

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Environmental impact of big dams in North Eastern region

States including lower Subansiri Hydro Electric Project

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA (Assam): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Environment and Forests to the environmental impact of big dams in North Eastern States including lower Subansiri Hydro Electric Project.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: There is no written statement. ... (*Interruptions*)...

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Member for calling my attention to this matter of urgent public importance. The statement is being distributed.

Environmental clearance for projects became a mandatory requirement since 27.1.1994. In supersession of 1994 Notification, a new Notification was issued on 14.9.2006, which subsequently amended on 11.2.2009. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification regulates developmental projects in different parts of the country and their expansion/modernization activities. It mandates prior environmental clearance to be obtained for the projects listed in its Schedule. The procedure for environmental clearance has been elaborated in the notification. The environmental clearance for River Valley and Hydropower Sector is covered in item 1 (c) of the Schedule to the notification.

A comprehensive EIA Report is required to be prepared as per Terms of Reference (TOR) given by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC). The EACs are multidisciplinary sectoral expert committees comprising of various subject experts and are constituted as per EAI Notification of 2006, for appraisal of sector specific projects. The methodology followed for each and every parameter of the project will be critically scrutinized and examined by the EAC before recommending the projects for environmental clearance.

A Statement showing a comprehensive list of River-Valley projects from the State of Arunachal Pradesh that are at various stages of environment and forest clearance is attached to my

Statement. I will not go through table, Sir, but it gives a list of the ten projects that are at various stages of environment and forest clearance.

The concept of downstream impacts is a recent one. The issue has been considered by the Expert Appraisal Committee for River Valley and HEPs and the EAC has suggested downstream studies need to be undertaken by the proponents of Lower Dem we and Lower Siang HEPs located in Arunachal Pradesh. The major concern is drastic alteration of flow in the lean season in the river which may lead to significant adverse impact to both terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity.

Sir, the lower Subansiri Hydroelectric project, located near North Lakhimpur on the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh is being executed by the National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC). This is the biggest HEP (2000 MW) undertaken in India so far and is a run-of-the-river scheme on river Subansiri. A concrete gravity dam of 116m high from river bed level will be constructed on river Subansiri. Total land requirement is 4111 ha. Out of which 4039.9 ha is forest land. Forest clearance has been issued on 10.6.2003. In all 325 persons will be partially affected due to this project. The project is scheduled for completion in 2012.

A comprehensive Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study for Lower Subansiri was submitted by NHPC for appraisal, covering all the environmental aspects and baseline data with respect to meteorology, geology, seismology, water quality, land use pattern, terrestrial ecology, wildlife, aquatic ecology fisheries and socio-economic aspects as well as Disaster Management plan. Based on the data given in the EIA report and subsequent clarification, Ministry of Environment and Forests accorded the environmental clearance on 16.7.2003.

The MoE&F has recently received the Report of the House Committee, Assam Legislative Assembly regarding the Impacts on the downstream areas of the Rivers in the State of Assam due to construction of big dams, presented to the Assam Legislative Assembly House on 17th July, 2010. The recommendations covered in the Report indicate the need for Comprehensive Scientific Studies

to be undertaken prior to various clearances for all future mega and small hydroelectric projects in Arunachal Pradesh and that the Government of Assam would play a proactive role in this regard. The need for comprehensive downstream impact studies covering all relevant aspects in hydroelectric projects is also emphasized.

The MoE&F has also taken note of the Study undertaken by University of Dibrugarh, University of Guwahati and IIT, Guwahati, submitted on 28th June, 2010 and the recommendations contained in the Report on the downstream impacts of the Lower Subansiri project. This study was commissioned by the Ministry of Power, Government of Assam, All Assam Students Union, and NHPC in December, 2006. Mitigation measures recommended by the Expert Group relate to the minimum discharge of the natural river be maintained through the turbines by, at least, one unit running continuously for 24 hours a day, development of thick vegetation cover/green belt along the river banks, flood shelters of the flood victims, etc. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has also received comments of NHPC on the recommendations of the Expert Group.

I wish to inform the House that the Ministry of Environment and Forests has undertaken two Basin Studies for Lohit and Bicham Basin in Arunachal Pradesh to adopt the River Basin approach for the future projects instead of the usual project-by-project approach to environmental impact assessment. Further, there are proposals for undertaking similar studies for Subansiri and Siang Basin by the Central Water Commission.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I share the worries of the hon. Member and other Members regarding the environmental impacts of big dams in the North-Eastern region States, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh. The country urgently needs to expand its hydal generation capacity, which is clean source of energy. I am also acutely conscious of the fact that serious ecological concerns have to be addressed while harnessing our hydel resources. I assure the hon. Members that a careful balance will be preserved at all times and all decisions will be taken in a transparent and consultative manner.

Status of the Hydro Electric Projects in Arunachal Pradesh

Project	Company	Capacity (MW)	Environmental clearance status	Date of Issue	Forest Clearance Status	Date of Issue
Lower Subansiri	NHPC Ltd.	200	Issued	16/07/2003	Issued	12/10/04
Kemang	NEEPCO Ltd.	600	Issued	29/03/01	Issued	03/08/2000
Ranganadi	NEEPCO Ltd.	405	Issued	23/07/85	Issued	07/05/90
Tago Micro	PWD	4.5	Issued	28/11/83	-	-
Pare	NEEPCO Ltd.	110	Issued	13/09/06	In-principle	11/01/08
Lower Demwe	Athena Demwe Power Pvt. Ltd.	1750	Issued	12/02/10	FAC recommended. Certain clarification sought from the State.	-
Gongri	Dirang Energy Pvt. Ltd.	90	Issued	12/02/10	-	-
Nuranang	PWD	-	Issued	11/02/91	-	-
Dibang Multipurpose	NHPC Ltd.	3000	Scoping clearance issued	17/08/2009	Proposal under preparation with State Govt.	-
Lower Siang Hydro Electric	Jaypee Arunachal Pradesh Ltd.	2700	Additional TOR issued	30/08/2010	Proposal under preparation with State Govt.	-

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Hon. Minister, in your reply, you have said many things. But, you have not mentioned about the recommendations made by the Expert Committee. Mr. Minister, the people of North-Eastern Region are not against power generation. But, we are against

if it is done at the cost of wildlife and property of the innocent people. Natural beauty and natural resources of Assam and the North-Eastern Region is the God's gifted. But, Sir, several big dams of North-Eastern Region have affected seriously the environment and the socio-economic lives of the lakhs of people of this region. We, the people of the North-Eastern Region, know the worst affects of Ranganadi Hydel Dam and Hydro project dam at Kurichhu, Bhutan. Due to release of excess water from the Ranganadi dam site and Kurichhu of Bhutan create flood havoc in Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Nalbari and Baksa districts of Assam by destroying lives and property, including roads, National Highways, railway bridges, etc. Sir, there is a Tipaimukh Hydro electric project in the North-Eastern Region. The project is opposed not only by us but also by Bangladesh.

Sir, totally ignoring the environmental aspect, the Government of Arunachal Pradesh signed MoU for more than 161 for hydro power projects. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh is building 4 other mega dams, besides many more small projects. These mega dams are taken up on Kameng River Basin, Siang River Basin, Diabang River Basin and the Lohit River Basin.

Sir, the Indian Sub-Continent is divided into five Seismic Zones with respect to the severity of the earthquake. Arunachal Pradesh falls in seismic Zone V which is considered as one of the most vulnerable areas. According to a seismic vulnerability study by Arunachal Pradesh Remote Sensing Application Centre, Parts of the State such as Peki Medi village in Upper Siang district, continue to experience frequent tremors on a daily basis.

The Lower Subansiri Hydroelectric Project is an inter-State project. The proposed dam site is 2.3 kms. upstream of Gerukamukh village in Dhemaji district of Assam. The 116 metres high dam would submerge 3,436 hectares of forest land. Hon. Minister, 3,436 hectares of land will be totally destroyed due to this dam. Secondly, the dam site is an important biodiversity spot. It will submerge Tele Valley Sanctuary of Arunachal Pradesh, Tele Reserve Forest of Arunachal Pradesh, Panir Reserve Forest of Arunachal Pradesh and Subansiri Reserve Forest in Assam. It means, this dam is going to submerge four reserve forests in our country.

The dam site is an elephant corridor. The dam site will block elephant movement. The site also seriously affects river dolphin population. They are not thinking about river dolphin. According to dolphin expert, Dr. Lal Mohan and his team, in a Report, suggested to establish dolphin sanctuary at Subansiri. Sir, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, was totally ignored. Sir, most of the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1872, is totally ignored here. The dam site and submergence area is the habitat of a number of animals listed in the Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. If this dam is constructed, the entire area will be submerged and these animals will have no place to live. These animals which have been included would die.

Sir, an Expert Group was constituted, not by us, jointly by the State Power Department and All Assam Student Union after a thorough discussion. What the Expert Group Says? Hon. Minister, kindly look at what the Expert Group has reported. You should look into that. This is not my Report. This is not our Report. This is the Expert Group constituted by the Government and the AASU.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, this is a very important subject.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. You are not asking any clarifications. You are making a speech. Anyway, I have given you the maximum time.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, the selected site for the mega dam of the present dimension was not appropriate in such a geologically and seismologically sensitive location. The seismic design parameter is not properly chosen for the project. According to the investigation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baishya, please conclude.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: ...the recommended seismic design parameter is at 0.5 metre. Therefore, it is recommended not to construct a mega dam in the present site. This is the recommendation of the Expert Group...(time-bell rings)...Sir, the Report further said that from geological, tectonic and seismological points of view, the Expert Group suggested not to consider the Himalayan foothills, south of MBT for any mega hydropower project. Sir, the Brahamaputra Valley Civilization is one of the ancient civilizations of our country. Due to this project, the Brahamaputra Valley Civilization is going to ... *(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are repeating, Mr. Baishya. ... *(Interruptions)*..

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: So, Sir, the hon. Minister is a very dynamic person. He has knowledge of everything. He has the knowledge of the report of the Expert Committee. ... *(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baishya, it is over now. Please finish it. ... *(Interruptions)*..
Your are unnecessarily repeating the things. ... *(Interruptions)*..

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: As a Minster, are you going to stop the construction of this project until the Environment Ministry gives its final clearance?

SHRI MUKUT MITHI (Arunachal Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I rise to clarify certain issues involved with the development of mega hydro power projects in Arunachal Pradesh and its impact on the land and the people and, particularly on the neighbouring State of Assam.

Ours is a tribal society and we hate to part with our land and rivers. These very sentiments make us vulnerable to certain vested interests.

A particular group, which opposes mega dams, succeeds in exploiting this very sentiment of ours and makes us believe that what they think is right. And, the Government machinery lacks commitment to mirror the good intention of the developing agencies of hydro power projects and benefits that would flow to us individually and to the society at large.

The key question, that I would like to raise, is this. Why the huge power potential of Arunachal Pradesh were not taken up for development in 60s and 70s when India could develop power projects in neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bhutan? Had we taken the kind of initiative, then, which we have been taking during the last ten years, Arunachal Pradesh would have been a developed State by now and the country would not have faced so much of power shortage. We would have, to a great extent, avoided the pollution generated by thermal power stations.

I understand that hydro power is a clean source of energy, as opposed to thermal power. However, any big dams would surely be affecting ecology and environment adversely. But this should not be a basis for abandoning the projects, as has been demanded by the hon. Member, who has raised this Calling Attention. We should strike a balance to ensure that environment is not affected beyond the permissible limit set under various laws. Moreover, the project should improve the quality of life of the project affected people. Our aim should be to develop hydropower projects in an eco-friendly manner causing minimum distress to affected people.

I have gone through the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy of Arunachal Pradesh. And, I can assure this august House that if the policy is implemented properly, project-affected people would be in a much better and happier condition.

As per the study carried out by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) and the individual power developers, the total hydro power potential of the State of Arunachal Pradesh is estimated at over 57,000 MWs. Besides this, the estimated potential for development of micro/ mini/ small hydel projects is around 1600 MW. Thus, Arunachal Pradesh has emerged as the front-runner State of the Union of India, as far as hydro power potential is concerned.

The apprehension, as expressed by the hon. Member, Mr. Baishya, that the dams situated in high seismic zone, like Arunachal Pradesh, might result in a major disaster and would be a constant threat to lives and property of people inhabiting downstream side of the project amounts to doubting

the technical capacity of our engineers. If it is so, we are not safe anywhere. As a matter of fact, Sir, myself being an affected party, as my house is situated in the downstream of Debang Hydro Electric Project (3000 MW) I am interested in knowing the technical aspects of stability factor of a dam. I have learnt that the stability criteria, seismic allowances, etc. are factored into the design and the structure of the dam.

In the case of Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project of 2000 MWs in Arunachal Pradesh, situated along the Arunachal-Assam border, I am given to understand that some doubt was raised by Assam about the stability of Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project, in the event of high intensity earthquake to which Arunachal Pradesh is prone. (*Time-bell rings*). The doubt was technically verified by the ITT, Roorkee and the expert team of technical examination of the Project's structure dispelled any such doubts. ... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI MUKUT MITHI: Should we be guided by rumours spread by some vested interests or technical report of an expert team?

And, the eternal issue 'to be or not to be' is inherent with the issue of development versus environment. ... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI MUKUT MITHI: Sir, I will take just two more minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no, you are making a statement; you are not seeking clarifications. In fact, you are all making statements. You are reducing the significance of the Calling Attention. ... (*Interruptions*)... You are making a statement. You are not seeking clarifications. ... (*Interruptions*)... Now, please conclude. You cannot take unlimited time. In a Calling Attention, there is time limitation. We have to conclude it in one hour.

SHRI MUKUT MITHI: Sir, on the basis of the demand of the hon. Member, I would just like to

ask the hon. Minister whether he is intending to stop all the projects that are going on in the country, and not only in Arunachal Pradesh, but also in the States, like, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand also, which are affecting the environment and the people of those States. ... (Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is the clarification. ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI MUKUT MITHI: Or, in the interest of the country from the power generation point of view, which is in deficit in our country, would the hon. Minister have a sympathetic consideration and will consider all the projects as per the law of the land.

श्री विश्वजीत दैमारी (असम) : महोदय, डैम के बारे में जो श्री वैश्य जी कॉलिंग अटेंशन लाए हैं और उस पर मंत्री महोदय ने क्लेरिफिकेशन दिया है, इस पर मैं कुछ आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। नॉर्थ ईस्ट में जितने भी बड़े-बड़े डैम बनने जा रहे हैं, उन पर से सारे लोगों का भरोसा उठ गया है और सब डर रहे हैं। अभी Lower Subansiri की जो समस्या है, इसमें डाउटफुल है, यहां पर फॉरेस्ट एंड एन्वॉयरनमेंट मिनिस्ट्री ने क्लिअरेंस दिया था, वह क्या सिर्फ अरुणाचल प्रदेश को देख कर दिया था या असम में भी भविष्य में क्या हो सकता है, इसके बारे में समुचित सर्वे करके दिया था। वहां पर जो एक्टिविटीज चल रही है, यहां पर सिर्फ इस प्रोजेक्ट को अरुणाचल के हिसाब से किया जा रहा है और जो वहां पर एन.एच.आर.पी.सी. कर रहा है, लोगों के भविष्य के लिए भी, वह भी सिर्फ अरुणाचल प्रदेश में ही कर रहा है। जैसे लोगों के यहां पर संस्थापन करने के लिए आई.टी.आई. सिर्फ अरुणाचल में ही बनाया है, कई स्कूल बनाने का निर्णय भी अरुणाचल में ही लिया गया है। जहां पर लोगों ने कम्पनी का वर्कशॉप वर्कशॉप वगैरह बनाया है, उसके सामने वे लोग कुछ भी करने नहीं जा रहे हैं कि यह सिर्फ अरुणाचल प्रदेश का प्रोजेक्ट है। तो इस पर फिर से ध्यान दिया जाए। दूसरा जो Pagladiya Dam Project है, इसको कई साल हो गए हैं और आज भी इसको करने जा रहे हैं, जबकि इस बारे में पब्लिक विरोध कर रही है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इस पर फॉरेस्ट एंड एन्वॉयरनमेंट मिनिस्ट्री देखे कि इसका अच्छी तरह से सर्वे किया है या नहीं? अगर नहीं किया है तो मैं चाहता हूँ कि सर्वे जल्दी करके आगे कार्यवाही की जाए, नहीं तो इसी तरह से समस्या आ जाएगी। भूटान एक दूसरा देश है। लेकिन इसका असर हमारे इंडिया पर भी पड़ता है, बोडोलैंड में भी स्पेशली पड़ता है। तो इस पर फॉरेस्ट एवं एन्वॉयरनमेंट मिनिस्ट्री उन लोगों के साथ कंसल्ट करे और जो भी प्रोजेक्ट लिया जाए, उस पर इंडिया से क्लिअरेंस

ले ले। उसको मैं अलर्ट करता हूँ, क्योंकि अभी थोड़ा सा जो कुछ हुआ है, जो हमारी मानस वाइल्ड लाइफ सेन्सुअरी है, वह उसको भी अफैक्ट कर रहा है, नेशनल हाईवे उठा कर ले गया है, रेल ब्रिज उठा कर ले गया है और सारा जमीन भी ले जा रहा है।

वे लोग किसी भी समय डैम से पानी छोड़ देते हैं, तो फोर्स में आते हुए नदी दूसरी तरफ को डायवर्ट होती जा रही है। इसी तरह वहां पर Punatsengchhu में एक प्रोजेक्ट तैयार हो रहा है, जिसका असर कोकराझार डिस्ट्रिक्ट में पड़ेगा। अभी यह कम्पलीट नहीं हो रहा है, इसलिए आप इस विषय में भी थोड़ा देखिए और NHPC भी दो नए प्रोजेक्ट्स भूटान में शुरू करने जा रहा है। आप उसको भी फिर से देखिए ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

श्री विश्वजीत दैमारी : सर, कहीं ऐसा न हो कि हम एनर्जी को ढूँढते हुए अपनी जमीन को ही न खो दें, कहीं हमारा Environment नष्ट न हो जाए, मैं आप से इसका अनुरोध करता हूँ। मेरा अनुरोध है कि Pagladia डैम प्रोजेक्ट एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है, इसको खासतौर से देखा जाए। यह Barpeta डिस्ट्रिक्ट में है। इस प्रोजेक्ट से नलबाड़ी डिस्ट्रिक्ट और Barpeta दोनों डिस्ट्रिक्ट प्रभावित होंगे। आप इसे जल्दी से देखें और इसके लिए कुछ व्यवस्था करें।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Deepak Das, already, your leader has spoken. So, you just seek your clarification.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS (Assam): Sir, I just need a clarification on the matter that has been raised by Mr. Birendra also but he did not elaborate. One study paper has been submitted by the Guwahati University and IIT people to the Government. In that, it has been raised that Government in the State, Centre and the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) should immediately stop construction of Lower Subansiri Hydro-electric Project (LSHEP). This was one recommendation.

The second recommendation was that all the proposed mega dam projects in the region should also be shelved.

Thirdly, present location of Lower Subansiri Hydroelectric Project was not appropriate because the site is geologically and seismologically sensitive. Moreover, seismic design parameters have not been chosen properly for the project. The dam is designed to withstand an earthquake of magnitude

of 8 whereas the recorded history of seismic events is of magnitude 8.5. These are the recommendations.

One more recommendation that I want to raise here is, adequate compensation for the riparian rights of the indigenous people and complex biodiversity of the region should be paid. It should be paid at the minimum discharge rate of at least 320 cumec throughout the day.

Sir, the eight-member Expert Committee has submitted its report on the issue to the authority concerned. The Chinese bid to divert the Brahmaputra and the dam and the other Himalayan rivers could not be countered with the mega dam projects on such river inside the Indian territory.

Then, in the Statement by the Minister, it is mentioned "I wish to inform the House the Ministry has undertaken two Basin studies for Lohit and Bichom Basin in Arunachal Pradesh to adopt the River Basin approach for the future projects instead of the usual project-by-project approach to environmental impact assessment. Further, there are proposals for undertaking similar studies for Subansiri and Siang Basin by the Central Water Commission." Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will stop any kind of construction till the study is completed. These are my clarifications. Thank you.

SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN (Assam): Sir, I have gone through the Statement given by the hon. Minister. I share the concern of my friends who have already sought clarifications. I will request the Minister to get the data of damage and loss suffered by the people of the North bank of the river Brahmaputra because of the discharge of water, in the last three years, by the projects in Bhutan, that is, just in upstream of lower Assam and Arunachal. I do not want to repeat. May I request the hon. Minister to collect the reports of the last three years of damage and loss, on all fronts, suffered by the Government of Assam and the people of Assam?

I also want to know whether they will review their approach to the problem. We shall have the power projects, but, at the same time, the loss to be suffered by the people in this process should not be beyond repair. Thank you.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Bihar): Sir, as we know, the total installed capacity of the hydel power projects in this country is around 36,000 Mega Watts as on 21st of May, 2007 which comprises around 24.7 percent of the total power generation in this country. We understand that the Northern-Eastern States do need power and that is a demand which they have been making for a very long time. They also get power from Bhutan which is our neighbouring country.

Sir, there are only two possibilities how you can have power projects in such areas. One is by construction of dams which will create large reservoirs and then you have power generation through that and the other is the run of the river which are smaller projects. I believe there is conflict there in the North Eastern States that whether you want big dams or you want smaller power projects. The big dams will have power projects which will be 500-1000 Mega Watts and there are smaller power projects which can go up to 25 Mega Watts which come under the Ministry of renewable Energy. Sir, the conflict is because the State Governments want larger power projects and they want more infrastructure on that aspect. When you talk about large power projects, then you talk about a large catchment area, then you talk about large reservoirs, then you talk about large construction of dams, then you talk about large displacement of people, then you talk about large loss of biodiversity, and then you also talk about large loss of aquatic and fauna. So, all this is a part of this and there is an ambitious strive to have large power projects. I hope the Minister would be able to answer the ratio of the project proposals received as far as large power projects and smaller power projects are concerned because there is something which is happening which we know.

Now, yesterday, the hon. Minister with great pride said that he is going to launch a satellite to monitor the forest cover. It is a very good thing. Today we say that our forest cover has gone up to about 23.5 percent. But, Sir, the most noticeable aspect is that out of this 23.5 percent which we talk about, 68 percent today is in the North-Eastern States. So, that credit which you take to yourself is largely attributed to what we have in the North-Eastern States and, I think, the Minister would agree with it.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: It is 25 percent.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Okay; 25 percent. So, the existence in the North-Eastern States is 68 percent of that. Now, because we require about 33 percent coverage, we are crossing that. A place like Andaman and Nicobar Islands would have 98 percent forest cover, and that is all what we add to bring it to 23.5 percent. So, the criticality here is, when you talk about the forest cover, you also have to view what is happening in the North-Eastern States. Sir, the point which I would like to raise and ask the hon. Minister is, when we talk about the North-Eastern States, they have a desire of power. But they have large forest areas, large biodiversities and there is a historical background, different ethnic people are staying there and so it is a cultural diversity. Now, what is happening in that region is that all this is getting affected by the process of large dams, large power projects and large construction activities. So, what is the view of the Ministry of Environment in this regard and how many such power projects are there whether they come under the Ministry of Renewal Ministry which are less than 25 Mega Watts or whether they come under the Ministry of Power which are of 500-1000 Mega Watts? What is the policy of the Government as far as the Ministry of Environment is concerned? The only aspect which I would like to mention here, Sir, is that biodiversity, fauna and all that which is there in the North-Eastern States need to be preserved. We need a policy in this regard. The concern which our friend, Mr. Birendra Baishya, expressed is that the policy in the Northern Eastern State is that there is an aggressive desire to have more and more power projects but the policy across the country is not exactly that. Now, in those States which are in the North-Eastern region, there is a demand, there is a pressure on the Government, there is a pressure on the people. So how does the Ministry of Environment and Forests establish a balance between the desire of the Government, the desire of the people and the requirement of environment protection and the forest protection? These are a few aspects on which I wanted to seek clarification. If the Minister

could throw some light on them, we would be in a better position to understand what is the policy of the Government as far as the power projects in the North-Eastern States are concerned. These are the clarifications which I wanted to seek. Thank you.

श्री अनिल माधव दवे (मध्य प्रदेश): सर, मुझे क्लैरिफिकेशन में केवल इतना ही कहना है कि बड़े बांधों के संबंध में, उसके पक्ष में लोग अपना तर्क देते हैं और उसके विरोध में लोग अपनी बात करते हैं। देश को आजाद हुए 63-64 साल हो गए हैं। मेरा केवल इतना ही कहना है कि इस पक्ष और विपक्ष के तर्क से ऊपर उठ कर, जिन बांधों का जीवन 20 साल या उससे अधिक हो गया है, क्या हम उनका socio-economic audit कर सकते हैं, उनका आर्थिक-सामाजिक अंकेक्षण हो सकता है? क्योंकि जब वह प्रोजेक्ट बन रहा था, तब यह claim किया गया था कि इसके कारण इतनी irrigation बढ़ेगी, इसके कारण इतने जंगल बढ़ेंगे, इसके कारण इतनी bio-diversity बढ़ेगी और हमने इतना submerge कर दिया, इतने जंगल डुबो दिए, इतनी खेती की जमीन डुबो दी, इतनी investment कर दी। आप profit and loss account बना लीजिए। प्रोजेक्ट को बने हुए 20 साल, 30 साल हो गए हैं। इससे हमारे सामने रिजल्ट आ जाएगा। लेकिन सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि बड़े बांधों के संबंध में इस प्रकार का आर्थिक अंकेक्षण करवाते समय भगवान के लिए इसे ब्यूरोक्रेट से मत करवाइएगा, क्योंकि वे उन बातों को बार-बार claim करते थे और रहेंगे।

जैसा आपने forest cover के बारे में कहा, जब forest cover की बात आती है, तो हम कहते हैं कि 37 परसेंट forest है, जबकि वन विभाग के अन्दर forests चार श्रेणी के हैं – बड़े झाड़ का जंगल, छोटे झाड़ का जंगल, झाड़ी और घास। इन सबको जंगल कहते हैं। जब टोटल देने की बात आती है, तो हम कहते हैं कि 37 परसेंट forest है, जबकि उसके अंदर घास भी आ गई, झाड़ियां भी आ गई, छोटे झाड़ का जंगल भी आ गया और बड़े-बड़े झाड़ का जंगल भी आ गया। इसलिए मेरे कहने का तात्पर्य इतना ही है कि इस संबंध में बड़े बांधों के environment clearance के पहले हम जितना विचार करते हैं, अगर उतना विचार 20 साल बाद भी कर लें, तो अच्छा होगा।

सर, मैं इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि बांधों के upstream के अंदर पानी कम होने लगा है और यह कहा जा रहा है कि इन बांधों से हाइड्रो प्रोजेक्ट्स से पैदा होने वाली बिजली घट जाएगी। बांधों के downstream में अंदर

नदियां मर रही हैं। इन सब कारणों से जो परिवर्तन आ गया है, वह बहुत बड़ा परिवर्तन है। अगर इसका कोई प्रामाणिक अंकेक्षण हो जाएगा, तो मुझे लगता है कि दूध का दूध और पानी का पानी हो जाएगा।

श्री समन पाठक (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : उपसभापति महोदय, मैं सभी माननीय सदस्यों की भावनाओं से अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ। जहां तक पॉवर प्रोजेक्ट का सवाल है, हम लोग समर्थन करते हैं कि नॉर्थ-ईस्ट में और पॉवर प्रोजेक्ट्स आने चाहिए। सर, नॉर्थ-ईस्ट में सिक्किम राज्य के अन्दर तीस्ता नदी है। 2006-07 में तीस्ता नदी के ऊपर 26 प्रोजेक्ट्स पास किए गए। एक छोटी सी नदी के ऊपर 26 प्रोजेक्ट्स पास किए गए। इसका जो मूल उत्पत्ति स्थल है, वहां पर एक ट्राइबल कम्युनिटी रहती है, that is called Lepcha community. वे लोग धार्मिक भावना से मानते हैं कि यह उनका एक पारम्परिक, historical place है। वहां के लोगों और ट्राइबल लोगों के इतने विरोध के बावजूद वहां पर छोटी-सी नदी के लिए 26 प्रोजेक्ट्स पास किए गए, तो ज्यादातर प्राइवेट हैं। काम शुरू करके प्रोजेक्ट का नाम दिखा कर वे भाग गए। आज तक उनका अता-पता नहीं है कि वे कहां चले गए। मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि कोई भी प्रोजेक्ट पास करने से पहले उसको ठीक तरह से क्यों नहीं देखा जाता? नॉर्थ-ईस्ट में young mountains हैं। जहां तक दार्जिलिंग या सिक्किम का सवाल है, यहां young mountains हैं। तीस्ता नदी के ऊपर स्टेज-II में NHPC द्वारा दो प्रोजेक्ट्स चलाए जा रहे हैं, जिनकी वजह से NH-31 बहुत damage हो रहा है। इसके साथ-साथ लालटुंग बस्ती, forest villages के साथ-साथ, इसके बाद जलपाईगुड़ी एरिया है, वह सबको affect कर रहा है। हालांकि यह मंत्री जी का subject नहीं है। वह पॉवर प्रोजेक्ट, जिसे 2009 में खत्म होना था, जो इतनी लागत से बना था, 2010 में उसकी स्थिति में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं है। वह बार-बार टूटता है और बार-बार उसको और पैसा देना पड़ रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति में मंत्री जी बताएं कि Environment Ministry से कैसे इन प्रोजेक्ट्स को examine किया जाता है और कैसे एक छोटी-सी नदी के ऊपर इतने प्रोजेक्ट्स मिलते हैं, मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि (उड़ीसा) : सर, मैं भी कुछ बोलना चाहता हूँ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : देखिए, पाणी जी, ऐसा नहीं होता है...(व्यवधान)...

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद (बिहार) : सर, मैं केवल आधा मिनट बोलना चाहूंगा।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : नहीं, नहीं। आप कॉल अटेंशन को डिस्कशन में कन्वर्ट कर रहे हैं। यह नहीं हो सकता कि पूरे हाऊस को अपॉर्चुनिटी दी जाए। It is only for those who seek clarification. ... *(Interruptions)*...

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद : सर, मुझे आप सिर्फ आधा मिनट दे दीजिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री उपसभापति : नहीं, नहीं, ऐसा नहीं हो सकता। We have a lot of business. Try to understand it. ... *(Interruptions)*... आधा मिनट कोई भी नहीं बोल सकता। I will test you today.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA (Assam): Sir, this is a very important subject that has been brought here for discussion today and I rise here to say something on this Calling Attention Motion. This has been discussed in the NDC for a number of times and almost all the States have no objection on the construction of dam. I would like to remind my hon. friend from AGP that as early as in 1988 the then Chief Minister submitted a memorandum. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: You are giving wrong information. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: You have the right to reply. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, he has no right to reply. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: As early as in September 1988, the then Chief Minister. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind the hon. Members that don't convert everything into a discussion. It is a Calling Attention Motion. Please seek clarifications only and the subject is environmental impact on the construction of dam, not beyond that.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: I want to know whether there was a memorandum submitted by the then AGP Government in support of the dam. Secondly, there is no objection about the dam,

but there are objections about the down streaming dam. ... (Interruptions)... In the last NDC meeting, the present Chief Minister of Assam has raised the concern that we should be careful about the down-stream impact of the dams because the areas surrounding dams, which belong to Assam area, are experiencing unprecedented flood situation because of the releases of excess water from those dams. There are various suggestions that, I think, have been made to the NDC also. So, we should be careful about the down-stream impact of dams. I want to know from the hon. Minister what has been proposed to reduce the down-stream impact which causes flood in the Assam areas and brings miseries to common people of Assam.

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद : सर, आप मुझे बस आधा मिनट दे दीजिए।

श्री उपसभापति : मैं देखता हूँ कि आधे मिनट में आपकी बात खत्म होती है या नहीं होती।

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद : सर, मैं बहुत कृतज्ञ हूँ कि आपने मुझे बोलने का अवसर दिया। माननीय सदस्य ने एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण विषय उठाया है। पर्यावरण का संवर्धन बहुत आवश्यक है और हम सभी इसके प्रति प्रतिबद्ध हैं। देश को ऊर्जा की आवश्यकता है। 64% ऊर्जा कोयले पर आधारित है, जिससे बहुत प्रदूषण होता है। जो ऊर्जा हम नदियों को बांधकर प्राप्त करते हैं, वह शुद्ध ऊर्जा होती है, क्रीम एनर्जी होती है। आपने इन दोनों के बीच समन्वय का पैमाना क्या रखा है ताकि विशुद्ध ऊर्जा भी आए और पर्यावरण का पूरा प्रबंधन भी हो? देश के लिए यह जानना बहुत जरूरी है।

मेरे असम के मित्र ने जो समस्या बताई है, वह बाकी प्रदेशों की भी है, लेकिन देश के विकास के लिए विशुद्ध ऊर्जा भी उतनी ही जरूरी है। हम आपसे यह जानना चाहते हैं कि इन दोनों में समन्वय के संबंध में आपकी सरकार का पैमाना क्या है? सर, मैंने आधा मिनट ही लिया है।

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि : सर, आन्ध्र प्रदेश और उड़ीसा की सीमा में एक पोलावरम डैम है, जो एक बहुत बड़ा बांध है और जिसका पर्यावरण पर बहुत असर पड़ रहा है ... (व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will not come under the North-East.

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि : सर, मंत्री जी जवाब देंगे? ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : नहीं देंगे। वह नहीं देंगे। ...**(व्यवधान)**... मैं अलाऊ नहीं करूंगा। जब मंत्री जी जवाब देते हैं तो मैं ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि : सर, मंत्री जी पोलावरम डैम के बारे में अच्छी तरह जानते हैं। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री उपसभापति : आप कोई दूसरा नोटिस दीजिए ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि : सर, पोलावरम डैम का environment पर impact पड़ता है। ...**(व्यवधान)**... पोलावरम डैम का environment पर impact पड़ता है, सर। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री उपसभापति : हो गया, हो गया। Hon. Minister, please give your clarifications in brief.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, large number of issues have been raised in the context of this Calling Attention Motion. The Calling Attention Motion is very specific on big dams in the North-East and the lower Subansiri Hydro Electric Project. But, issues relating to the policy of the Government on big dams, issues relating to the audit of the dams that have completed 20 years in operation, issues relating to the loss of bio-diversity and forest cover and environmental impact assessment have been raised. Sir, you will not give me the time to respond to all these questions. I think we can have a separate discussion on this. I am willing at any point of time for any debate of any duration on these issues. So, let me start with that. Sir, in my previous incarnation, I was also the Minister of State for Power. So, I am very well aware of the need to make India much more self-sufficient in the production of energy in which electricity plays a very important role. We have about 35,000 MWs of installed capacity of hydel power today. Our ultimate assessed potential is about 150 thousand MWs. We must increase the contribution of hydel power. It is a clean source of energy. It is a renewable source of energy. We must, in the context of global climate change particularly, lay greater stress on hydel power. Let me also say from a strategic point of view that we must lay stress on hydel power because if we do not develop our hydel potential, particularly on the Siang River in Arunachal Pradesh, our negotiating position *vis-à-vis* China on the Brahmaputra issue weakens. So, from an energy point of view, and from a strategic point of view, we must have a programme for development of hydel resources. I believe in this. At the same time, Sir, if you ask

me, "Have we been sensitive to the environmental impact of hydel projects?" The answer is: No. Have we taken environment and bio-diversity impacts into consideration? The answer is a clear and categorical 'no'. So, I am acutely conscious of the need to increase energy on the one side and improve our strategic bargaining position, particularly in China, on the other side. Regarding our hydel projects in Bhutan, I want to assure my friends from Assam that our projects in Bhutan fulfil not only an economic necessity but are also a strategic necessity for us. Bhutan is of vital strategic importance. So, please, don't criticize our hydel project in Bhutan. So, I think, we must strike a balance. I am grateful to Shri Ravi Shankar Prasadji for raising this issue, and I will address this balance issue in a separate debate on how we propose to bring about a balance between the need for developing hydel resources and the need to protect and preserve the environment.

Sir, on the North-East, let me respond to the clarifications that have been sought. Ten Members have spoken. Sir, the first clarification, that has been sought, is what I am going to do on the Expert Committee report that has been submitted by IIT (Guwahati), Guwahati University and Dibrugarh University on the future of lower Subansiri hydro electric project. My answer to this is that on the 10th September, I am going to Guwahati. I am going to have a consultation with the members of the Expert Group and the NHPC. I have received the comments of the NHPC on the recommendations of Expert Group, and on the 10th September, I am going to have a wider consultation with the members of Expert Group and with NHPC to find a way out. Sir, today, let me speak with full sense of responsibility, I cannot become a Minister for stoppages. I cannot become a Minister who puts a stop to all on going projects. But I can be a Minister. ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT (West Bengal): If it is against the guidelines. ... (*Interruptions*)... If it violates his own guidelines, why should it be allowed? ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE (Kerala): Sir, the Athirapally project. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL (Kerala): Sir, the project in the State of Kerala. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Let me finish. ... *(Interruptions)*... Athirapally project has not started, my friend. ... *(Interruptions)*... I am talking of projects, on which substantial amount of work has been done. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: But if the conditions are not fulfilled. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I cannot answer like this. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENRDA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, the Minister gave an assurance and now. ... *(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : यह क्या हो रहा है? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this is something which is not. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister is not answering on Kerala. ... *(Interruptions)*... The Minister is not answering on Kerala. ... *(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. Please sit down.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, the Minister has to stop the damage. ... *(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : आप एक word पर उठ खड़े होते हैं। आप उनको बोलने तो दीजिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Please listen to me. ... *(Interruptions)*... If fifty percent of the work has already been completed, I cannot stop this work.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Can you halt it?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam, please listen to me. Please halt yourself, and, listen to me

for a while. I have halted some projects. Where projects are under implementation, all I can do is, insist on mitigation measures, neutralization measures, Environmental Impact Assessment measures so that the adverse environmental impact is minimal. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: In this House, the Minister gave an assurance that. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, the hon. Minister can take up. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baishya, it is a limited issue. Please sit down. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: What is this, Sir? The conditions have been violated. What is the Minister going to do?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You please confine yourself to Assam, North Eastern States and the environmental impact. Otherwise, you please seek the information either through question or. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Let me say that I cannot give a clear and categorical assurance today that the lower Subansiri project will be stopped but I can give a clear and categorical assurance to the hon. Members that all the recommendations made by the Expert Group on how to minimize the adverse environmental impact of lower Subansiri in Arunachal Pradesh and in Assam are implemented by the NHPC. I can give this assurance on the floor of this House.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, I want to seek one clarification.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No clarification. The Minister has already made a statement. The statement contains everything. Clarification does not mean that he should go on giving answers. ... *(Interruptions)*... The statement has been given; clarifications have been answered. It is over. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, he has given this reply in the Question Hour. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the first clarification that was sought was what do I propose to do? The Expert Committee has given a report. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, the Expert Committee gave a report that. ... *(Interruptions)*... It should be stopped.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: His statement contains everything. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Who constituted the Expert Committee? ... *(Interruptions)*... It is in the memorandum.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalita, please sit down. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, the assurance was.... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down, Mr. Baishya. ... *(Interruptions)*... Nothing will go on record. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA:*

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS:*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baishya, please sit down. ... *(Interruptions)*... Please address the Chair. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, you must have a special dispensation for Members of the States where Assembly elections are going to be held very soon. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: No, no. This is not right. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: What is this, Sir? ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, I think, you have clarified it. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: I am answering it, Sir. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: What is this, Sir? ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What are you saying? ... *(Interruptions)*... Please go ... *(Interruptions)*... Please go ... *(Interruptions)*... Mr. Baishya, please go. ... *(Interruptions)*... What is this?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: What is this, Sir? ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: WHAT? ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: We need your protection, Sir. ... *(Interruptions)*... There is no question of elections. ... *(Interruptions)*...

*Not recorded.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, okay. There is no election in your State. ... *(Interruptions)*...
There is no election in Assam. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baishya ... *(Interruptions)*... Please, Mr. Baishya
... *(Interruptions)*... Nothing will go on record. ... *(Interruptions)*... You are not speaking from your
seat.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Mr. Minister, I request you to please withdraw that.
... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH : Okay, Sir, withdraw my comments. ... *(Interruptions)* withdraw my
comments, Sir. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Sir, he is ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalita *(Interruptions)* Mr. Kalita ... *(Interruptions)* thought it
is only DMK and AIADMK, but now it is ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I withdraw a factual statement that I just made. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA:*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Baishya, you take it in the right spirit. ... *(Interruptions)* Why
are you taking it otherwise? Take it in right spirit. ... *(Interruptions)* No, no, it is not
political... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH : Sir, Mr. Baishya, who is a friend of mine ... *(Interruptions)* on many
occasions, on this subject, I have explained to him that 10th of September I am coming to Guwahati
... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, you have given all the clarifications needed. Please
conclude it. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH : I am going to look at the recommendations and I am going to ensure
that all the necessary measures required for ensuring that the lower Subansiri will not have an
advance on the downstream areas of Assam.... *(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, please*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Brindayji, you are a senior Member. ...*(Interruptions)* You also want to ...*(Interruptions)* This Calling Attention is not on a wider issue. ...*(Interruptions)* Please don't take ...*(Interruptions)* We are not discussing today the entire environment. We are discussing only the impact ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, it is a general statement. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, it is not a general statement. I will not agree that it is a general statement....*(Interruptions)* Mr. Minister, please conclude.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, on the projects that have not been implemented so far, that are still going through the process of environmental and forest clearance, I want to give a clear and categorical assurance that we will take the utmost care and we will not repeat the insensitivity of the past. We will be extraordinarily careful in giving environment and forest clearance. We will conduct river basin studies; we will conduct downstream studies and if the decision is that the project should not proceed, we will not hesitate to say 'No' to the project.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, okay. *(Time-bell rings)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: So, I want to say this clearly and categorically*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : We will now take up the Special Mentions. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, finally ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : We have to conclude this because one Calling Attention cannot take the time of the entire business of the House...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, finally, I want to say ... *(Interruptions)*... finally, I want to say that environmental audit of dams, of the type that Mr. Dave has raised, has indeed been carried out. Bhakra Nangal, which was one of the first, in fact, the earliest. ... *(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, please ... *(Interruptions)*... Let us not deviate from the subject. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I am responding to the clarification. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, if it does not belong to your subject, please don't give it. ... *(Interruptions)*... If it is not on the subject ... *(Interruptions)*... Calling Attention has a limited scope. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, if you give me a chance to finish, I will finish. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, Mr. Minister.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I will finish now, if you give me a chance. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We will have one more discussion on it if somebody gives a notice. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I will finish by simply saying that Arunachal Pradesh has over 15,000 megawatts of hydel capacity and not all of this hydel capacity can be developed because of adverse environmental impact. The challenge for us is to develop the maximum possible element of this capacity in such a manner that both the people of Arunachal Pradesh benefit and people of India also benefit but without significant. ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now I am going to take next subject. ... *(Interruptions)*... Please, Mr. Minister. Special Mentions.

SPECIAL MENTIONS *

Demand to take steps to bring into Force the Draft Sports Policy, 2007

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK (Goa): Sir, India's new Sports Policy has still not been finalized. Draft Sports Policy, 2007 ought to have been brought into force by now, at least, considering the spirit of Commonwealth Games.

*Laid on the Table of the House