन को अगर चंस दिया जायेगा . . . (व्यवधान) . . . देखिये वह भी खड़े हैं, वह भी खड़े हैं।

SHRI J. K. JAIN: Only one question, Sir. You had given me an assurance.

श्री रामानन्द यादव : चेयरमैन साहब, आगे बढ़िये। बहुत अधिक इम्पीटेंट क्वेश्चन है आगे . . .

SHRI J. K. JAIN: Sir, you had assured me that you will allow me after him. Please allow me to ask only one question. I will take only one minute.

श्री रामानन्द यादव : चेयरमैन साहब, आप आगे क्वेश्चन लीजिये।

श्री जे० के० जैन : एक मिनट
... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री हरी शंकर भाभड़ा : सभापति महोदय, सभापति महोदय, आप ने सब से पहले मुझ को कहा था।

श्री जे० के० जैन : : आप इधर के लोग जब इंसिस्ट करते हैं तो आप अवसर प्रदान करते हैं। मेरा आपसे निवेदन है...

श्री रामानन्द यादव : सभापति जी, एक बहुत इम्पोर्टेंट क्वेश्चन है। आगे बढ़िए, यह हाइलां अब जेक्शनेबल है।

श्री सभापति : जरा मेरी बात आप मान तो लें। अगर मैंने आपको इजाजत दो तो फिर पंडाराज वाक्स खुल जायेगा।

श्री जे० के० जैन : कभी कभी आप हम लोगों को इंसिस्ट करने पर भी तो कोई सप्लीमेंटरी पूछने का मौका दोजिये। कभी तो मौका देंगे ?

श्री सभापति : मैंने तो सप्लीमेंटरी के लिये मिस्टर मिरधा को मौका दिया था। उन का यह मेडन सप्लीमेंटरी था।

श्री जे० के० जैन : मैं आपसे यह जानना चाहता हूँ -- मैं बैठने को तैयार हूँ -- लेकिन उधर के साइड से जब लोग इंसिस्ट करते हैं तो आप उनको इस प्रकार से सप्लीमेंटरी पूछने का अवसर देते हैं ... (व्यवधान) ... मैं आपसे आश्वासन चाहूंगा, यदि वे लोग कभी इंसिस्ट करेंगे तो उनको आप अवसर प्रदान नहीं करेंगे। मैं बैठने को तैयार हूँ।

श्री सभापति : आप एक दफा नजर उधर करिये। How many people have raised their hands Please raise them again.

देखिये जनाब, किस किस को मना कर सकता हूँ ?

श्री हरी शंकर भाभड़ा : सभापति महोदय, मेरी ओर भी जरा ध्यान दोजिये आपने सबसे पहले मुझ को बोला था कि मेरा नाम ...

श्री सभापति : गलती हुई होगी ...

श्री हरी शंकर भाभड़ा : देखिये आप श्री राम निवास मिरधा को सप्लीमेंटरी पूछने की अनुमति दिये हैं।

श्री सभापति : मुझे उम्मीद थी कि मिस्टर धाबे और डा० भाई महाबीर कम वक्त लेंगे। उन्होंने सारा वक्त खत्म कर दिया।

श्री हरी शंकर भाभड़ा : उस में दोष हमारा नहीं है।

श्री सभापति : अब डा० भाई महाबीर आप के पास जाकर बैठ गये हैं।

डा० भाई महाबीर : कल जो सवाल पूछने में समय लिया था उस से आधा भी नहीं लिया।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 162.

Leave Encashment by Government employees

@*162. SHRI F. M. KHAN;
SHRI SYED AHMAD
HASHMI:†

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to allow leave encashment to the Central Government employees;

@Previously Starred Question 22, transferred from the 24th November, 1981.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Syed Ahmad Hashmi.