

[Dr. K. L. Rao]

Uttar Pradesh we have this unrest among the engineers. It is true that unless a man puts in all his best, he will not be able to do his best. This problem is still worrying us and I hope things will settle down and it will be possible for us to manage as best as we can with whatever we have.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA (West Bengal): Sir, this power crisis has become a national crisis. There are allegations, complaints and charges against the Government of India that they are not fully utilising our coal resources for generation of power. It is said that if the Government of India utilised fully our coal resources, then we could avoid loss of foreign exchange. I want to know from the Minister whether the Government is considering the setting up of coal-based power centres in West Bengal and other provinces where coal is available, so that we can immediately make up the shortage of power and avoid foreign exchange loss as well.

DR. K. L. RAO: Sir, we are fully aware of the importance of coal-based power stations or coal pithead power stations because it will save us transport. That is the main advantage of it. It is not a question of thermal power versus hydel power. The question is, coal transport is very difficult in our country because of the limited rail system that we have and if we have power stations right at the coal pitheads, it will be possible to save transport of coal. But there are some difficulties in that and that is why we want to take up in the Sixth Plan coal-based power stations to the extent possible. That is why a committee has been appointed to go into the setting up of big thermal power stations. Coal pithead power stations must be very big, of one million or two million or four million units. That is why we are thinking of big power stations, two in Madhya Pradesh near coal pitheads, one or two in Bengal and Bihar, one in Andhra Pradesh, one in Maharashtra

or wherever there is coal. The idea is to generate a large block of power and transmit it. It requires transmission lines of high voltages. A lot of steel is required for the transmission towers. And the size of the machines also must be bigger. That is why we are thinking of 500MW machines. All these are under consideration and the committee has been appointed to go into this question. When the report comes, we hope to start in the middle of the Fifth Plan so that the benefits may come out in the Sixth Plan.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Statement by Minister. Mr. Shinde.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, my name is there. I would like to put one question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If I call you, I will have to call at least a dozen people.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: My name is there in the Calling Attention Notice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Others also have given their names.

SHRI G. A. APPAN (Tamil Nadu): I have also been rising.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is why I am telling Mr. Ghosh that if I call him, then I will have to call several others, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, Mr. Tyagi, Mr. Kapur and others.

Yes, Mr. Shinde.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER ON DROUGHT SITUATION

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): Sir, instead of reading the whole statement, I will lay it on the Table if you permit me.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: Sir, with your permission I beg to lay on the Table of the House a statement on the drought situation in the country. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-4179/73.]