

children are kept in dingy accommodation and are forced to work daily for nearly 18 hours, getting monthly salary of Rs.300. The owners confine these children by providing tape-recorders, televisions etc. for entertainment, and the nearby custom-built dirty *dhabas* provide frugal non-nutritious food. Such pressure-oriented working environment results in several children developing orthopaedic and vision-related problems. Thus, after four to five years when they grow older and become unfit for the job, they are driven away by embroidery owners and replaced by younger and more nimble hands. Despite several NGOs working in anti-child labour movement, nothing concrete has emerged to prevent organised trafficking of children into the Capital every day; and thus, their exploitation continues. Police cannot be oblivious of these illegal activities. Thus, concerted efforts by groups, sponsored by the Government of India, comprising compassionate police personnel and dedicated social workers with well defined time-bound objectives/targets to be achieved, are an immediate necessity to stop this exploitation of children.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal, absent. Shri R. Rama Mohana Rao, absent. Shri Rama Muni Reddy, absent. Shri Eknath Thakur, absent. Smt. Savita Sharda, absent. Smt. Sushma Swaraj, absent. Shri C. Ramachandraiah, absent. Smt. Vanga Geetha, absent. Shri Kalraj Mishra, absent.

DISCUSSION ON THE WORKING OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Ministry of Environment and Forest, which was created in the year 1985 acts as a Nodal Ministry, for the Government of India, for planning, promotion, coordination and overseeing the implementation of various environmental management to promote forestry programmes, and all that Sir, the annual report of the Ministry for the year 2004-05 shows that the approved outlay for the Tenth Plan is Rs. 5,945 crores. The outlay provided for the year 2004-05 was Rs. 1150 crores. The allocation for the Ministry was reduced at the time of Revised Estimates to Rs. 1050 crores. The outlay approved for the year 2005-06 is Rs. 1234.91 crores, which is 7.38 per cent higher than the outlay for 2004-05.

A synoptic glance of the Outlay for Externally Aided Projects would reveal that it has been reduced from Rs. 95.52 crores in 2004-05 to Rs. 55.01 crores in 2005-06. This is mainly on account of conclusion of some Externally-aided Projects like Environmental Management Building Capacity and Eco-development projects during the year 2004-05. Consequently, the domestic budgetary support has increased from Rs. 1054.48 crores in 2004-05 to Rs. 1179.90 crores in 2005-06.

Sir, in accordance with the Government's policy, a lump sum equal to 10 per cent of Plan funds is being reserved for the North-Eastern sector, including Sikkim. I would therefore like to appreciate that although there has been greater emphasis on the North-Eastern region, the Ministry should make a lump sum budgetary support under one head, equal to 10 per cent of Plan funds for the North-Eastern sector, including Sikkim, and not under separate heads, as has been made in the current financial year.

As regards the details of projects where funds have remained unutilized in the year 2004-05, the Ministry informed the Standing Committee that some part of the funds, under the head NRCD, that is, Externally Aided Project and NLCP remained unutilized. This was because of the delay in finalisation of appointment of Project Management Consultants for Japan Bank for International Cooperation-aided Yamuna Action Plan-II Project, which resulted in the surrender of large amount of funds. Similarly, under NLCP, the major project of Dal Lake has been accorded in principle approval by the Planning Commission in July 2004 only, and also there was an embargo put by the Planning Commission for sanction of new projects. Sir, due to these reasons, funds under this head remain partially unutilised in 2004-05.

I would like to urge the Ministry that any delay in the finalisation of the appointment of Project Consultants for any of the future projects of the Ministry should be avoided as far as possible and that any other element of delay leading to partial utilisation or unutilisation of funds earmarked for the project should also be avoided as far as possible. Sir, I would also like to impress upon the Ministry that it should take up a detailed review of all the schemes, particularly those with small outlays in the first quarter of the Annual Plan 2005-06, with a view to merging the smaller schemes into a single scheme.

Sir, some of the important issues like pollution from coal based methane and clean coal technologies, optimal hydrocarbon energy

management through clean development mechanism in the wake of the implementation of Kyoto Protocol in February, 2005.

I also feel that the Ministry should address the key issues pertaining to the transition of a carbon based economy to a hydrogen economy in such a manner so that the following could be promoted most effectively:

- a. Promote more rapid dissemination and use of efficient, existing commercial technology in strategic and environmentally sensitive areas of the country.
- b. Encourage the development and use of innovative, currently non-commercial technologies.
- c. Enhance the ability of all oil sector companies to achieve and utilise advanced and efficient technologies.
- d. Improve scientific understanding by addressing well-known uncertainties in the adoption and implementation of efficient technologies.

Sir, the protection of environment has become a major issue in the recent years. It is only appropriate that protection of environment is given due importance by the Centre and the State Governments. Almost all the State Governments in India have separate Ministries for dealing with environmental issues. More often, environmental issues clash with the development of the country. Sir, there is a serious debate going on all over the world whether environmental issues could block development. Many developmental projects which will help improving the living standards of the poor people are blocked and languishing on environmental issues. This House has to consider whether a country like India can afford blockage of developmental projects on grounds of environmental issues.

Sir, I would draw the attention of the House to the incidence of how a major power project in Tamil Nadu that was commissioned could not deliver power to the people. The Paikara Power Project in Niligiri District was commissioned, but the Central Government's Environmental Ministry failed to give clearance for the power transmission project that has to pass through forest lands only for a short distance. Who will benefit from a power project that could not deliver power to the people? Environmental issues should not be used to settle political scores. The Minister of Environment and Forests belongs to the DMK Party, which is the principal rival to the present Government in Tamil Nadu. After all, the power produced in

Paikara is not going to benefit the ruling party functionaries in Tamil Nadu, but the people of Tamil Nadu. The idea behind the issue of not giving clearance is to defame the State Government purposely. This kind of cheap practice should be condemned by one and all in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*... The country is now passing through a coalition era. The ruling party at the Centre may be the opposition party in the State or *vice-versa*. But politics have come in the way of development. The Minister is playing politics on environmental issues. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): But in Tamil Nadu, you are the ruling party. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Shunmugasundaram, you are going to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*... You can have your views, when you speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): He is referring to politics. Where is the politics? ...*(Interruptions)* ..

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

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Whenever Mr. Narayanan speaks, he speaks only politics. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, you are also going to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: I am not speaking politics.

Sir, I can give one more example. The present Assembly building and the Secretariat, which is in a dilapidated condition, belong to the Defence Department. The present Government wants to construct a new building for the Assembly and the Secretariat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: They wanted to demolish a college. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can make your views, Mr. Shunmugasundaram, when you speak. ...*(Interruptions)*... You are one of the speakers. ...*(Interruptions)*... You can have your views, when you speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: But the Ministry of Environment and Forests is blocking this massive project in the name of environmental issues. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: There was an agitation by the people. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is not because of the Ministry of Environment. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let him speak. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please allow him to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: They wanted to demolish a college. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: This is very unfair. Why are you interrupting me? ...*(Interruptions)*... You don't want the facts. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: We don't want any facts. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanan, you speak. You don't yield.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Sir, I submit that * ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I have a point. ...*(Interruptions)*... He is casting aspersions. ...*(Interruptions)*... He says that the DMK demanded the Ministry. That should not go on record. ...*(Interruptions)*... What is he talking? He is a very senior Member of this House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, you can reply to him when you speak. Let him speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Whatever is unparliamentary, that should be removed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If it is unparliamentary, I will look into it. ...*(Interruptions)*... The Minister wants to speak.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): Sir, I do believe that I am competent to give answer to all the

* Not Recorded.

queries or apprehensions raised by Mr. P.G. Narayanan. My point is this. *
...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will look into it and it will be removed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: The Prime Minister should not be put into trouble because of our politics. ...*(Interruptions)*... The allocation of the portfolios and the allocation of business is the prerogative of the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will remove that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: You are stepping into the prerogative of the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, I will remove it from the record. ...*(Interruptions)*... Certain things will not go on record. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: The prerogative of the Prime Minister should not be questioned in this House. ...*(Interruptions)*... That is the only point. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I removed it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: I am not questioning it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: *is being allowed to speak in the Assembly when the Chief Minister is there. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is going on in the *. *(Interruptions)*...

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

SHRI G.K. VASAN (Tamil Nadu) : Let those words be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I removed them already. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Why? ...*(Interruptions)*...

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanan, allocation of portfolios is the prerogative of the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: I have not touched the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. MALAISAMY (Tamil Nadu) : Let them say that they did not ask for it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, he is a very senior Member. As a senior Member, he should not give unethical views in Parliament. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: It is not unethical. Everybody knows about it.

SHRI G.K. VASAN: Sir, he is misleading the House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It will be removed.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: He is misleading the entire country. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanan, please speak on the subject.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Now I come to the Integrated Forests Protection Scheme. It is a very important scheme. The Integrated Forests Protection Scheme is of significant importance not only for maintaining the existing forest cover and natural regeneration but also for achieving the national goal of 25 per cent forest and tree cover by 2007 and 33 per cent by 2012. Actually, this scheme was to be administered as a Centrally-Sponsored Scheme, but it has now been transferred to the State.

I express my serious concern over the sudden disappearance of tigers from the Sariska Tiger Reserve. The negligence of the forest staff coupled with a large-scale poaching has cost the country dear. Poaching is not a new phenomenon. But now the poachers have become more advanced by having latest weapons and very powerful communication network, making lackadaisically managed tiger reserves an easy picking. In contrast, the forest guards are usually equipped with a wooden stick and most of the times they are without any means of communication. Sir, communication facilities should be stepped up. They should be provided

with modern weapons in order to combat the poachers. Taking note of the alarming situation, I suggest that a Special Task Force at the Central or the State level, with the involvement of the Para military Forces, must be constituted to combat the menace of poaching of wildlife.

Involving the villagers living in and around the national parks/tiger reserves, to prevent poaching, as they are aware of the tentative movement of poachers, is absolutely necessary. All vacant positions of forest guards should be filled immediately and at no time should any tiger reserve be left with junior officers.

The Ministry should formulate an effective strategy to consider all activities, current and potential which can influence forests and related social, economic and environmental outcomes. More focussed interventions are required in order to address the issues relating to opportunity, empowerment and livelihood, security of the poor people who depend on forests in different ways. A broader livelihood approach, covering productive capacity, institutional and legal structures, market access and tenure must be adopted which puts the forests into the broader context of rural development.

The focus should be on improving governance, especially, correcting major distortions in incentives and markets that are reducing the value of the forest resource, the development of efficient markets and encouraging competitive private sector participation in the sector.

In this connection, Sir, I welcome the news regarding the proposed Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, which is likely to be introduced in Parliament sometime next week. The tribal right has been at the heart of the Conservation debate. So, getting the opinion of various tribal groups also is the need of the hour.

Sir, we have all seen the impact of tsunami on our Coastal Systems and the significant role played by the mangroove forests. Therefore, I would like to suggest that the National Mangrooves Afforestation Programme should be designed so that new research projects on the priority areas of mangrooves and coral reef conservation for supplementing Management Action Plan of strategically identified mangroove areas is accorded due importance.

I express my extreme dissatisfaction over the lackadaisical approach of the Ministry in undertaking the lake conservation schemes and

it seems that the Ministry is moving without specific targets and objectives. The Ministry has not come out with any specific targets to be achieved during a particular period. I am, therefore, of the view that the Ministry should formulate short-term and long-term plans on lake conservation with specific targets and should proceed further in that direction as per those targets.

DR. M.S. GILL (Punjab): Sir, a discussion on the Ministry of Environment and Forests is, in some ways, perhaps the most important subject of discussion in this country. Forest, environment, rivers and wildlife are the sum and total of the essence of our country. What would happen to them? Would they survive fifty years hence or would they be more or less eliminated and we would go to heat and dust as the famous book of Ruth Provar Jhabwalla says and as the Shashi Kapoor's film has brought out vividly that India one day will be reduced to heat and dust? I think if one really thinks deeply, even agriculture – you know, Sir, I have a close link with agriculture in various ways – is totally related to forest, rivers, wildlife, all of them together. This is one single chain, or chain of human sustenance and human support. Therefore, a discussion on this, I think, is perhaps a most worthwhile one. I wish my friends on the other side were here. You don't enjoy talking if you don't have your friends, opponents, everybody, here. It is a pity they are not there. This is a subject which, frankly, the whole of this House and the whole of that House should be discussing for as long as it takes. Sir, there was an ICS Officer in Punjab. You know, when we talk of the British ICS officers of those days – in spite of what my friends on my right would say; – there is a lot that those people contributed; there is a lot that those people emotionally tried to do for India's survival, savings of all its heritage, its wealth – wealth in the broadest sense. Mr. Calvert was an ICS Officer; he was a founder of the Co-operative Movement, the Land Mortgage Banks and the Land Development Banks and plenty others. In 1920s, he was a man of King's College, Cambridge. He wrote a book "The Wealth and the Welfare of the Punjab". It is actually the basis of Agriculture Economics in India. And, he had a man called Sir Malcolm Darling, who was also from the King's College, Cambridge. They set up the Board of Agriculture Economics in Punjab.

In that book, I have never forgotten reading – at that time, he is talking of the Punjab, He said, "Few in the plains of the Punjab realise on

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what a thin thread their survival hangs. It is the forests in the hills," — "which lets the rain down gently by taking it on the trees and slowly on to the grass, and slowly down the slope, without erosion of the mountains, and without damage to the soils. And it is that forest in the hills, which ensures that the plains prosper, that there are no floods and there is no washing away of all the valuable soil." And he said, "If those forests were to be cut down, then the Punjab will again turn in to the desert, we found it, when we came." And, the Punjab was a desert of *kikar* and *kesia* and all those kind of plants, and then later, they had canals and this and that."

In another words, there is a total linkage. Therefore, this Ministry and this total collection of subjects is something which touches India very closely. There is, obviously, need for various kinds of controls and various kinds of protection measures. The British had their own system of forestry. There are two views on that also as to whether the hill people should be totally deprived or the forest people or the tribal people should be totally kept away. The forest officers and others have controll and they regulate in a bureaucratic kind of way, and deprived those people of their legitimate rights, and harass them. This is all a matter of history which has happened in that period. But, we have now new laws for protection of forests and environment. We have passed all these laws in the recent past, in the recent decades by this Parliament in a free India, But I do have one basic thought. I want to share with you, I have been to every game park; I have gone on foot with my wife, and walked up to lions in the Gir, and had a close look at them, and taken photographs. And some of them came walking and saying, 'have a look at us'. But, then, they realised, that it was me and not Seshan, मेरे को उन्होंने जाने दिया, कुछ नहीं कहा। कसम की बात है, मैं आपको बता रहा हूँ, कभी मौका मिलेगा, तो मैं आपको अलग से बताऊंगा। आप जो मर्जी समझो। ...*(Interruptions)*... So, I have done that. God knows how many times I have been to Ranthambhore. I know Sariska, and today we are talking that nothing is left there. I think there is not a game park, to which I have not been. I have been to the forests in Uttaranchal, Binsar, etc., Shivpuri forests in Madhya Pradesh, anywhere.

So, I have an interest in it. I know something at the ground level. It is not just at the academic or administrative or Secretary, Agriculture level. I would like to point out, that there is one flaw in our law-making process and in our laws. I used to say when I was a bureaucrat also. There is a theory in India, sadly, since Independence, that whatever is to be done for India,

which is good for India, if you do it from Delhi and centralise it totally, then you definitely succeed. It is absolutely illogical and wrong. It is part of the large problem in all the Ministries, not just this Ministry of Forests, because it is at the roots of our thinking, that whatever is good for India, only we, in Delhi, can do it, whether the Minister or the Secretary. And, then, we powerfully centralise, and every little thing has to be sanctioned from there. We say, we mean well, we are, actually, more patriotic than the man in Bengal or in Chennai or wherever. Perhaps, we are also, perhaps, we are not. But, I would like to remind people that this is a sub-continent. In the normal course, the whole of the European Common Market fits into only one corner of this country. Most of the States of India are 70 million or 80 million or 100 million and unfortunately, U.P. is 140 million. They are vast States. They are bigger than France, or any country anywhere in the rest of the world. And you try and centralise it all to Delhi! And, then, people have to rush here. They are harassed; they are bothered; they go round-and-round the Ministries. And believe me, the Minister is not necessarily better than the bureaucrats. You know all of them. The fact is, it is delay, diversion and every kind of difficulty.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is one o'clock now. How much time will you take now?

DR. M.S. GILL: I was worrying that I will have to start and then carry on. Of course, I can talk in the afternoon.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will continue then. The House now stands adjourned for lunch.

The House then adjourned for lunch at one minute past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two minutes past two of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Gill to continue.

DR. M.S. GILL: How much time am I to spend so that I watch it?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It all depends on ...(*Interruptions*)... The Congress Party has six speakers and one hour. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. M.S. GILL: About 20 minutes. Sir, since we are back after a good lunch, I must slightly recapitulate. But what I was trying to emphasise was, the importance of the forest, which protects the rivers, which gives us any kind of agriculture and sustenance, and, in fact, the great worry that

over fifty years of Independence how much all this has diminished. My own personal observation – I have some link with Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh. When we went there in the fifties, it was a vast forest preserved by Maharaja Scindias. It had unlimited tigers. It was difficult to avoid them. I am not exaggerating. But they were not unfriendly. We could get along very well. ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, with tigers. ...*(Interruptions)*... All animals are friendly. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one minute. Let me have my say.

Today fifty years on, it is my observation, the forest has gone, the hills which were dark with forest, there is nothing left just shale stone. माइनिंग भी इल्लीगल हो जाती है, everywhere in this country. There is no tiger; there is no cat left. There are some deer in a game park. This is the diminution of everything. Water has reduced – and, the rains also. When we went there at that time, you believe me; we used to have summer rains of July-August rains better than in Shimla. रिमझिम-रिमझिम,। It has all gone. I can tell you of Sikkim. I went there for mountaineering there in 1961. We walked all the way to the snows, through dark woods and heavy forests with unlimited birds which are all written about by mature writers; In the seventies, I walked over the same area. Roads have been taken. There are shale hills leading to landslides. You cannot walk in the sun. This is actually the condition of India.

Yes, to protect it, you need laws, laws have been passed. But I do like to emphasise to the Minister that we should always be careful, that the laws are in some kind of a balance, not use this simplistic theory that bring everything to Delhi, and then you will be all right, and you will do very well. In fact, often you do worse. It is a sub-continent. Punjab is close to Delhi. I always sympathise with people from Manipur, Mizoram, Assam, Kerala who break their backs, even in aeroplanes coming every week, twice a week for meetings here with Ministers and Secretaries. Everybody knows it and I have watched it. That should not happen by over-centralisation. We should trust the State Governments. The idea that only we are patriotic, we are noble, we know best for India should not be forced on people. we have major States and their Chief Ministers, their Government, their Chief Secretaries are very important people, sense, 'responsible' people. If India is kept going, it is these people who somehow keep it on track sometimes in grave difficulties. I have seen the forest loss. I have been to Binsar forest in Uttaranchal, and walking in the forest with the local hillman, I would talk with them. देखो, यह पेड़ सूख रहा है, यह गिर गया है, जल गया है, दो साल से पड़ा है, लेकिन हम इसको ले जा नहीं सकते हैं। The oppression of the inspectors of very Ministry, including the Environment Ministry is also. It

also breeds corruption. I have watched the Environment Ministry for 15 years. It is the most vital Ministry. Whether it is Power, or Industry, or atomic energy, all the important things, people might want to be Ministers of, but they found that जब तक उधर नहीं जाएंगे, तो काम नहीं चलेगा। So you had the last chubby. It must be so even today. That again even leads to the kind of problem of corruption, problem of delay, problem of execution. Therefore, development is slow in this country. It gets even slower. I am just cautioning you. How they can balance all this between here and there, is something I would rather leave to them. Wildlife – there are game parks and these sanctuaries. I have been to a fair number of them, and we do our best and the Department does its best. The officers and guards do their best, but there are severe limitations. First of all I think, population policy, and population situation of India is totally linked to forest, environment protection and wildlife protection. I have often thought and said in private conversation, that in fifty years of my observation we have lost half the forest, half the wildlife, half the tigers etc. and give us another fifty years, we will clean it out. Heat and dust रह जाएगा। Why? It is because of population pressure. If we cannot stabilise quickly, 50 years is already too long. We can't take another 50 years. I see all the population figures or the census figures, and the hopes that are expressed going down by a decimal point. That won't do. This certainly won't survive. It is the pressure of the population on the forest as well as on the wildlife. Around Ranthambore, around Sariska, around Shivpuri, around any game park, the people also had to live. They have an argument. I can see that also. They need all sorts of resources out of those forests. If their pressure is too much there is no way in a democracy you can say, शेर जरूरी है, आदमी जरूरी नहीं है। आप यह कर नहीं सकेंगे। It is as simple as that, at least in my thinking. Therefore, we need to stabilise population. Therefore, population has to be linked to this forest policy and the entire environment policy and we should see how to protect it, anywhere. The population also has to have a friendly link with the policy, laws and the implementers, the officers and the guards because ultimately, the two cannot co-exist in hostility again in a democracy. We see everywhere whether it is in Rajasthan parks or elsewhere. No Government of this or that party, can, go against it if there is people's anger on a situation, where they perceive grave distress to them. I see the Gir lions. I have been there and the Gir lions are breeding heavily. There is even an idea to take them to Madhya Pradesh. Sometimes they wander off. Once they got around to Island Dew on the beach. Well, lion is also entitled to put on his shorts and be on the beach.

I don't see why he can't. He can also have his holiday on the beach but they are going out of the area, out of the park. Those Maldharis, who live there, are in clash with them. They bring the cattle. They also have to survive. The Gujarat friends are shaking their heads, because I know Gujarat a bit. Therefore, this is a fundamental aspect, of what we do about forests, population and wildlife altogether. या तो सारे इकट्ठे रहेंगे, बैलेंस में रहेंगे या कोई नहीं रहेगा, क्योंकि जब वे चले गए when the forest is gone, when animals are gone, what is the use of you and me staying on? That will also happen.

Now, I come to environment. Water, environment, rivers are all very important. Everyday we read about the Yamuna. It is a cesspool. We read all the figures, of how much muck Delhi is throwing out, and what small percentage of it goes into the river. We all know the river. We had the First Ganga Plan and now we have the Second Ganga Plan. And, there is a second Yamuna Plan. We have seen all of them. If you look at Punjab, its only resources are soil, the great rivers and the people who work. The rivers are in great danger there. I noticed it in the Annual Report that Sutlej has been mentioned among the great rivers to be looked after. Sir, Sutlej is also a cesspool in Ludhiana. Things are even worse. All the chemicals of Ludhiana industrial units, are soaking into the great resource -- the underground rich and sweet water -- of Punjab. Once you poison it, there is no science to un-poison it again. I asked my friend, Dr. Kasturirangan. There is no way you can un-poison it. We do not know what to do about it.

Now, I come to pollution control boards. I know that the Punjab Pollution Control Board is putting Ads. in editions of Hindu in Tamil Nadu and in other papers. They are wasting their money. Giving Ads. in Tamil Nadu is no good. You have to persuade Punjabis, not to do so badly, I see Hoshiapur case. I keep on getting letters. Sir, five or seven villages are being ruined due to poison out of a paper factory. Then, I went to Punjab and checked there. I asked somebody, who knows about it, in the Pollution Control Board. He said, "Sir, the man who owns that factory is so big. What can we do? Nobody here wants us to do anything." This is a sad story. So, I wrote a letter to the hon. Prime Minister. I said, "आप ही पढ़ लें इसको, शायद कुछ हो जाए या न हो" The Central Pollution Control Board, the State Pollution Control Boards have got to do a better job. But, they also have got to do a balanced job. They cannot sit on things and again become a source of power or a source of corruption. Otherwise, it would not work.

I see Haryana fighting with Delhi. I was unhappy at the division of Punjab, once upon a time in 1966. But, I am happy, now, that Haryana is facing Delhi, not Punjab, because people here want unlimited water. They want huge lawns in all their farmhouses! I would forbid their lawns. I would say, 'you cannot have more than 10 sq. ft. of lawn.' Do you realise how much water is needed, to soak lawns in this climate? And, who should be given it? But, Haryana faces ire of Delhi, to give more water. Haryana legitimately says, 'I have to worry about myself, my farmers, my crops and also my cities.' And, I have said about six or seven years ago – in the last century – in a convocation address, "Future wars in the next Century..." – "... inter-country and intra-country, अंदर या बाहर, will be only over water." You mark any boundary between Palestine and Israel, but, Jordan's little river has been taken by Israel. They will never give it to the West Bank, whether they give a small West Bank or a big West Bank, and this kind of trouble goes on within our own country. For all the neighbouring States water will be a perpetual problem. But, how are the rivers going to survive, if there is no forest? They cannot survive up in the hills of Himachal. No water will come in them. You cannot divide. No water.

Then, another point – effluent control. All over the Western countries, the city's dirty water is made drinkable again. It is possible. The hon. Finance Minister is trying to give Rs. 1,000 crores for a saline water treatment plant like Ariths, Fortune-I, etc. Why does not he put up plants which are available at far less cost? Mr. Jairam might know and might agree with me. All over Europe, you can make the cities' effluent drinkable. Go on recycling it. We have to do something like that. Otherwise, you can go on fighting with Delhi or even with U.P. You want pipeline water from Tehri Dam and how many Tehri dams will you built, I had been to Bhagirathi valley. You have smashed it. वह धर्म की वैली तो खत्म हो गई, मेरी नजर में तो खत्म हो गई। Water is to be conserved; it has to be re-used. That's all I can say.

Another small point. You have various bodies – impact assessment authorities, the National Forest Commission, the National Environment Appellate Authority. Why do they all have to be headed by judges only? I respect judges. Judges know many things. But judges do not know everything. And, this country has gone too far. The National Forest Commission will write a report after 30, 40, 50 years! I have read the British reports. I am sorry, with all the qualities, a Judge cannot be a man to head it. And, the idea that nobody else can, I think, should be rethought. And, I

think, you should rethink this in all Ministries. I see all sorts of departments and requirements, but they say जज लगा दो । Well, if that is the solution, maybe....

Then, there is the question of illegal mining and legal mining. We have seen the Supreme Court dealing with the Aravali hills. I am very clear in my mind – I have been up and down the Aravali – that we could green it, to the extent it was 500 years ago, or, in Babur's time. Do you know Babur hunted – I have read his autobiography – tigers in Chandigarh? And, he hunted rhinoceros in Peshawar. Please read that book. Everything was here. And, lions were up and down to the Punjab, not in the Gir only. Unlimited! But all of them, ultimately, began to disappear, because of this kind of vandalism. Mining is one of those vandalisms. I wish this country, the Forest Ministry, would take up this task and green the Aravali. Delhi will be a different city – a green city, a cool city, a rainy city. I can assure you, it can be done. Israelis will do it for you, if we can't. ...*(Interruptions)*... Well, do it then. Please do it. That's what I am asking all of you.

On the other hand, I give you the case of Orissa. At lunch, I met one of the MPs from the other House. And, I know it, but he was more emotionally talking to me and Dr. Kasturirangan, regarding the utter devastation of the KBK districts, with Bauxites, by, as he says, 50,000 trucks, taking away everything. Sir, you can sanction a mine, but you do not have the authority, to sanction away the future of thousand years of India. And, nobody has that. But that State has been devastated because mining is rich-pickings. And, you take a tiny percentage, or, a small percentage और यह कर दो । I think, that has to be looked at. Again, the Supreme Court tries to control mining. But I also worry that the Judiciary has to do all the Executive's control works. This is dangerous for democracy. I think, we can do it. You should do it. So, please look at that.

Now, I come to the point of 'tribals and forests'. There are, I think, at least, 300 million tribals. And, frankly, I have great sympathy with these people, because they are having a rough time everyday, whether it is Bihar or Orissa or Madhya Pradesh or they can't fight us. I think, that is the way I might put it. Therefore, it is understandable that since they are intimately related to the forest because even what they eat, what they survive on, is linked to the forest. But, at the same time, the State has to control it a little bit and regulate. But in a democracy of the Indians, for the Indians, I think, something must be always kept in mind, that there is a fine balance to

protect their rights, also because they are less articulate, less clever than the rest of us. That's all I have to say,

I think, Sir, I should wind up now. I have taken more than my twenty minutes. Thank you very much. But what I do have to say is that this Ministry, deserves a lot more attention, and a lot more discussion with the rest of India. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri R. Shunmugasundaram. You have six minutes.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, I request you to give me ten minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Today there are about 18 speakers. ...*(Interruptions)*... That is why I said six minutes. There is nobody to interrupt him.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM : Thank you very much. Sir, the National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages that 1/3 of the geographical area of this country should have forest or tree cover. But, the actual forest cover or treecover, as surveyed by the Forest Survey of India, and as per its estimate, is only 19.27 per cent. Even out of this 19.27 per cent, 11.17 per cent alone is the dense forest having density of over 40 per cent. About 7.95 per cent, that is, roughly about 2,61,310 sq. kilometres of the geographical area is an open forest having a density of less than ten per cent. This degradation of forest needs an immediate attention. Sir, the Ministry alone cannot do this. The Ministry has been funding all the projects, it is spending so much of money, but, I suggest that it should take up active afforestation in joint participation with industrial houses and other like-minded Non-Governmental Agencies, who are interested in such projects.

Sir, we have seen that during festivities and national festival days, several concrete structures and arches are being constructed. There was a case – the hon. Minister knows, it is from his district -- where a concrete arch was sought to be built in commemoration of the birthday of a particular political leader. When the case came up before the Madras High Court, and the High Court condemned building of arches in commemoration of political leaders. Sir, my suggestion is...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, when the matter came up before the court, it condemned it. My suggestion is, when such concrete structures are sought to be built, the Ministry should make it

mandatory that, at least, 2/3 of the land space in that concrete area or monumental area or memorial place there should be greenery, and active tree plantation must be done in that area. It is always better that during such national festivities or celebrations; active afforestation through planting thousands of saplings must be done. It must be encouraged. Whichever organisation approaches for celebration of such commemoration, the Ministry should insist upon active tree plantation. It should make a notification to that effect or make a regulation to that effect. I also request the hon. Minister – I had already made this suggestion to him in one of the meetings – to take the service of brand ambassadors. We have many young sportspersons in our country who are coming up like Sania Mirza or Narayan Karthikeyan or other youngsters, or promising sportspersons who can be made brand ambassadors to promote afforestation. Sir, there is no visible afforestation programme by the Ministry. Lakhs and lakhs of saplings must be planted. This was taken up about three years back when the hon. Minister's predecessor was there.. ...*(Interruptions)*... Lakhs and lakhs of saplings were planted on a particular day and such active steps must be taken. ...*(Interruptions)*...

Sir, the other aspect is about the programmes of the Ministry, that is, regarding conservation of national rivers and lakes. Funds have been provided by the Ministry for abatement of pollution in rivers. But as regards Tamil Nadu – I am not going to blame anyone – it is done with 50 per cent participation by the State Governments – what is happening is this. When I compare the execution of programmes in the rivers of other States, I find that a lot of money has been spent by them, but not even 25 per cent of the amount allotted by the Central Government or sanctioned by the Central Government has been spent in Tamil Nadu. Sir, I have got the list. I can give it...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN: Sir, it is not correct. It is misleading.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is his opinion, Mr. Narayanan. I can't do anything. If he wants to say something, how can you stop him?

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, that is history, past record of the local Government. Everybody knows that.

Then, Sir, there is mercury contamination in water and this is the finding of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board is actually treated as a dumpyard of the brilliant IAS officers

who are antagonistic to the Government, or who are not found in favour of the...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude, Mr. Shunmugasundaram.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, the Pollution Control Board, despite being a dumping yard, has found that there is mercury contamination in Kodaikanal and other lakes and rivers in Tamil Nadu. Sir, mercury contamination is highly dangerous because it leads to mental disorders. Now, here is a bad news for sea-food lovers that fishes in Chennai, Calcutta and Mumbai are contaminated with mercury. This is mostly because of the chloro-alkaline industries which produce chlorine and soda ash. These are two basic substances in industrial manufacturing. *(Time-bell rings)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, one more minute please.

Sir, mercury contamination in our country is estimated to be 70 per cent whereas in Europe it is only 1.5 per cent. Sir, water is very valuable resource for human life. It has to be conserved and wisely used. The ground water in Tamil Nadu, particularly, in Chennai and other places is depleting and no water desalination plant is coming up. I would only suggest to the Ministry that all the mineral water or drinking water bottling units or industries should be banned. They should not be allowed to take ground water for their use. They should be directed to establish their own desalination plants. This way, the ground water which is already depleting Tamil Nadu will be saved to a great extent.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, just one more minute please. Sir, the other thing is about the Coastal Regulation Zone which the Ministry promised to visit in its Draft National Policy. But the Draft National Policy which had been circulated earlier in December, I do not know what has happened to that. In that National Policy, the Ministry has promised to revisit the Coastal Regulation Zone. Sir, this statement was made before the Tsunami-effect. I want to know from the Ministry what is their proposal after the Tsunami, because the existing zone is 500 metres from the shore, and there was a suggestion by all political parties in Tamil Nadu that it should be made 1000 metres, instead of 500 metres. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, I am concluding. I would also like to say a few words about the Tsunami-effect. I am mentioning it because it is very important for Tamil Nadu. The Tsunami effect has salinated the fertile land. You also know that the Committee visited and the hon. Deputy Chairman was also there. The fertile land has been salinated. Something has to be done by the Ministry in this regard. I request that the extra grants must be sanctioned for this purpose.

Sir, finally, I would like to mention a word about mangrove forests also. I would like to know what steps are being taken for afforestation of mangrove forests. You have seen in Muthupettai area, where mangrove forests were there, the Tsunami effect was not there at all. Actually, in Tamil, in ancient days, the mangrove is called *alai atri*, *alai* is wave, *alai atri* is to cool down the wave. So, for over 2000 years, it was there in existence. But the active urbanisation has destroyed the mangrove forests, and the Ministry has to do something about that. I want to thank the hon. Minister, his predecessor and the Ministry for saving educational institutions in Tamil Nadu from being destroyed for political purposes. With these words, I thank you for the opportunity given to me.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR (Tripura): Sir, first of all, I would like to thank the hon. Minister, Department of Environment and Forests for making good achievements in the fields, forestry and environment, though there are lapses in some cases. Sir, this Ministry of Environment and Forests is treated as the nodal Ministry for planning, promotion, coordination and overseeing the implementation of various environmental and forestry programmes. The objectives of this Ministry, broadly, pertain to conservation and survey of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife, prevention and control of pollution, afforestation and regeneration of degraded areas, protection of the environment and ensuring the welfare of animals. And, for this purpose, we have the Botanical Survey of India, the Geological Survey of India, the Forests Survey of India; we have the National Forest Policy, the Environment Policy; we have adopted so many Acts and Regulations to control the conservation of forests produces. Sir, what we have seen in the Forest Policy is that the country should have one-third of its area under forest cover, and a programme has been taken to ensure it by 2012. Sir, the Forest Policy has given this Ministry the capacity to override the projects and plans of other Departments. Sir, coming to the North-East, ten per cent of the Plan funds have been earmarked for the region. During the last year,

the amount allotted was Rs. 115 crores. A good portion of that money has remained unutilised. Whatever the reasons might have been, the money was not spent. This year, the allocation amounts to Rs.123.5 crores. The Standing Committee has made some recommendations for the Ministry to take care of the problem of funds remaining unutilised, so that this may not recur.

Sir, the North-Eastern States are known mainly for their forestlands. In the case of Tripura, forest wealth is the main source of income for the State. But when we go through the Annual Report, we find that the North-East has not been given much importance. Even we have national parks and sanctuaries. But no money has been allotted for them in the Annual Report. Would the Government take any steps to double the number of those parks?

Sir, I invite the attention of the hon. Minister to see that the vast forest area in the North-Eastern States is taken care of and the forest wealth which is in abundance in the North-Eastern Region should be improved and developed.

Sir, the Ministry has given clearance to 791 projects, 34,135 hectares of land, 92 national parks, 500 sanctuaries, and the land required for these programmes. But this is one side of the Ministry showing achievement. I wish to highlight here the other side of the working of this Ministry. As may be learnt from the Standing Committee on Energy, for each and every power project one has to obtain clearance from this Ministry. The clearance is delayed for months and years together and that is why, it is not possible to start the projects on time. Some of them have actually been delayed so much that it may not be possible to implement them now.

Sir, nearly 4 million people in India are passing their days in extreme fear and tension as they are facing the threat of eviction. Sir, I do not know what the Ministry is going to do to help these people, who are suffering owing to the Supreme Court orders banning removal of dead, diseased, dying, or, wind-fallen trees, drift-wood trees, and even banning the removal of grass. How are these people going to be saved? What is the stand of the Government? What are the realities? The people, who are dwelling in the protected areas, are ecologically dependent on the forests to meet their requirements of fuel, fodder, medicines, fish and other aquatic animals.

Here, I find that the Standing Committee recommended that their ecological dependent should be taken into account. The Standing Committee has remarked that local population including Tribals should be allowed to share its products without compromising the preservation of our national forests. Sir, as soon as this order comes into reality, what we had seen in Orissa was that thousands of Adivasis lost their professional employment. They were dependent on this forestry. In Rajasthan, a good section of population depends on animal husbandry. As the removal of grass is banned, the animal husbandry, which is their profession, is at stake stage. In our Tripura, the State Government undertook a programme of rehabilitating Adivasis, the Tribals. At that time, the order of the Supreme Court came and that programme had to be stopped. The State Government approached the Central Government to know as to how this problem could be overcome. But, I think, the Central Government has not yet given any instruction to them.

Sir, I would like to point out another important thing. The people dependent on forestry cannot enter into forests. But where dense forests are there, these forests have become hideouts for extremists and terrorists in different parts of the country. It is a reality. The poachers, smugglers, thieves and all those who carry stolen forest goods are equipped with arms. How can our forest guards, with a stick in hand, face them? So, it is seen that the entire forest area in some States is infested with all these extremist activities. So, this has also to be taken care of. We cannot leave this area in their hands. So, what can we do? My suggestion is that if the local people and the people residing in the closed neighbourhood of the forestry - as their livelihood, their ways of life and everything is ecologically developed along with forestry - are given the share of doing something, then, they will not destroy the forests. Instead, they know how to develop the forests because their life is designed like that. I think, these things will be taken into consideration to take measures how to safeguard the Adivasi people from such official orders so that they can sustain their livelihood depending on these forests and environmental programmes (*Time-ball*).

Lastly, I would like to point out that the task of maintaining under-dependence between plants and animals and between living and non-living things should be safeguarded at any cost. The relationship between nature and man is very interesting. This nature provides us food and clothing, our pleasures and our wealth. At the same time, this nature also creates problems for us, obstacles in our life and for fighting all these obstacles, we

have developed science; we have developed our mechanisms. The Government should now ensure the speedy introduction of a Bill in which the cut-off date of legislation regarding occupation of forest land by forest-dwelling tribals should be, at least, retained as 31st December, 1993, as provided in the Ministry of Environment and Forests guidelines of 5th February, 2004. Sir, this has to be abided by so that these forest dwellers can survive along with the development of the forestry. Thank you, Sir.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN (Uttar Pradesh): Thank you, Sir. I had written down something that I wanted to read out. But, before that, something happened and I would like to share this with you and the House. I went for a meeting and there was this heavy discussion in the meeting and towards the end of the meeting, one of the ladies said that it is so wonderful to know that you can communicate with the handicapped persons so easily. I was a bit shocked, and then she told me that she was born deaf, but she spoke fluently. The throw of her voice was a little soft. So, I was quite surprised. I said, "I didn't realise that you had this problem. But you speak so wonderfully and you are so articulate." And, she said, "Isn't it wonderful? I was born in the right environment. My family provided me with encouragement and facilities." And, it immediately connected the topic that we are discussing today. I think, it is so important to provide the right environment, not only literally but also metaphorically. What I am going to read out is, obviously, what other speakers have spoken and the Members, who are going to speak after me, are going to say the same thing. But, I think, more importantly, the attitude of the people have to change if we want to look after environment, provide the right environment and take care of forests, educating people and telling them what is good. There are three very important elements – You have water; you have land; you have forest. These three things are very, very important for a proper environment. I think these elements need to be taken care of and the most important thing is to allow the people who are attached to these three elements, to be with them, and in the name of progress, not to take them away from their natural habitat. When you talk about water, I talk about fishermen. They live near water. They earn through water. They live by water. By saying that we want to clean our rivers, we want to clean the sea-shore, nothing gets done, but in the process, all these fishermen are removed from their natural habitat. And, therefore, there is a lot of negligence because since they work near water, they work in the water and they know how to keep it clean. They have kept it clean for so many years,

but suddenly due to modernisation there is pollution, there is contamination.

In the same way, you talk about jungles. Adivasis have been living there for years together, they have helped the jungles to grow; they plant and nurture the plants. These plants become trees and when they are full-grown trees, we decide that we need the wood and we allow certain people to go and cut the wood. We throw these people out of the jungles, and, we send them to work somewhere else and take them away from the natural habitat. I think they should be allowed to go back, live where they have lived, and, therefore, in the process look after the forests; because that is what they know, that is where they have lived all their lives and that is where they have grown. They get their food from there and they know how to look after their environment.

Sir, in the same way, we have land, and, I talk about the kisans. Today, thousands of kisans are dying. It is such a pity that people who cultivate are dying of hunger and I think we need to look into it. I don't want to get into the details because all the Members sitting here are all very knowledgeable, all very learned and they know what it is. I, therefore, feel that it is very, very important for the Government to create an environment of awareness and allow people, who are naturally connected to these elements, to be involved and to be there, and, not to take them away; and also to see that fishermen, adivasis and the kisans have the rightful – at the moment, I don't have the right word – land and it should be given back to them; they should be allowed to live their normal life. Sir, if you allow me and if I have some more time, I would like to read what I have written.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can take another 3 - 4 minutes to complete your speech.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: I will really have to run for that and I will try my best. Sir, as I stand to speak on the subject of environment and forests with which the Minister of Environment and Forests is concerned, there are reports that the protective Ozone layer has reached its lowest level due to changes in the weather and increasing levels of pollution. This information, confirmed in the quarterly reports received from 35 weather stations spread over from the Greenland to the Tenerife Island of North Africa, was revealed in the conference of European Geological Federation held in Vienna recently.

Sir, we cannot escape our contribution to this dangerous formation. If there is any comfort to be found in the prospect of environmental decline, it lies in the idea that the process is gradual and predictable. All sorts of soothing cliches follow from this notion. As the twenty first century begins, several well-established trends are shaping the future of our civilisation. Some of these are population growth, rising temperatures, falling water tables, shrinking cropland per person, collapsing fisheries, shrinking forests and the loss of plant and animal species. I refer to the falling water tables, which is an area of serious concern. While irrigation problems such as water logging, salting and silting go back several thousand years, aquifer depletion is new one confined largely to the last half century, when powerful diesel and electric pumps made it possible to extract underground water at rates that exceed the natural recharge from rainfall and melting snow.

The largest single deficits are in India and China. As India's population has tripled since 1950, water demand has climbed to where it may now be double the sustainable yield of the country's aquifers. As a result, water tables are falling in most parts of the country and wells are running dry in thousands of villages. The International Water Management Institute, the world's premier water research body, estimates that aquifer depletions and the resulting cutbacks in irrigation water could drop India's grain harvest by up to one-fourth. In a country that is adding 18 million people a year and where more than half of all children are malnourished and underweight, a shrinking harvest could increase hunger-related deaths, adding to the 6 million world-wide who die each year from hunger and malnutrition.

Sir, what are the causes of this malady? Where have we gone wrong? The answer is here. The eminent economist Gunnar Myrdal in 'The Asian Drama' had described the nations of South Asia as 'soft states'. In other words, these nations have governance systems in which the stated policy is at variance with the implemented policy. There is no reason to believe that as the country enters the 21st century, with all the complexities arising out of the liberalised and growing economy, heavy population density, intense poverty and considerable pressure on natural resources, much has changed in terms of governance systems.

The Government has repeatedly stated its interest in pursuing a path of economic development that does not lead to environmental harm.

3.00 P.M.

After the Stockholm Conference in early seventies, the country had enacted the Water Pollution Control Act in 1974 and the Air Pollution Control Act in 1981. Following the Bhopal Gas disaster in 1984, the Government realised that its legislative base was weak to deal with industrial accidents, and enacted the Environment Protection Act in 1986. During this period, there has also been considerable institutional development with the creation of a full-fledged Ministry of which you happen to be in-charge and a Central Pollution Control Board at the federal level and similar institutions in nearly all the 20-odd States of the country. But, despite this legislative and institutional framework, and a pollution control policy statement in 1991, precious little has actually changed on the pollution front that continues to worsen rapidly over the time.

Environmental management is built on two principles: the balance principle and the precautionary principle. Economic growth, it is widely recognised, creates environmental problems. Therefore, the Government, while promoting economic growth, must use its regulatory and fiscal powers to strike a balance with environmental harmony. But, the Government was not bothered about any of these two obligations. Dramatic rise in air pollution in most Indian metropolises over the last one decade is a direct result of an inefficient state, both in terms of balancing responsibilities and precautionary activities. According to a WHO report, published in 1994, the Indian capital is the fourth most polluted city in the world. And, no wonder, the amount of pollutants the transport sector pumps into Delhi is more than the sum of the vehicular pollutants emitted in Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata. Of the total air pollution load from various sources, vehicular pollution contributes to a shocking 64 per cent in Delhi, 52 per cent in Mumbai and 30 per cent in Kolkata.

Sir, in order to contain the increasing level of air pollution, (Time-bell rings) ... Can I just wrap up, Sir?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is only the first bell.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Automobile technology in the country not only needs updating, but some of it needs outright junking also. The outdated carburettor technology, used in several Indian models, was discarded in the West a long time ago.

Another area of concern is poor-quality fuel. Fuel quality was hardly ever considered responsible for vehicular pollution in Indian cities until recently. The petroleum sector pointed a finger at the automobile industry every time the subject came up. But the contribution of bad quality gasoline and diesel to air pollution in the country has been grudgingly acknowledged over the last few years. Sir, I will not go into this aspect in detail.

Sir, traffic non-planning is another area of concern. In answers to Parliament Questions, the Government continues to pass on the buck to the States.

In totality, our cities are burning up in the smoke of pollution. Something needs to be done for the environment. It is a global concern. Let your Ministry not sit as a spectator or else dangers will increase for the human life. Already respiratory diseases in Delhi are stated to be 12 times more than the national average. As the rate of asthma cases among children increases, vehicular pollution is debilitating our future – nearly 12 per cent of Delhi's school children are asthmatics. In Mumbai, the rising number of cardiovascular deaths is attributed to vehicular pollution – the city has half the taxis in the country and a fifth of all private vehicles.

Lastly, I would like to conclude with a request to the Minister to ban and strictly monitor the ban on plastic bags. This issue has been debated in the House many times, but there has been no follow up. This usage of plastic bags is not only unhealthy but also an eyesore. Sir, if we want a healthy and prosperous India, then we have to take the environment issue very seriously and on a priority basis. Thank you very much, Sir.

DR. K. KASTURIRANGAN (Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. Sir, environment is no longer looked upon in terms of its component, but as an integrated system in a holistic way. The earth today is seen as an interactive physical, chemical and biological system. So anything that happens in one, is supposed to interact and influence the other components of the environment. The atmosphere, ocean and land, all these now become a part of that total picture that one has to look at. In this connection, the present way in which one talks about is to think globally and act locally. Anthropogenic effects until recently were not the cause for the changes in the environment. The different time scales of the earth's evolution have themselves been influencing the atmosphere, the land as well as the oceans. But in the more recent past, one has started seeing the

influence of the human activities – the anthropogenic activities on the environment. And this, in turn, has led to the realisation that there have to be certain controls, there have to be certain regulations and, therefore, an understanding and the outcome of all these is, of course, agreements like the Montreal Protocol, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Ramsar Agreements on wetlands and so on. Now, it is interesting to note, as Jayaji has just mentioned, about the question of Ozone. Until recently, on the basis of the last two-three years' measurements, it was felt that the steps that had been taken in the context of controlling the gases, particularly Chloro Fluoro Carbons (CFC) that affects ozone content in the atmosphere, one is able to bring down the level of ozone reduction and, therefore, there is a rejuvenation of the ozone layer at the stratospheric altitudes. But this year's report says to the contrary – that it has not improved at all. Now, they go back to their original model and say by only 2050, we will have the ozone to the original levels. Now, what does it tell us? It tells us one important thing – that these perturbations in the earth system, whether it is atmosphere, whether it is land or whether it is ocean, they have certain minimal time scales and some of the more serious aspects of time have built up time scales similar to the rejuvenation part of it, which are in the time scales of decades. This is what one is really worried about. Because once you get into a regime where you have a problem of controlling that component of the environment, then you have to wait for decades when the nature takes over to correct the situation involve even as you do all the other types of regulatory mechanisms to support such recovery process. So, keeping all this in mind, one talks quite about the environment, and it is not my task to go into the details of all this. But specifically with respect to our own concerns, I would like to dwell a little bit on forestry. We know that we have a report – a good report has come out this year from the Environment and Forest Group and I should compliment the Minister for this effort that has come out. But what we see here is that we have something like 20 to 21 per cent as the total forest cover of the country and about 10 per cent as what you call as 'closed forest' with a canopy cover of probably more than 40 per cent. Now, the Ministry has taken steps to make sure that there is one more level to which one can characterize crown-density. But what is significant is that we have really only 9 to 10 per cent which is what you call as heavy thick crown component of the forest, not anywhere near 30 per cent that we are talking about, as target for 'closed forest'. And then we are talking about the Tenth Plan target which is about 25 per cent which means bringing another six-and-a-half million hectares of land under

forest cover. And finally, of course, one is talking about the Eleventh Plan, that is, by 2012, of a 30 per cent level, which again needs an area of something like 32 million hectares. Now, if one looks at the strategy, for realising this kind of a thing, one very clearly sees that many of these areas that will be covered with tree plantations would be falling outside the notified areas of the forests. And also, this kind of tree planting by itself is not going to make a forest. So, what I would like to stress here is that going beyond 10 per cent and going beyond 20 per cent to 30 per cent is going to be a very difficult process, simply because you have to have 33 million hectares of land, and that too, if you are thinking in terms of planting it by roadsides, urban planting and things of that kind, they really don't become forests. Forests are an eco system which is very unique. It is not just a question of planting trees and increasing the vegetative cover. So, I hope, that when we try to plan in the context of an environmental aspect, the questions of what will be forest and what will be the tree cover, green cover, etc., there will be clear cut distinction so that when we try to talk about a 30 per cent target by 2012, we are really talking of the forest component and not the tree component alone. The second part of it is, of course, when you have this kind of a thing, what is the kind of strategy? We have something like 62 million hectares of land which have been identified as waste land and about 45 million hectares today are what is called as 'cultureable waste land'. I am aware that the Ministry is taking the necessary steps to retrieve this cultureable waste and so that it becomes really productive. To what extent many of this waste land could be slowly turned into vegetative cover and ultimately into a genuine forest cover over decades is a matter which would be worthwhile looking at because our land is going to be very limited, the population is continuing to grow and, therefore, there is not going to be new land available to take the forest wealth to 30 per cent.

The third part, of course, I would like to say is with respect to an issue raised recently. There is the question of forest wealth being provided to the people who belong to the forests. I think it is a very noble idea. It has certainly lot of good things about it. But one has to make sure that a clear-cut assessment is made as to how do we manage that kind of a scenario and what role the Department of Forest themselves will have to play in the context of managing such a strategy. Ultimately, the Forest Department has the responsibility to manage the forests and perturbations in the managerial structure within the forests could certainly come in the way of their ability to make sure that the targets are met. I am sure that this is a very delicate issue which will be sorted out and ensured that the local

people who belong to the forests and depend on the forest wealth are not denied their due and, at the same time, we have a means of ensuring that the forest wealth is maintained in a sustainable fashion because it is for the good of the people who belong to the forest themselves.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI) in the Chair.]

And, ultimately, I would like to make one mention and that is related to the environmental economics, the value of environmental system and the economics related to that. Not that, it is important at this point in our country's development, but it is very important that we start understanding the value of environment, in terms of its actual cost benefit. And this will give an appreciation as to why we should be protecting the environment. The value of nature, purely in terms of the ability to remove carbon dioxide or to reduce the ozone layer or to contain the global warming, is one aspect of it. But there are several aspects of the local ecology that one would today deal with, by means of suitable environmental strategies and this is becoming a widespread procedure in Latin America and other locations. This is related also to the environmental economics. And I am sure, in the years to come, our own Ministry, alongwith other Ministries, will address this question of the value of the environment and ecology in the overall context of sustainability and development. Thank you.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ (Jammu and Kashmir): Madam, I must say that the Ministry of Environment and Forest is doing a commendable job. It has been doing it for a long period of time. There is consistency in that hard work, and, since I have to be brief, I would compliment the Ministry for so many achievements. The position taken by the Ministry is a very difficult one. In fact, this Ministry has a very tough job. From a distance, it looks a very small Ministry, but there is quite a lot of work inside, and today, there are so many pressures on the Ministry. The Ministry has taken a position that 'what suits environment, suits development.' I support this dictum, I support this philosophy because, the Ministry has to explain to the nation the needs of environment, and what sustainable development actually means, it has to explain to the nation further. In fact, there has to be a vigorous debate on that. The Ministry has lent support to so many areas and tried to control pollution. It has also tried to increase the forest cover. But I do not think that the Ministry has succeeded in increasing the forest cover. It is a tragedy. At least, we should have 33 per cent of land area under forest, and when we produce the figures, we say, we have 23 per cent of land under forest cover. But that is ultimately not

true. Then we come down to a little dense forest and say, 19 per cent, and finally, we say, we have the forest cover of only 11 per cent of the land mass. But this Ministry tried over a period of time to preserve forest, conserve them, and tried to increase the forest cover. But there is a lot of pressure on forest. I do not know whether the Ministry could have done better. But it is a challenging task for future. So, the areas in which the Ministry has done very well are many. But there are some grey areas, not because of the failure of the Minister or his colleagues, but because of so many pressures, these grey areas are there, and this august House has to take notice of them. We have to fight the battle together, give support to the Ministry and see what can be done. The Ministry recently has said that it would be producing a new Environment Policy, and this announcement has come in for some criticism. The hon. Minister will have to go into this question. Yes, it is on the website. But the website is not the common man's field. Even intellectuals sometimes do not find time to see the website. There has to be a debate in this House and the other House, and a larger debate with the people on the new Environment Policy, and I do not think it is advisable to offer an advice to the hon. Minister. But I would say that this Ministry should take care of the NGOs because the NGOs attached to this Ministry are taking interest in environment. They are not letterhead organisations. Some of the NGOs in our country have earned international applause for their work; I will not mention any of them although some of them are doing a commendable work. Therefore, the NGOs together are raising a question that there is no transparency; this new Environment Policy has not been circulated. But from the Minister point of view, I think, he will explain the position, and he will tell us that it has been circulated. But there has to be a debate, nationwide, on the Environment Policy because environment is under pressure; our ecology is under pressure. If we do not take care of it now, we shall be doomed because India is in a very difficult situation. On the one side, we are developed. On the other, in certain areas, we have organised lopsided development. We have areas of poverty. We have people living below the poverty line. Then, the question of sustainable development becomes very relevant. But it is easier said than done; this Ministry has to take the nation into confidence. I do not know how the hon. Minister will organise debates; it is a difficult task. But when I say today that there are some grey areas, I do say they are not because of the Minister's mistakes, but because of the pressure of the whole nation, the pressure on resources, the development pressures. Therefore, environment is in danger.

On the question of biodiversity, this nation became very safe because of this Act. The Bill was passed last year. We have done this exercise in 1997. On the question of biodiversity, we must now know what is happening. This Act has been applied. What is the feedback? I would request the hon. Minister to discuss that feedback on the question of bio-safety and biodiversity in this House. While I am saying this, I will not call it an advice, but an opinion. My understanding is that all the wisdom cannot be in the Ministry. When I had to do this exercise on biodiversity, I moved out of this Ministry on so many issues. Yes, the then Secretary was a knowledgeable person. He became the member-Secretary. There were 14 scientists drawn from all over India, and, then, the draft was produced. My point is, today, we have a very rich scientific community, and that scientific community is at the disposal of the Ministry. Therefore, we must take full advantage of our knowledgeable people. It is dangerous to rely only on the expertise that is available in the Ministry.

Another grey area is regarding wildlife. Wildlife is under pressure; the majestic Tiger is under extinction. And the Ministry has taken the position that the tiger population is increasing! As I said earlier, the performance of this Ministry is being watched by everyone, from the common man to the highest intellectual. Therefore, on the question of tiger's life and its population, this Ministry has to be very cautious. I must congratulate the hon. Prime Minister for having instituted a Task Force on Tiger. So, let us hope that in future, we shall succeed in protecting our tigers. In 1993, we had only 19 tiger reserves, and at that time, the number of tigers that we had was 4,334. The tiger census is a very difficult task, but we have to rely on certain data. This data is a valid data. But, now, we have 28 tiger reserves. The hon. Minister must have taken certain measures for protecting the tigers. I have found that many concerned citizens are in a kind of mental agony; we cannot lose tigers because wildlife is so important. It is part of the sustainable development which we want to organise. We can't live without tiger and tiger is being poached under the very nose of the Ministry. So, when the hon. Minister rises to explain the achievements of his Ministry, he may kindly say something very authoritatively on tiger.

Another grey area is regarding our lakes. Many of them are drying up. A lot of resources have been wasted. I must admit before this august House that while I was moving out of the Ministry, I prepared a note for the Cabinet stating that we must close down the Ganges Action Plan-II because

my understanding was that we had lost Rs.500 crores without achieving anything. I visited Hardwar and many cities through which the Ganges passes and I found, with my own eyes, that the dead bodies of animals and human beings flowing down the Ganges. The Ministry was spending crores of rupees on that project. Today, this House must know as to what is happening to the Ganges. Is it pollution-free? Has it become clean? What is the total amount of money that was spent? What is the achievement? There was a situation in Kanpur at one point of time. The crematorium was closed because the electricity bills were not paid. When the crematorium was closed, the dead bodies were thrown into the Ganges. We can't continuously spend or invest money in cleaning the Ganges without any achievement to our credit. I have taken only two or three areas. When the hon. Minister explains the achievements of his Ministry, I would like to know the fate of the lakes in the country and, particularly, about the Ganges and its future.

Now, I come to the question of global warming. I don't dispute the points raised by my dear colleague, Dr. Kasturirangan. Yes, ozone is a situation. But a much more difficult and dangerous situation is global warming. India has the credit of producing the Kyoto Protocol. India was the leader country. We may lag behind in so many areas. But as far as environment is concerned, we have earned name. This Ministry has earned name. Our scientists have earned name and fame together internationally. At Kyoto, when the Kyoto Protocol was produced for reducing the emissions, the Green House Gas, it was India that gave the lead to the international community. At that point of time, China and India came together. I understand that China is warming towards us in terms of environment, but others know in political terms and economic terms. As far environment is concerned, China is really with India. At that time, when China and India came together, it was a compulsion for G-77 and the Kyoto Protocol was produced together. India was not merely a signatory to that document. India was the leader. At that time, the US continued to be the greatest polluter. More than 25 per cent of world's pollution was single-handedly produced by America. Only three days ago, we were invited to a discussion by Global Climate Coalition in Delhi. Dr. Karan Singh was also there. Mr. Peter Leff from England initiated the debate. He was optimistic about America signing this treaty or the American scientists or environmentalists accepting it. I sounded my pessimism. I said that the General Motors and the oil companies in America did not want to reduce their consumption. They have coined terms like "training in emissions".

That was not workable in 1997 or 1998, That is not workable even today. This is the opinion of the European Union. Therefore, I share my pessimism that unless America receives a jolt, and we are in a position to do that, they wouldn't accept it. We experience the global warming. Today is a cold day; tomorrow may be a hot day. The seasons have changed. The Tsunami may be because of that. In the same country, in one part you will have drought and in the other part, you will have floods. It is a man made tragedy. They have finished the jungles and have created this situation in response to the greed. Therefore, we are living very dangerously. Global warming is a reality. We shall suffer not because of our mistakes, but because of the mistakes committed in America. In 1997, the then President Clinton – a year before, 500 deaths had occurred in Chicago; I felt very surprised and rather frustrating – was trying to convince his nation on the climatic change. America could give the lead to the whole world. The General Motors -- see the enormous budget of the General Motors -- and all the oil companies wanted to wreck the Kyoto Protocol. Madam, 250 members of the climate coalition representing the General Motors and oil companies went to Japan to wreck that Treaty. Today, even Russia has signed the Treaty. But it is a tragedy that America has refused to do it. America continues to produce pollution. So, what do I expect from the Ministry? I expect from the Ministry – we are all with the Ministry; many peoples and many scientists are with the Ministry – that it must get into a dialogue with the European Union. They cannot whisper to America that you kindly sign the Treaty. The European Union is in disagreement with President Bush. So, India is the leader country. India and China together can create an atmosphere of compulsion for Americans in the G-77. Unless America abides by the provisions of this Treaty, pollution will be there, greenhouse gases will be there and trouble for humanity will be there. Unfortunately, India will suffer because of the mistakes of America. America is an advanced country. We have to fight poverty. We have to organise development. Madam, America is trying to change our responsibilities. The hon. Minister knows that the Convention on Climate Change lays down equal but differentiated responsibilities. India is a responsible country. We shall reduce greenhouse gases; we shall reduce emissions within our control, but we have to organise development. America has reached the zenith of development and yet America refuses to reduce emissions according to the provisions of this Treaty. So, India should refuse to suffer. I would request the hon. Minister to kindly organise a debate in this House on the Kyoto Protocol because many people in this country do not

know the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. We are living dangerously because pollution is increasing and emissions are increasing. America is creating such a situation. We may be friendly with America in political and economic terms, but on the question of environment and on the question of Treaty, we shall have to oppose President Bush's policy. We have to rise to the occasion because we are a leader country. Thank you.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): Madam, the hon. Members who spoke before me have said that this Ministry was doing a very good job. I am sure they are right. I will not go into the big things like international problems. All the big things like the Ganga and the Yamuna have been discussed. I would like to be specific. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards one vessel. Since 2000, one vessel known as the Indian Princess has been grounded. That has got stuck up in the Candolim Beach of North Goa. Our rules and laws are such that neither the Central Government nor the State Government have been able to do anything. This particular ship, God knows belongs to whom, is a foreign flagged ship, controlled by an Indian businessman and still our Government can do nothing about it. This issue has been discussed in the House; it has been discussed in different Committee meetings. And, if you put this question to the Ministry today, they will know nothing about it, for the simple reason that mind-set is not there. The Ministry knows the problem. But there is no follow up. Once they reply to a certain thing, it is then forgotten. Mr. Minister, let me tell you; the ship will be broken into pieces, and there will be environmental disaster on that beach. The fishermen will suffer, and for five years, the beach will be closed. I will request you to kindly look into it.

Similarly, when we talk of big things, there is environmental problem on the Everest. People go there and make it dirty. What are we doing about it?

When we talk about tiger reserves, I can tell you my experience. About thirty years ago, when I visited Sariska and Ranthambore, the guide over there said, "Sorry, Sir; we are asked not to show you tigers because they will be disturbed if we try to show you to them." Now I understand that that made it easy for the poachers, in collusion with the forest officials and guides, to indulge in poaching because the visitors are not allowed to go around freely and they are not guided properly. Mr. Minister, I strongly recommend that we should have more trained guides because when we go to sanctuaries anywhere else in the world, be it Africa, America or Europe,

there, they make it a rule to show you all the animals there. You go to Kenya or Nigeria. They will ensure that you are able to see all kinds of *flora and fauna* and all kinds of wildlife. Then, the question of poaching also will get reduced, if not eliminated. This kind of an effort has to be made, Mr. Minister. Otherwise, to my mind, your Ministry has become spineless, powerless and a result-less Ministry. I request you to make new laws if there is something lacking in the present laws. Please make new laws. We will support you. Otherwise, what your Ministry does is to simply harass small industries...(interruptions)...

PROF. P.J. KURIAN (Kerala) : Is he making insinuations against the Minister when he says that the Ministry is spineless?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I would like to tell the hon. Member that there is no insinuation against the hon. Minister. I have not made any single remark against the Minister. He has come to the Ministry only recently. I am talking about it since 2000 when some other Government was there. And, if my friend still wants to know the details, I will sit with him and give him more details. Our hon. Minister is quite okay. I would only request him one thing that the mind-set of the Ministry officials has to change. They are only trying to harass the industries. They send their inspectors to small, small units all over the country. Please stop this harassment. If there is something wrong going on on the environment side, tell them clearly that that has to be corrected within a fixed time-limit. I will have no objection. In the case of FDIs and new industries, environmental clearance is a big problem. You need to give them clearance. Please fix a time-limit. We have to have a balance. We cannot stop the development of our country. You can say, "Sorry, we cannot allow this kind of industry"; I will have no objection. But if you allow that industry and clearance is required, then there should be a time-limit.

Sir, the last thing that I want to say is that we need to save the environment for the coming generations, whether it is the pollution of water or air or whether it is noise pollution. There is no doubt that we need to save our environment. But we should not fix our priorities in such a way that we take up everything and nothing happens. Let us fix priorities in such a way that some big things happen; the small things will just follow. Therefore, I will request you to find out these small things, which I have mentioned, like reserves; how do we improve upon them? It has become a national issue. It has become an international issue. I am sure, under your leadership, things will change in the Ministry; the mindset of the officers will

change; and if this can happen, then you would have achieved a lot.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Madam, let me begin by saying that on the question of the functioning of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, two things cannot go together. One is the full-throated campaign for a consumerist society, and the other, the protection of environment. Some of my friends commented earlier that the most consumerist society, that is, the United States of America, is responsible for most of the degradation of the environment. But, unfortunately, in our country also, we are promoting consumerism. And while promoting consumerism, we are also thinking about environment. Therefore, my first submission to the hon. Minister is that both these things cannot go together. Consumerism will destroy the environment. That has been our experience over a period of time. The most developed countries are the most responsible for the degradation of the environment, whether it is a question of global warming or the depletion of the ozone layer. I am not going into all those technical details. Unfortunately, I do not know what is being propagated in public; I cannot afford the time to search the website. Nowadays, it has become a fashion to say that everything is available on the website. How many people can access the websites, especially those in the villages, in the rural areas, where 80 per cent of the population live and people do not have Internet access? Access to Internet in India is hardly zero point something. So, from that point of view, I really do not understand to whom you are making this information available. I want to make a suggestion to the hon. Minister and the suggestion is very important. You may accept it or reject it. Please give your directions in writing, in regional languages, through the Panchayats, so that your directions reach the right people. The interests of the rural people and the interests of the environment are inextricably intertwined. These cannot be separated. Unfortunately, for consumerism that I am commenting on, and for the hedonistic society that I am commenting upon, internationally, it has become a fashion – and, in India also, over a period of five or six years, especially during the NDA regime particularly, there was a crazy propaganda – to say that it is the tribal people, the indigenous people who are destroying the environment, who are destroying the forests. The fact is just the opposite. It is the consumerist society, it is urbanisation, it is industrialisation, it is the so-called development that is destroying the environment. We prefer to keep quiet when industrialists or big multinational corporations destroy the environment. Let me give you some examples.

Madam, I want to give a small example because there is not much time at my disposal. In a magazine, they were commenting on 'colonisation's dirty dozen'. Now, what is the average residue in a sample of soft drink manufacturers, like Coca Cola and Pepsi? I am not really commenting on water depletion in Kerala, what has come on the fore. Say, Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Diet Pepsi, Miranda Orange, Miranda Lemon, Blue Pepsi, etc., there are 12 companies, there are 12 names, how they are simply trampling the EU norms from 11 to 70 times. It is simply shivering. I also sometimes shiver as to what is happening exactly. The residues which are being left by them are 11 to 70 times more than the EU norms, what is acceptable to us, what is also endorsed by the Kyoto Protocol. Now, they are trampling this, and trampling at will.

Madam, in an answer to a question in Parliament on 5.7.2004, the Ministry in its reply has referred to only 20 companies, whereas there are 90 companies. It is very interesting. That is why I would like to refer it. The Pepsi has got 38 plants. Of which, 17 are company-owned and 21 are franchise-owned plants. Coke has 25 company-owned and 27 franchise-owned plants. It is based on the Report given to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, when a hue and cry was made on the pesticide residue in the soft drinks. The Ministry lists only 20, out of 90 plants, which is just 22 per cent of the total plants in the country. They could report only 22 per cent. What is the situation? These companies combined together, extract 16,500 kilolitres of water per month. And, this water is being used by them leading to a depletion of sub-soil water level. This is number one. Number two,...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI): That is also at a very cheaper rate.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Yes, Madam. It is at no rate even. Madam, it is not at a cheaper rate. It is no rate even. They are getting it a zero rate. In Kerala, our friends are suffering.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI): They are getting it at a cheaper rate from some municipalities.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: In Kerala, our friends are suffering, and they are going scot-free, simply scot-free.

Madam, another point I would like to say is, how the consumerists or how the rich people are destroying the environment. Say, just for an example, Mr. Minister, please note it. I am saying this because there is a

rampant and indiscriminate use of environment by the rich people. I am saying so because the Environment Policy, the Policy on the Climate or the Policy on Climate Change is not in place. In fact, the Policy on Climate Change is not in place, even though I had shouted for it in the year 2002. Incidentally, the same party used to hold the Ministry of Environment and Forests – Mr. Baalu was the Minister of your party. When I asked for a Climate Change Policy, virtually, I got a letter which is quite ridiculous, I must say, without any understanding of climate change. Practically people do not understand what can be a Climate Change Policy. People understand the Climate Policy. That appeared to me very funny. However, Madam, I am not going to comment extensively on that. But, I would once again implore upon the Ministry please do such a thing. The advanced and developed countries do have a Climate Change Policy, but we don't have a Climate Change Policy up till now. Even though we are in 2005, but, we don't have any Climate Change Policy up till now. It is very, very important to protect the climate of ours, to protect the environment of ours. So, you must come out with a clear Climate Change Policy.

However, while talking about the Climate Change Policy, I was just referring to some experiences of ours. What I mean to say is that the Environment Policy should be a comprehensive policy. It cannot be made only by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. It would be absolutely an apology of a policy. Unless this policy is integrated with the Industrial Policy of ours, with the Agricultural Policy of ours, with social and other political policies of ours, it cannot be simply put in place in the right earnest.

Madam, now I would like to say something about the use of pesticides, rodenticides, weedicides, herbicides; insecticides, etc. In Punjab and Himachal, particularly, in the organised apple orchards or in the organised agriculture, they spray pesticides, rodenticides, herbicides. They are very rich kulaks, rich peasants, rich farmers. They spray these things. Spraying of this sort of pesticides, insecticides, rodenticides, weedicides and herbicides cause a very serious impact even in the pristine localities. Unfortunately, India is a very thickly populated country. We cannot emulate the policy of protection of environment as in America which is scantily populated or Canada or the Scandinavian countries which are scantily populated. We cannot have the same policy in our country. We should evolve a policy according to our own condition. I mean to say that people must be integrated with the Environment Policy; particularly, the indigenous people must be integrated with the Environment Policy. Otherwise, no

Environment Policy is going to succeed. And indiscriminate use of pesticides is to be taken care of. What is the pesticide policy of our country? Does it conform with the Environment Policy of our country? I doubt, it is not. Unless we take a holistic view, we cannot. Since the time is not in my favour I cannot speak at length though Mr. Saif-ud-Din 502 and even Mr. Bagrodia said that I can speak for ours together on the issue. It is a very interesting issue. It concerns the people; it concerns the country; it concerns the world as a whole. But, unfortunately, time is not in my favour.

However, I would just share what the experience of mine is. The hon. Minister may kindly note on the Yamuna Action Plan. What is the present status of Yamuna Action Plan? What are you doing? I had been to the Taj Mahal some two years back. I have seen that Yamuna near the Taj Mahal has been subverted to a swamp. It should not be told that it is converted, but subverted to a swamp and that swamp is freely emitting H_2S , hydrogen sulphide, and this hydrogen sulphide in reaction with the air is converted into sulphuric acid, H_2SO_4 . And that sulphuric acid is getting deposited on to the walls of the Taj Mahal. Now, the Archaeological Survey of India is bringing *multani mitti*. They say it is aluminium trisilicate, scientifically. *Multani mitti* they are using. They are painting *multani mitti* and trying to take care of that erosion on the marble soft of the Taj Mahal. That is not the solution at all. Unless you really liberate Yamuna, unless you talk to the Haryana friends of ours, to the Haryana Government, unless they release water, the swamp in Delhi – the big drain in Delhi carrying only effluents – and the swamp near the Taj Mahal cannot simply be corrected. This Taj Mahal will not be the Taj Mahal after some few years. I am afraid that unless this is stopped altogether, unless this is taken care of very seriously, we will not be able to protect our pride, one of the seven wonders of the world.

Madam, I would like to implore upon the hon. Minister and the Ministry, as a whole, that we should have a comprehensive Environment Policy. I would also like to say something after seeing the Annual Report of this Ministry of Environment and Forests. I find very interesting points where I would like to put questions to the hon. Minister. The hon. Minister may refer to page-43 where you have referred to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Committee. You have reported that, "An Expert Committee under Dr. M.S. Swaminathan was constituted by the Ministry on 19th July, 2004, for comprehensively reviewing the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991, in the light of findings and recommendations of previous committees, future

pronouncements, representations of various stakeholders and suggest suitable amendments, if necessary, to make the coastal regulatory framework consistent with well established scientific principles of coastal zone management. The committee has submitted its report to the Ministry on 14th February, 2005."

Madam, my question is, what action you have taken on the report. Have you just stored the report very carefully, or you have really worked on the report? If at all you have really worked on the report, what are your action plans, what is the action taken report? By what time you are going to submit the action taken report on this very valuable report of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, a very eminent scientist.

Madam, I would like to say something because I have the first-hand experience in the Dahanu block of Thane district in Maharashtra where a dam has been constructed in the name of benefitting tribals. I was really wondering. Practically, the tribal society of Dahanu block was the least beneficiary of that dam and that dam was supposed to produce 6 MW of electricity. I asked the engineers and they told me that nothing was being produced. The ecology has been very badly disturbed and the tribals have been evicted from the place. Fortunately, the report is here and I quote from page-44. It says, "The Expert Committee also visited the Dahanu Taluka area in view of the representations made to permit developmental activities in the region and revise the Dahanu notification. The report on the assessment of the flora and fauna of Dahanu was also finalised."

Now, what is the final step that you have taken? Are you going to act very seriously against the so-called developmental projects in Dahanu Block, which is mostly inhabited by the tribals? I would like to have your kind answer on this. Madam, you have already rung the bell. I am not going into much detail. I would just like to express concern about the environment policy. Quality environment cannot be made – I once again repeat – unless you take a comprehensive view of the entire situation. How do you propose to take a comprehensive view? No sectional view will succeed. In fact, in the country of ours, in the thickly populated country of ours, no sectional policy will succeed. I am sure and I still believe that this Ministry will have a different view about the entire situation. The whole gamut of problems will be understood in a different way. This Ministry will certainly envisage some such comprehensive environment policy so that it can benefit, because environment is for the man, and environment consists of flora, fauna, all sorts of animals, endangered species of animals and

everything. Mr. Minister, do you have any audit on the flora and fauna? I understand that particularly in the North-East – my friends from North-East will certainly vouch for this – a number of flora and fauna have been taken out to the Western countries. Many of those have been patented. Here in India, we depend on herbarium. We put everything in herbarium. But herbarium protection or herbarium recording is not internationally accepted. It is not internationally accepted. I would like to know whether you have produced a data of geographical identity because this is an era of patent. While commenting on the Patents Amendment Bill, I was telling that unfortunately we are living in an era of competition and not of cooperation. In this competition all developed countries are all out to destroy, to rob the biodiversity of different developing or under developed countries. There are several examples. I can talk for hours together insofar as robbing or destroying the biodiversity of different countries is concerned. India is a sub-continent and our biodiversity is also very, very rich biodiversity. But many of our flora and fauna have already been taken out. Many of the flora and fauna have become endangered. What are your plans, your action plans exactly to protect those flora and fauna, to protect the species, genera of those plants, save this country, and save the mangrove of this country? Himalayan botany is one and the coastal botany is another. In the coastal area, you have to save the mangroves. Some of the friends have already commented on mangroves. Mangroves were instrumental in saving some of the areas from tsunami. Even the intensity of the devastating tsunami could be reduced, could be minimised and could be resisted by the existence of mangroves. Now, mangroves are also being endangered nowadays. In Sunderban areas mangroves have been endangered. Instead of taking care of that area, what your Department is doing, I am just giving you an example in this regard of the Jambodwip, which is a small isolated island. In Jambodwip fishermen of adjoining areas, who were cultivators, who were agriculturists originally, for some three or four months in a year, they go for fishing. This Jambodwip was being used as a hub by the fishing community. They used to dry the fish. The small area was being used by them to dry the fish from the months of October to February – October, November, December, January and February. (*Time-bell*) I am concluding. I am just winding up. For these five months they were using it. The Environment and Forests Department of West Bengal has given a report for allowing this particular area of Jambodwip by this fishermen. But I am told that your Ministry of Environment and Forests at the Centre here has unnecessarily put an embargo on that. Now, the

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fishermen are in a lurch. They are not able to dry their fish after the catch of the fish. Even in a serious situation when there is a storm in the ocean; they use to save themselves by taking shelter in the Jambodwip. What are you going to do about these Jambodwip fishermen? There are thousands of poor fishermen who are involved. They were using no trawlers. What are you going to do about the Jambodwip?

With these specific suggestions, recommendations and queries, I would like to thank you very much for the time that you have given. Thank you.

प्रो. राम देव शंङ्गरी (बिहार) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदया, एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर सदन में चर्चा हो रही है। पर्यावरण का संबंध प्रकृति और प्राकृतिक साधनों से है। प्रकृति ने हमें क्या कुछ नहीं दिया - सांस लेने के लिए हवा, पीने का पानी, जंगल, पहाड़, नदियाँ, समुद्र, सब कुछ दिया। अगर हम प्रकृति के साथ दोस्ती और अपनापन बनाकर रखते तो आज इस सदन में बहस की आवश्यकता नहीं होती। मगर हमने प्रकृति के साथ कैसा व्यवहार किया? हमें जो प्राकृतिक साधन मिले, उनका हमने कितना दुरुपयोग किया? हमने बहुत ही बेरहमीपूर्वक और निर्दयतापूर्वक प्रकृति का दोहन किया। अपने लिए भौतिक साधनों को प्राप्त करने के लिए, अपनी तृष्णा, लिप्सा और हवस को प्राप्त करने के लिए, जो भोगवाद की संस्कृति से पैदा हुई है, उसकी ओर बढ़ते हुए हमने प्रकृति को बहुत बड़ा नुकसान पहुंचाया है। उसका खामियाजा हमें आज भी भुगतना पड़ रहा है और आगे भी भुगतना पड़ेगा। महोदया, आज क्या शहर, क्या नदी, सभी प्रदूषित हैं, सभी को हमने प्रदूषित कर दिया है। हम औद्योगिकीकरण की होड़ में बड़े-बड़े उद्योग-धंधे लगा रहे हैं, एक दूसरे से आगे बढ़ने के लिए, एक दूसरे को पीछे छोड़ने के लिए, मगर उसका नतीजा क्या हो रहा है, उसका रिजल्ट क्या रहा है। प्रकृति का और जो प्राकृतिक साधन हमें प्रकृति द्वारा मिले हैं, उनका कितना भारी नुकसान हम कर रहे हैं। प्रगति और विकास के नाम पर हम जो कुछ कर रहे हैं, उसका खामियाजा हमें आगे भी भुगतना पड़ेगा। महोदया, एक समय था, जब गंगा और यमुना - आज भी हम उन्हें पवित्र नहीं मानते हैं - एक समय था जब गंगा में कहीं भी स्नान कर लेते थे, कहीं आचमन कर लेते थे, हमें ऐसा लगता था कि सभी पापों से हमें मुक्ति मिल गयी है लेकिन आज गंगा-यमुना की यह स्थिति है कि कुछ स्थानों को छोड़कर - हरिद्वार-ऋषिकेश जैसे स्थानों को छोड़ करके - हम कानपुर में हों या पटना में हों, उन सब स्थानों में गंगा में लोग स्नान करना नहीं चाहते हैं। वैसे पवित्र नदी को ध्यान में रखते हुए लोग स्नान करते हैं। इस प्रकार पवित्र नदियों को हमने जो सम्मान दिया, उसे हमने प्रदूषित कर दिया है और इसका दोषी कोई दूसरा नहीं है, हम उसके लिए दोषी हैं। हम शहरों में कारखाने लगाते हैं, उसका सीवेज होता है, उसके माध्यम से नदियों में गंदा पानी जाता है। जो मानव मलमूत्र है, उसका शोधन नहीं करते और वह भी जब नदियों में जाता है तो नदियाँ तो मैली होंगी ही। इसमें सारा दोष हमारा है और जो कुछ भी हमें भुगतना पड़ेगा, वह स्वयं अपने किए का भुगतना पड़ेगा। महोदया, आजकल शहरों में जो वाहन हैं, उनकी भी भीड़ लगी हुई है। एक-एक आदमी के पास तीन-तीन, चार-चार, पांच-पांच कारें हैं। उसके अलावा ट्रक, बस एक-एक शहर में इतनी गाड़ियाँ हैं, जिनका प्रदूषण वह शहर बर्दाश्त नहीं कर रहा है।

महोदया, यह दिल्ली शहर सबसे प्रदूषित शहरों में से एक शहर है। हम यहां शुद्ध वायु में सांस नहीं ले सकते ! शुद्ध वायु हमको यहां नहीं मिल सकती और शुद्ध वायु लेने के लिए जिनके पास पैसा होता है, वे बाहर जाते हैं? जब भी सप्ताह का अंत होता है, वे दूसरी जगह जाते हैं, खुले मैदान में जाते हैं। इस दिल्ली शहर में, जो देश की राजधानी है, यहां हम शुद्ध वायु में सांस भी नहीं ले सकते।

महोदया, हमारे पूर्वजों ने पशु-पक्षियों तक को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए, संरक्षित रखने के लिए, उनको सम्मानित रखने के लिए, एक ऐसी संस्कृति का विकास किया, जिसका उल्लेख मैं आपके सामने करना चाहता हूं। उल्लू पक्षी किसकी सवारी है? वह लक्ष्मी की सवारी है, जो धन देती है। शेर किसकी सवारी है? वह दुर्गा माता की सवारी है। चूहा किसकी सवारी है? वह गणेश की सवारी है। मैं ये उदाहरण इसलिए देना चाहता हूं कि हमारे पूर्वजों ने पशु-पक्षियों की रक्षा के लिए एक संस्कृति का विकास किया, उन्हें सम्मानित करने के लिए एक संस्कृति का विकास किया, उनके साथ सामाजिक और धार्मिक रिश्ता जोड़ा, उनका संबंध देवी-देवताओं से जोड़ा, इसलिए कि भविष्य में वे सुरक्षित रहें, उनको किसी प्रकार से नुकसान न पहुंचाया जाए।

महोदया, मानव समाज के लिए धरती एक खूबसूरत वरदान है और उस धरती को बचाए रखना हमारा कर्तव्य है। अभी हमारे कुछ माननीय सदस्य जंगलों के बारे में चर्चा कर रहे थे। इस समय जो जंगल का क्षेत्र है, वह पूरे भौगोलिक क्षेत्र का 23.03 प्रतिशत है। सरकार की योजना है कि 2012 तक इसको 33 प्रतिशत किया जाए। इसके लिए तीन करोड़ छत्तीस लाख हेक्टेयर जमीन की आवश्यकता होगी। सरकार के पास अभी सिर्फ इसका 15 प्रतिशत जमीन है, बाकी जमीन निजी क्षेत्र में है। अब सवाल यह उठता है कि अगर निजी क्षेत्र सरकार को सहयोग न करे, तो जो लक्ष्य उन्होंने निर्धारित किया है, उसे पूरा नहीं किया जा सकता। इसलिए सरकार इसमें किस प्रकार से निजी क्षेत्र का सहयोग लेगी जिससे उसका लक्ष्य पूरा किया जाए - इसके लिए सरकार की क्या योजना है, स्थिति स्पष्ट करनी चाहिए। महोदया, इस समय स्थिति यह है कि अगर आपका अपना पेड़ भी है और वह सूख गया है, तो भी उसे आप काट नहीं सकते। उसे काटने के लिए भी कई जगहों से आपको परमिशन लेनी पड़ेगी। जहां तक पेड़ लगाने की बात है, मैं समझता हूं कि निजी क्षेत्रों में पेड़ लगाने और पेड़ काटने का जो कानून है, इस कानून में संशोधन करने की आवश्यकता है। मैं चाहता हूं कि पेड़ लगाने के लिए भी किसानों को प्रोत्साहित किया जाए। निजी क्षेत्रों में जिनकी अपनी जमीन है, उन्हें सबसिडी दी जाए, पेड़ लगाने के लिए उन्हें प्रोत्साहित किया जाए। जब किसी कारण से वह पेड़ सूख जाता है या उसे काटने की आवश्यकता पड़ जाती है, तो उसे काटने के लिए भी सहज कानून बनना चाहिए।

महोदया, इस मंत्रालय का काम जटिल जरूर है, दूसरे कुछ माननीय सदस्यों ने भी कहा है कि एक तरफ प्रगति और विकास की गति को आगे बढ़ाना है, जिसके लिए औद्योगीकरण की आवश्यकता होगी, सड़कें बनानी पड़ेंगी, कारखाने लगाने पड़ेंगे और दूसरी तरफ जो पर्यावरण की स्थिति है, उसमें भी सुधार लाने की आवश्यकता है। मैं जानता हूं कि यह काम कठिन है, मगर मैं समझता हूं कि यह मंत्रालय एक योग्य मिनिस्टर के हाथ में है, और इस कठिन काम को मिनिस्टर करेंगे, अभी कर भी रहे हैं। हमें जंगलों को बचाना भी है और जंगलों को बढ़ाना भी है, तो निश्चित रूप से आम लोगों के सहयोग की आवश्यकता पड़ेगी। जो अच्छे एनजीओज हैं, उनका सहयोग लेने की आवश्यकता पड़ेगी, एक जागरूकता अभियान चलाना पड़ेगा। गांवों में पेड़ लगाए जाएं वृक्षारोपण कार्यक्रम चलाए जाएं। सड़क के किनारे पेड़ लगाए

जाएँ। अभी भी बहुत कम ऐसी सड़के हैं जिनके किनारे पेड़ लगे हैं, इसलिए सड़कों पर भी पेड़ लगाए जाएँ। महोदया, आप जानती हैं कि बाहर के देशों से विदेशी पक्षी हर साल यहां आते हैं और वे पक्षी हमारी झीलों और नदियों में आकर रुकते हैं। व यहां इसलिए आते हैं कि यहां का वातावरण, यहां की नदियां और यहां का पानी उन्हें अच्छा लगता है। वे यहां आकर प्रजनन का काम भी करते हैं। जो विदेश से आए हुए पक्षी हैं हमारे देश के पक्षी हैं, हमारा कर्तव्य उनका संरक्षण करना है। ऐसे भी समाचार आते हैं कि झीलों में, नदियों में जो बाहर से पक्षी आते हैं, उनको यहां नुकसान पहुंचाया जाता है। सरकार का काम है कि वह सब देखें और जो पक्षी बाहर से आते हैं, उनको हम जो भी सुविधाएं दे सकते हैं, वह सुविधा प्रदान करें। उनके लिए हम झीलों और नदियों में भोजन की व्यवस्था कर सकते हैं, वह करें। उनके लिए यदि घास लगाने की व्यवस्था करनी हो तो करें। महोदया, यह बहुत ही कठिन समस्या है। अगर नदियां प्रदूषित रहेंगी और हमारे जंगल कटते रहेंगे तो निश्चित रूप से जिस लक्ष्य को हम पूरा करना चाहते हैं, वह लक्ष्य पूरा करना हमारे लिए कठिन होगा। हमें विश्वास है कि हमारे योग्य मंत्री जी इस लक्ष्य को पूरा करने की दिशा में जनसहयोग, हमारा सहयोग और जिनका सहयोग भी लेना आवश्यक होगा, वह सहयोग लेंगे। हम आशा करते हैं, हम कामना करते हैं कि वे अपने लक्ष्य को पूरा करें। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी) : मंडारी जी, आपने समय के साथ भी सहयोग किया, इसके लिए धन्यवाद। डा. कर्ण सिंह।

DR. KARAN SINGH (NCT of Delhi): Madam Vice-Chairperson, this discussion on the working of the Ministry of Environment and Forests gives us an opportunity to deal with what is surely one of the most serious and crisis-ridden areas facing us, as we now move into the 21st Century.

Madam, as Mr. Bhandari just said, the environmental awareness is not new for us. In the Atharva Veda, there is the *Bhoomi Sukta* having 63 verses, which contains the most comprehensive and holistic approach to the environmental values in India. And, as has been said, the sacred groves, the springs, the forests, the sacred animals, were all built into our civilization and into our culture. But, unfortunately, due to a variety of circumstances, we seem to have lost that. And, coming to modern times, I was a Member of the delegation, led by Shrimati Indira Gandhi, which attended the first Human Environmental Conference in Stockholm in 1972. That was a very historic conference. There were only two heads of Government, Indira Gandhi and Olof Palme. And from that time onwards there has been an international commitment to improving the environment; and, India has been in the forefront. But, unfortunately, thereafter, there was a meeting in Rio in 1992. There was a Kyoto Protocol in 1997 to which my colleague, Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz, made a reference. But the fact of the matter is that there has been a sharp deterioration in the environmental situation in the last few years. The global warming is very much a reality. The icecaps are

melting. The Himalayan glaciers are receding. Anybody who knows the Himalayas, the *Devatma* Himalayas, the Great Himalayas, which Kalidas has described:

अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा, हिमालयो नाम नगाधिराजः ।
पूर्वापरो तोय निधिबागह्य, स्थितः पृथिव्या इव मानदण्डः ॥

कुमारसंभवम्

Those Himalayas and the glaciers are receding. The oceans are rising. The Ozone Layer is depleting and erratic weather conditions are appalling. There is deforestation. There is desertification. Species are disappearing. We are, therefore, facing a very major crisis. Now, Madam, this deals with environment. There are many aspects to the environment which have been touched by the previous speakers.

There was a mention about 23 per cent forest cover. That is not the correct figure. The satellite pictures that we have seen show that our forest cover now has been reduced to almost 11 per cent and is rapidly depleting. It is not, usually, realised that trees are only secondarily producers of woods; primarily, they are the producers of water. Where the trees get cut, or they get destroyed, the land is eroded, the whole climate changes, and forests turn into deserts. I have in my lifetime, Madam, seen whole forests disappearing in Kashmir because of a lack of commitment. In various other parts of the country also this is happening. I once said in the other House and I will say it again here. If you get, what I called, a *Dusht Trimurti*, that is, the combination of a corrupt forest officer, a corrupt contractor and a corrupt politician, then, whole forests disappear and they re-emerge in all the new houses in the Gandhi Nagars, in the Subhash Nagars and in the Jawahar Nagars that are being built around the country. There has been a loot, virtually, of our natural environment in the last few years.

There was some mention of the tiger. I would like to seek your indulgence to tell you about how the tiger became the National Animal. In 1967 when I became cabinet Minister here, not for Forest – Shri Babu Jagjivan Ram was the Forest Minister and Agriculture Minister – I was asked by Smt. Indira Gandhi to head the Indian Board for Wildlife. At that time, the National Animal was the Lion because the Ashoka Chakra has four lions. I immediately said, lions are found only in one small corner of India whereas the tiger is ubiquitous. We must change the National Animal. So, I got a resolution passed in the Indian Board for Wildlife to change the

National Animal from the lion to the tiger. That went before the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. That was how the decision was taken to make the tiger the National Animal. A Steering Committee was set up. I was the first Chairman of the Steering Committee on Project Tiger. Over 30 years, this is the position. We started with nine project areas and today there are, I think, 30 projects. But the tiger is gravely in danger. Whatever the Ministry may say, the fact of the matter is that tigers are in grave danger. For example, in Sariska, the tiger has totally disappeared. You cannot see a single tiger now in Sariska. In Ranthambore also, tigers are gravely in danger. Therefore, I congratulate the Prime Minister for having set up a Tiger Task Force. But it is possible, and I must sound a note of warning that the tigers may be falling below the biological minimum necessary to survive.

There is also a question, and also a delicate question, which I want to briefly touch upon. That is this question of tribal rights and giving the forest rights to the tribals. We are all for the forest rights to tribals. Tribals have been here. They are *Adivasis*. They have been here for thousands of years. They deserve special attention. But, Madam, it should not be that the land mafias, the mining mafias in this country take undue advantage of the tribals. The tribals are simple folk. They are poor people living at subsistence level. They can take advantage of them. And if this happens, and if those sharks get into our forests through the tribals, that will be the end of forests in India. Just in Delhi and around Delhi itself how much illegal mining is going on! The other day, there was a film on TV which showed blast after blast of illegal mining carried on before the very nose of the National Capital Territory. Therefore, while we should certainly protect the rights of the tribals, we must be very careful not to take a step that might, ultimately, result, in fact, in the destruction of whatever little forest cover we have. Madam, there are many areas which I could cover, but a lot of other people have to speak. This beautiful planet of ours has nurtured consciousness from the slime of primeval ocean for billions of years. I would recall that photograph of planet earth taken from the outer space. How beautiful it is! This is *Bhavani Vasundhara*. This is the planet that has nurtured us for billions of years, and, today, this planet is in danger. We, in India, have got to play our role. Rightly it has been said that the United States has not even signed the Kyoto Protocol. It is a shame and disgrace that the world's richest and the most powerful nation should refuse to sign the Kyoto Protocol. But we have to do whatever we can. We have to have a national consensus on these matters. I have been

watching the young Minister Mr. Raja ever since he was the Junior Minister. He is a well-meaning young man; he is doing his best, but environment is too important to be left to a single Ministry. Environment is something to which the Government of India, the State Governments, the Panchayati Raj Institutions and public opinion, in general, have got to be committed. Therefore, I would submit to you, Madam, that we must be very careful in our developmental projects.

For example, the river linking project. I think, it is a project that is going to destroy India. You can link one or two rivers, perhaps, in some areas, but this grand project of linking of all the rivers is going to destroy the environment of this country. Even today, the Tehri Dam and the Narmada Dam have created havoc in those areas. Therefore, before we get into these grand sounding projects, let us rethink on our Environmental Policy. Let us have, as has rightly been said, a holistic approach, so that this beautiful land of ours and this planet is safeguarded not only for ourselves, for our children, for our grandchildren, but also for the generations yet to come. Thank you.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी) : धन्यवाद, कर्ण सिंह जी। श्री मोती लाल बोरा जी ...(व्यवधान)... अभी-अभी भंडारी जी बोल चुके हैं, अभी मनोज भट्टाचार्य जी बोल चुके हैं, विपक्ष है नहीं।

श्री मोती लाल बोरा (छत्तीसगढ़) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदया, एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण विभाग के विषयों पर हम चर्चा कर रहे हैं। डा. कर्ण सिंह जी ने ठीक कहा कि 1972 में जो स्टॉकहोम में 112 देशों की कंफेरेंस हुई थी और उस कंफेरेंस में डा. साहब तो मौजूद थे ही, इंदिरा गाँधी जी भी मौजूद थीं। उन 112 देशों के लोगों ने पर्यावरण के बारे में जिस प्रकार की चर्चा की, इसके साथ ही जापान से मिनिमाता नगर से एक व्यक्ति आया था, उसने कहा था कि आज से 12 साल पहले एक कंफेरेंस में मैं भाग लेने गया था, तब चल कर आया था, आज मैं व्हील चेयर पर इस कंफेरेंस में आ रहा हूँ। उसके कहने का आशय यह था कि जिस प्रकार औद्योगिकीकरण की अंधाधुंध बीमारी आज दुनिया के अनेक देशों में फैल गई है, इसके कारण आज पर्यावरण में प्रदूषण हो रहा है और पर्यावरण के प्रदूषण के कारण आने वाली जो पीढ़ी होगी, वह विकलांग होगी। उसके लंबे कान होंगे, लंबी नाक होगी। इस प्रदूषण को रोकने के लिए हमें हर देश के अन्दर वनों को सुरक्षित रखने की आवश्यकता होगी। आपको याद ही है कि सन् 1977 में स्वर्गीय प्रधानमंत्री श्रीमती इंदिरा गाँधी ने भारत के संविधान में मार्गदर्शिका सिद्धांत का समावेश किया था, उसका आशय यही था कि प्रत्येक राज्य को वनों की रक्षा करनी होगी। वन्य प्राणियों की रक्षा करने की जिम्मेदारी प्रत्येक राज्य को करनी होगी। आज हम देख रहे हैं कि वनों की अंधाधुंध कटाई, जहरीले रसायनों का विवेकहीन उपयोग हो रहा है। आपको याद है कि जॉन एफ केनेडी ने अमेरिका में इस डीडीटी के उपयोग पर प्रतिबन्ध लगा दिया था। दुनिया के महान लोगों ने इसका उल्लेख किया था कि डीडीटी जैसे रसायनों का उपयोग कितना खतरनाक हो सकता है। आज हमारा गिरता भूजल, कल-कारखानों और वाहनों से हवा में निरन्तर उगलता

जहर, भूमि-क्षरण, रक्षात्मक ओजोन कवच का नष्ट होना और ग्रीन हाउस गैसों के कारण पृथ्वी का गर्म होना, आदि ऐसी समस्याएँ हैं, जिसके कारण जीवन संकट में पड़ गया है। बार-बार आने वाली बाढ़ और लगातार हर वर्ष पड़ने वाला सूखा सीधे-सीधे जंगलों के विनाश से जुड़ा है। जंगलों का विनाश किस प्रकार हो रहा है, हिमालय से निकलने वाली नदियों में तो पानी रहता है...। लेकिन हम अन्य नदियों की दशा को देखें तो वर्षा के बाद देश की अनेक नदियों का पानी लगभग सूख जाता है। महोदया, महात्मा गांधी ने कहा था कि, "Nature has given sufficient for man's need, but not sufficient for his greed." महात्मा गांधी पर्यावरणविद नहीं थे, लेकिन वह जानते थे कि आज वनों की जिस प्रकार से अंधाधुंध कटाई हो रही है और उसका देश के पर्यावरण पर जिस प्रकार असर हो रहा है, उसके लिए हमें मनुष्य की इस लालची उपभोक्ता संस्कृति को निर्ममता से रोकना होगा। आज कारखानों से निकलने वाला गंदा पानी, शहरों का मल-जल और खेतों में उपयोग होने वाले रसायनों से पानी दूषित हो जाता है। महोदया, देश में 35 करोड़ घन मीटर जलाऊ लकड़ी की आवश्यकता आज से 10 वर्ष पहले आंकी गयी थी। महोदया, देश में पशुओं की उपलब्ध संख्या 84 करोड़ से अधिक है और उनके लिए 50 करोड़ टन हरे चारे और 37.3 टन सूखे चारे की आवश्यकता है। हमारे वनों की आज जो दुर्दशा हो रही है, उससे हमें पूरी तरह से चिंतित होने की आवश्यकता है। महोदया, आज देश में बहुत से उद्योग धंधे लग रहे हैं, शहरों में बहु-मंजिले मकान बन रहे हैं। अल्मोड़ा और नैनीताल में, जहां आज से कुछ वर्ष पहले तक लोग गर्मियों में ठंडी हवा लेने जाते थे, वे कंक्रीट के शहर बनते जा रहे हैं। इस सब पर कोई रोक न होने के कारण वहां लोगों का जीना पूरी तरह से दूभर होता जा रहा है। वहीं दूसरी ओर हमारे वन और पर्यावरण मंत्री जी से मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि ऐसी बहुत सी हमारी योजनाएँ हैं जोकि पर्यावरण के नाम पर रुकी पड़ी हैं। महोदया, मध्य प्रदेश जब संयुक्त था तो छत्तीसगढ़ में 500 मेगावाट की बोधघाट परियोजना सन् 1981-82 में शुरू हुई थी जिस पर लगभग 2400 करोड़ के आसपास घनराशि खर्च हुई है, लेकिन पर्यावरण के नाम पर स्वीकृति न मिलने के कारण आज भी ऐसी बहुत सी योजनाएँ ठंडे बस्ते में पड़ी हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहूंगा कि जो हमारे बड़े-बड़े राज्य हैं, उन राज्यों में आपके पर्यावरण विभाग की नोडल एजेंसी होनी चाहिए ताकि उन्हें बार-बार दिल्ली न आना पड़े। महोदया, मैंने केन्द्रीय मंत्री के रूप में देखा है कि कितने छोटे-छोटे मामले पर्यावरण विभाग के पास आते हैं। वहां जंगल नहीं हैं, लेकिन हमारे यहां के रिकॉर्ड में जंगल दर्ज होता है, इसलिए हम जंगल मानकर बैठे हैं जिस कारण न वहां बिजली के खम्भे लग सकते हैं, न नहरें बन सकती हैं और न सड़कें बन सकती हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहूंगा कि वे एकदम प्रैक्टिकल होकर इस बात को देखें और प्रत्येक राज्य में इन कामों के लिए नोडल अधिकारी नियुक्त हो। अपने राज्य में दौरा करें केवल दफ्तरों में बैठकर यह कार्य न करें अन्यथा बहुत सी सिंचाई योजनाएँ, बहुत सी सड़कों का निर्माण कार्य पर्यावरण विभाग की अकर्मण्यता से रुका पड़ा है। ये कार्य आज से नहीं अनेक वर्षों से रुके पड़े हैं और हमें पता नहीं चलता कि इस कारण कितना नुकसान हो रहा है। महोदया, आज आम आदमी के लिए सड़क की आवश्यकता है, गरीब के लिए जंगल से जलाऊ लकड़ी की आवश्यकता है, लेकिन जलाऊ लकड़ी पर आप प्रतिबंध लगा देते हैं, गरीब अपने सिर पर लकड़ी का बोझ लेकर आता है तो उस पर प्रतिबंध लगता है, लेकिन जंगलों से अंधाधुंध लकड़ी की कटाई, जंगलों के पास आरा मशीनों का लगना दुर्भाग्यजनक है। कई राज्यों ने जंगलों के आसपास करीब 15 किलोमीटर तक प्रतिबंध लगाया है, वहां किसी प्रकार की आरा मशीन नहीं लगेगी, लेकिन आरा मशीन लगाने वाले येन-केन-प्रकारेण

इस प्रकार की जुगत भिड़ा लेते हैं और इस बात की कोशिश करते हैं कि जंगलों से लकड़ी की निकासी और अंधाधुंध कटाई होती रहे। इस पर हमें रोक लगानी चाहिए। जंगल में हमारे जो फॉरेस्ट गार्ड हैं, और जो अधिकारी हैं, उनकी सुरक्षा की भी पूरी व्यवस्था हरेक राज्य को करने की आवश्यकता है। केन्द्र सरकार द्वारा इस बात का निर्देश दिया जाना चाहिए कि वहाँ जंगल में रहने वाले लोगों की सुरक्षा के लिए उन्हें आवश्यक आधुनिक उपकरण दिए जाने चाहिए, ताकि वे जंगल माफियाओं के साथ मुकाबला कर सकें, क्योंकि जंगल के जो माफिया हैं, उनके पास धन है, बल है और अनेक शक्तियों के उपयोग करने की ताकत है। मेरा आपसे केवल एक निवेदन है कि जंगलों की कटाई रोकनी होगी। हिमालय के आसपास जिस प्रकार का खनन हो रहा है, इस खनन के कारण आज वहाँ के आसपास के जंगल सूखते जा रहे हैं और सूखने के कारण उन जंगलों का विनाश होता जा रहा है। हमें इस बात की कोशिश करनी होगी कि ये जंगल विनाश से बचाए जा सकें। आपको याद है कि 1950 में भारत के पहले खाद्य एवं कृषि मंत्री श्री के.एम. मुशी थे, उन्होंने एक वन महोत्सव की शुरुआत की थी। आज वन महोत्सव केवल फोटो खींचवाने के लिए मनाया जाता है। कुछ आदमी खड़े हो जाएं, उनकी फोटो खिंच गई, उसके बाद वनों का कहाँ ठिकाना? मैंने स्वयं एक मुख्य मंत्री के रूप में देखा है कि जहाँ-जहाँ...(व्यवधान)... It is true. I am saying this because I have experienced this as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. I have seen it myself. We need to see to it that the *Van Mahotsav* is not just treated as a ritual but taken seriously. मैं आपसे केवल इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमने वन महोत्सव के महत्व को घटा दिया है। 1950 में डा. के.एम. मुशी ने जिस बात की शुरुआत की थी, आज प्रत्येक राज्य को इस बात के निर्देश होने चाहिए कि हम वन महोत्सव के अंतर्गत उस प्रदेश के अंदर लाखों झाड़ लगाएं और वन विभाग के अधिकारी इस बात को देखें कि वे लगाए गए झाड़ जीवित हैं या मर चुके हैं। अगर वे मर रहे हैं तो...(व्यवधान)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी): कृपया आपस में बात न करें।

श्री मोती लाल बोरा : उसकी जिम्मेदारी उन्हें लेनी होगी। मैं पर्यावरण व वन मंत्री जी से निवेदन करना चाहूँगा कि वे इस तरफ भी ध्यान दें और वनों की सुरक्षा के लिए कड़े कदम उठाएं। आपने मुझे जो समय दिया, उसके लिए धन्यवाद।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी): धन्यवाद, श्री बोरा जी। श्री आर.एस. गवई साहब।

SHRI R. S. GAVAI (Maharashtra): Thank you, Madam Vice-Chairman, for inviting me to participate in this very important discussion. Madam, at the outset, I appreciate and welcome the Draft National Environment Policy, 2004, which was released in the month of August. In fact, as mentioned earlier by the hon. Member, Shri Motilal Vora, it was during the regime of late Shrimati Indira Gandhi, that, for the first time, to create awareness in the public at large in the nation, the Directive Principle of State Policy on Environment was articulated through Article 48 of the Indian Constitution, introducing the 42nd Amendment in 1970. Also, Article

15(1)A(g) mentioned that it is the fundamental duty of the citizens to protect the environment. Madam, I had mentioned this in 1977 and the Policy was released in 2004. That means since we have waited for more than 25 years. It means that we have waited for 25 years. It was not awareness either on the Government side, both the Central and the State, or on the side of public at large in the country. The Ministry has now come up with the Policy Document and this is the first attempt since the suitable amendment in the Constitution fixing the fundamental duty in the Directive Principles of the State Policy was incorporated. I, therefore, congratulate the Ministry for the decision, and I also appreciate the spirit of the decision. Madam, the National Environment Policy emphasises that what is good for the environment is good for the economy and for the overall development. I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister that the Policy cannot be considered as an isolated policy; it should be pro-people and pro-environment. I need not enter into the controversy which appeared in the Press that many NGOs, reputed organisations have explained their views that there is no transparency in the Policy. The NGOs and the people who are keen for the environment are not being taken into confidence. I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister that on such an important Policy, which involves the whole nation, the Central Government, the State Governments and, in decentralised form, the Panchayati Raj institutions have to be taken into confidence. As a matter of fact, whatever is incorporated in the Policy, I appreciate it and, by and large, the Policy, which was released in 2004, ought to be welcome. The draft State Policy mentions that the States are not the owners but they are the trustees of the natural resources. I think, this indicates a lack of coordination between the Centre and the States, and furthermore between the decentralised form, that is, the Panchayati Raj institutions. I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister to let us have coordination. As far as the States, and decentralised Panchayati Raj institutions are concerned, they have some practical knowledge, practical aspects, they had the spot study, and whatever problems they face at the local level could be rectified by mutual discussion. Madam, as mentioned earlier by some of the hon. Members, Shri Manoj Bhattacharya, Shri Motilal Vora, every State has its own problems. And, those problems are not yet redressed. While welcoming the policy, I am for pro-environment measures to avoid the disastrous effects if there will be no environment. There are some practical aspects also, which ought to be considered. Now, I will deal with the problem of my State, Maharashtra. We have got a rich forest cover in Maharashtra. Taddeo, Chandrapur and Melghat are in my own

district, Amaravati district. There are forests, as referred to by Shri Manoj Bhattacharya, Dhanu, Jawahar, and there are other tribal belts also. There are indigenous tribal people, from the Scheduled Tribes, who have dedicated, devoted their whole lives from generations to nourish the forests, for the development of the forests and for the protection of the forests. But, the contrast is that they are the sufferers. Hon. Minister is well aware of the Conservation of the Forest Act. We welcome the Act. We are for the conservation of the forests. We condemn cutting down of trees, the theft of the teak wood, the *chandan* wood etc. As a matter of fact, the indigenous people, the tribal people, who have protected the forests, should be given legitimate safeguards, which are not, at present, available to them. There is a law, Madam, designated as the Scheduled Tribe and Forest Dweller (Recognition of the Forest Rights) Act. The Act is there. But, this Act is not being implemented. They have not been allowed to live their traditional life till today. We call them *Adivasi*, tribal, indigenous. *Adivasis* means those who are the original citizens of India. Whatever are their legitimate rights as provided in the law, are not available to them. In the last session, there was a great concern over the issue of malnutrition of *Advasis* in the tribal belt, of the Scheduled Tribe people, particularly in Melghat and the rest of the forest. What is the reason for this? The Act provides a legitimate right to the land which is cultivable. And, a part of the forest should be given on a permanent lease to these indigenous tribal people. It is not yet given. (*Time-bell*). I will finish within two, three minutes. What is the reason for malnutrition? It is because there is no communication. At least, in the tribal belt, in the tribal areas, this Forest Conservation Act should be relaxed for the overall development of the tribal and indigenous people of the tribal belt. Madam, there are certain rights for them. In Law, these are designated as 'nistar' rights for their livelihood, the 'nistar' rights for the household purposes, to build up their huts, houses, but they are deprived. There are forest societies; non-tribal people are the members of the forest societies, and, the indigenous people, the tribal people are not the members of the societies.

I am happy that under the able leadership of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, and, our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singhji, the UPA Government, through its Common Minimum Programme, stated that whatever the legitimate rights are there for the tribal people, they should be accorded to the tribal, including the cultivable land of the tribal and the indigenous people. Under the pretext of the projects, they are being shifted to the non-tribal areas. They are habituated for the tribal work and when

they were shifted to the non-tribal areas, they suffer from hunger, and, as a matter of fact, they are half-naked, half-starved even though their loyalty lies with the forests, their dedication and devotion lies with the forests. So, at least, the Act which is giving legitimate rights to the Scheduled Tribes, that should be accorded; and respect ought to be given. Regarding the Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government, I am sure, it will give the satisfaction to the tribal and adivasis people.

Madam, Shri Manoj Bhattacharya quoted a case, I have got a case of irrigation project in the Melaghat area, namely, Tapir project. I fought against the Government of Maharashtra, the Government of India; I moved a petition in the Human Rights Commission wherein I mentioned that the projects in the tribal belt is for the benefit of the non-tribal people, and, teakwood trees worth crores of rupees are being merged in the project; at the cost of tribal and their sacrifices, the non-tribal are being benefited because of the politics, maybe. So, this is intolerable. Madam, I tell you about another case. You know the problem of the Vidarbha-Nagpur division wherein Wardha, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara and Gondia districts come. It is all-technical, it is having not a single tree there in the forest, and, only the nomenclature, designated as the forest area. At least, the criteria for the forest area is that 40 trees ought to be grown in the forest areas, but thousands of acres of cultivable land, land to be developed is being kept vacant because of the wrongly designated nomenclature as the forests...*(Interruptions)*... No, because you have referred to it, I don't want to repeat it. So, the spirit of my speech is for the development, protection of the environment, forests and conservation. But, at the same time, on the flimsy ground, having no practical aspect, the worst sufferers are the adivasis, indigenous people of the tribal belt.

Madam, — I don't want to wait for further time-bell -- I had sufficient material but I would say that the main thrust of my speech is that the indigenous people who are residing in the tribal belts should not be the worst sufferers. This is the attitude of the forest officers who treat them like slaves. At the same time, they welcome the mafia, those who cut the teakwood, the sandalwood; they support them. The tribal people fight against the mafia, and they are just like slaves in tribal belts. So, I would like to request the hon. Minister to give them better treatment and see that they are given their legitimate rights as per the law. With these few words, I thank you once again for having given me an opportunity to speak on this subject.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी) : श्री राजीव शुक्ल, आपका पांच मिनट समय है, आपने उनका समय लिया है।

श्री राजीव शुक्ल (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं एक ही प्वाइंट पर बोलूंगा। एन्वॉयरमेंट मिनिस्ट्री पर डिस्कसन है, इसलिए मैं कोई यहां नॉइज पॉल्यूशन नहीं करना चाहता। बहुत संक्षेप में, दू दि प्वाइंट, मैं बात करूंगा और एक मुद्दे को ही उठा रहा हूं।

महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से केन्द्रीय वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्री से एक सीधा सवाल करना चाहता हूं कि राजस्थान में सरिस्का और रणथम्भोर दोनों में टाइगर्स के गायब होने की रिपोर्ट एक महीने से ज्यादा हो गई, दो महीने से ज्यादा हो गई, अखबारों में छप रहा है, तो इस बारे में क्या कार्रवाई हो रही है, क्या हुआ है? देश की ऐसी धरोहर, देश की ऐसी सम्पत्ति वाइल्ड लाइफ की उसके बारे में मुझे लगता है कि सब कुछ ठंडा होता चला जा रहा है। किस-किस की जिम्मेदारी फिक्स की जा रही है, मैं मंत्री जी से पूछने की कोशिश कर रहा हूं। 1999 में रणथम्भोर में 46 टाइगर्स थे और 35 टाइगर्स सरिस्का में थे, मोटे तौर पर अगर यह रिपोर्ट देखी जाए। आज जो बात आ रही है कि एक भी टाइगर सरिस्का में नहीं है और शायद एक या दो इक्का-दुक्का शेर रणथम्भोर में हैं। तो इसकी जिम्मेदारी किसके ऊपर आयत की जा रही है, किसकी जिम्मेदारी निर्धारित की जा रही है? जो मुझे पता चला है कि न तो वहां पर वन विभाग का कोई कानून है, न तो वन विभाग के कोई नियम हैं, जो इन सेन्चुरीज पर लागू होते हैं। किस की एक्सेस होगी, वहां आवागमन के लिए उसकी कोई रिस्ट्रिक्शन नहीं है, कोई भी इन सेन्चुरीज के अंदर जा सकता है, कोई भी कहीं से निकल सकता है। मुझे तो यह बताया गया है कि सरिस्का के अंदर एक मंदिर है। उस मंदिर में दर्शन के नाम पर वन माफिया के तमाम लोग जाते हैं और उस मंदिर में दर्शन के नाम पर इसके बाद वहां पर यह सारी करतूतें होती हैं और शेरों को मारा जाता है और मंदिर के नाम पर भक्त के नाम पर वहां पर लोग चले जाते हैं। न तो कोई आवागमन पर प्रतिबंध है, जो फॉरेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट है स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का उसका हाल यह है कि उसमें 50 परसेंट वेकेंसीज हैं, उसमें काफी रिक्त स्थान पड़े हुए हैं तथा लोगों की भर्ती नहीं की गई है। जो स्टाफ है वह बिल्कुल बुजुर्ग हो रहा है, एजिंग स्टाफ है। नए स्टाफ का तथा गार्ड को भर्ती करने की कोई प्रक्रिया वहां चालू नहीं की गई है। जो टॉस्क फोर्स प्राइम मिनिस्टर ने बनाई थी उसकी रिपोर्ट बहुत स्पष्ट थी जिसमें राज्य सरकार जिम्मेदार थी, राज्य सरकार का वन विभाग जिम्मेदार था। लेकिन उसके बाद क्या कार्रवाई हुई, क्या जांच हुई, क्या भारत सरकार ने इस पर कोई जांच बिठाई है या भारत सरकार ने कोई जांच नहीं बिठाई है?

(श्री उपसभापति पीठासीन हुए)

स्टेट गवर्नमेंट निश्चित रूप से इस जांच को दबाने की कोशिश करेगी, ऐसा मेरा साथ-साथ आरोप है। डा. कर्ण सिंह जी अभी कह रहे थे कि भवानी वसुन्धरा की कृपा से ही पर्यावरण होता है लेकिन जब वसुन्धरा ही इसके लिए जिम्मेदार हो जाए तो फिर क्या किया जा सकता है। मेरा सीधा-सीधा आरोप राजस्थान की मुख्य मंत्री वसुन्धरा राजे पर है कि वह वन माफिया से मिलकर, टाइगर माफिया से मिलकर, इसको दबाने की कोशिश कर रही हैं। जांच की सही बात सामने नहीं आने दी जा रही है। इसलिए भारत सरकार की जांच होनी चाहिए। एक नहीं दो-दो सेन्चुरी का मामला है राजस्थान में। मैं तो कहता हूं कि भारत सरकार को

विचार करना चाहिए कि स्टेट सब्जेक्ट से क्यों नहीं हम इसको कांकरेंट लिस्ट में लाते अगर हमें बचाना है राष्ट्र की इस धरोहर को, इस सम्पत्ति को। आज पूरे विश्व में चले जाइए, आज इस समय सबसे ज्यादा टूरिस्ट क्यों जा रहा है अफ्रीका में, क्योंकि वहां वाइल्ड लाइफ है और हम वाइल्ड लाइफ को ऐसे ही खत्म कर रहे हैं। मुझे किसी ने बताया कि जो राजस्थान के रहने वाले हैं कि 40 रुपए में गरीब लोगों से, गांव के लोगों को पकड़ कर माफिया शेरों को मरवाता है और एक करोड़ में एक शेर बिकता है क्योंकि उसकी खाल काम में आती है, उसका मांस काम में आता है, उसकी हड्डी काम में आती है, उसका दांत काम में आता है और उसका खून तक लोग इस्तेमाल करते हैं और बाल भी इस्तेमाल करते हैं। बहुत कुछ काम में आता है। इस तरह से एक करोड़ में शेर पड़ता है। यह करोड़ों का मानला है उपसभापति जी। इसलिए मेरा मानना यह है कि सरकार को, भारत सरकार को, केन्द्र सरकार को राजस्थान सरकार के मरोसे नहीं बैठना चाहिए। राजस्थान में कुछ जरा दबाव पड़ेगा, तो वहां पर अधिकारियों का बोर्ड बना दिया जायेगा। भारत सरकार इसकी उच्चस्तरीय जांच करवानी चाहिए, चाहे किसी भी एजेंसी से इसकी जांच करवायें और जो दोषी हैं, उनको तत्काल सजा दी जानी चाहिए, जिससे कि आगे से सेंचुरीज में ऐसी घटनाएं नहीं हों, उसके लिए पुख्ता इंतजाम किये जाने चाहिए। यही मेरी मांग है और इसके साथ ही, मेरे चार मिनट पूरे हो रहे हैं, इसलिए मैं बैठ जाता हूं। धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA (Karnataka): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for his achievements in this Ministry of Environment and Forests. Sir, I would like to read out a few lines that I have written.

Sir, the 42nd Amendment in its Article 48-A to the Directive Principles of State Policy has put emphasis on environment stating that, "The State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wild life of the country." Besides, protection of environment is one of the fundamental duties of every citizen of our country.

Environment pollution and preservation of environment is a burning issue of concern not only in India but also all over the world. As such, a comprehensive strategy for environmental conservation is the need of the day. Hence, the proposed National Environment Policy is a welcome initiative and the very essence of N.E.P. is its emphasis on the fact that what is good for the environment is also good for the economy. In other words, environmental protection cannot be considered in isolation from the development process of the country. This requires the use of knowledge already available more effectively for more sustainable development rather than indulge in further research.

Sir, the adverse impact of deforestation is all visible now. The soils are affected by various ailments which have to be treated, followed by

plethora of problems like drought, flash floods, earthquake and soil erosion etc. The super cyclone of Orissa, the severe drought in Rajasthan and the touching earthquake in Gujarat are a few glaring examples to the after effects of large-scale deforestation of the tropical forests.

Sir, it is indeed an appreciative measure adopted by the Forest Department of late though, known as "Participative Approach", with an aim to green all barren and degraded lands in rural areas by involving villages both in planting as well as protecting and caring the existing forests. This 'Greening India Project' even enjoys massive international support. In order to see that it does not turn out to be another white elephant, it would be a novel idea to start "*Krishi Vigyan Kendras*" at all districts to reach the grass-root levels. The adverse impact of deforestation on the national economy is visible mainly on agriculture, and it is far more serious in India. This requires immediate attention of planners and rulers alike.

Sir, I must bring to the kind attention of the Members of this august House a new serious problem emerging in my home State, Karnataka – the threat of Naxalism and Left-wing extremism. These Maoist groups have almost succeeded in converting the eco-rich Western Ghat, Malnad areas and parts of South Canara regions as guerrilla zones. They are attracting tribals, *dalits* and poorer sections of society inhabiting in these areas to strengthen their base by organising mass movements. The State Government is handicapped due to the lack of adequate laws to deal with the problem. Even Panchayati Raj institutions are not in a position to do justice to the Naxalite-affected areas. I am of the firm view that the spread of Naxalism cannot be curbed, unless and until development activities in favour of the poor, ignorant and downtrodden in Naxal-infested areas is taken up in the right earnest.

Since many of the State Governments are faced with this problem, I appeal to the hon. Minister to review the existing forest conservation laws in the background of the need to contain this virus of Naxalism.

I would like to give a few suggestions. Firstly, the right to give environmental clearance to projects should rest with State Governments, and not with the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest, with a view to effective governance. Secondly, there should be effective involvement of 'Vana-Sanrakshana Samithis' to prevent red sanders smuggling. Thirdly, major problems, seriously related to environmental degradation, namely,

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population growth, technology and consumption choices and poverty, are to be tackled immediately and effectively. Fourthly, the suggestion contained in the National Environment Policy regarding the regularisation of encroachment on forests is a welcome move, yet, care should be taken to see that it should not affect the livelihood of tribals. Fifthly, more and prompt attention should be given to forest conservation, taking care to see it does not affect the development process in the State adversely, in other words, ensure sustainable development which is the need of the day. Sixthly, another method could be to introduce a tree census programme to have a clear picture of number and kinds of trees that constitute the natural resources. Seventhly, another valid suggestion is that the children, who are the future of the country, should be given education about environmental protection, which are being threatened by human greed, urbanisation, population explosion, etc.

Sir, keeping all these factors in view, I appeal to the hon. Minister to formulate a policy in this regard after peaceful and thorough deliberations. Further, it is also very important that both the Central and the State Governments should work in a cooperative spirit rather than adopting a confrontational attitude to combat this challenging task ahead. Thank you, Sir.

श्री उपसभापति : डा. प्रभा ठाकुर, आपके पास पांच मिनट हैं।

डा. प्रभा ठाकुर (राजस्थान) : धन्यवाद उपसभापति महोदय, मैं कोशिश करूंगी कि पांच ही मिनट में कनक्लूड करूँ। महोदय, वन एवं पर्यावरण विषय पर जो चर्चा सदन में हो रही है, आज यह पूरे विश्व की चिंता का विषय है। दस-बीस वर्षों पूर्व शायद इतना संकट नहीं था लेकिन शायद 21वीं सदी में यह पूरे विश्व की प्रमुख चिंता बनी हुई है। कारण यह है कि जब विश्व के लोगों को यह समझ में आया कि पर्यावरण, जल और जलवायु, दोनों से जुड़ा हुआ है यानी मानव जीवन से, जीवों के जीवन से जुड़ा है, तब इसका महत्व समझ में आया और आज विश्व में यह कहा जा रहा है, यह चर्चा हो रही है कि पर्यावरण विरोधी विकास विनाश का पर्यायवाची है। पहले जो होड़ थी, चाहे औद्योगिक विकास की हो, चाहे परमाणु हथियारों के विकास की हो, बढ़ते हुए वाहनों की हो, बड़ी-बड़ी इमारतों की हो, आज इन सबसे मुड़कर इनके कारण जो प्रदूषण बढ़ा है, उसकी ओर पूरी दुनिया की चिंता है। जो ओजोन लेयर है, सूर्य की किरणों के विकिरण से, मनुष्य के, प्राणियों के शरीर के लिए ढाल के रूप में जो काम कर रही थी, उस पर जब से दुष्प्रभाव पड़ा है, तब से यह खतरे की घंटी बजी है और आज इस सदन में भी इस विषय को लेकर चर्चा हो रही है। जंगलों और वनों की कटाई के बारे में सदन में चर्चा की गयी। राजस्थान में यह स्थिति है कि वैसे तो वहाँ जंगल यों भी कम हैं, वहाँ दो-तिहाई हिस्सा लम्बे-लम्बे रेगिस्तान हैं। उनमें भी जहाँ जंगल थे, जंगल-विहीन पहाड़, अरावली पर्वत श्रृंखला वहाँ

देखने को मिल जाएगी। पेड़ लगभग सारे काट दिए गए हैं, काफी तादाद में काटे गए हैं। जितनी तादाद में काटे गए हैं, पेड़ लगाने की दिशा में उतना काम नहीं हो रहा है। हालांकि जो वन एवं पर्यावरण मंत्रालय है, वह अच्छा काम कर रहा है, अच्छी पॉलिसीज़ हैं, अच्छी योजनाएं हैं। पचास लाख हैक्टयर क्षेत्र में वन लगाने की जो स्कीम पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय की है, वह स्वागत योग्य है। इससे कई आदिवासियों को एवं ग्रामीण क्षेत्र के लोगों को रोज़गार मिलेगा लेकिन चिंता का विषय यह है कि आखिर ये पेड़ जो कट रहे हैं, आखिर ये जो जंगल कट रहे हैं, इन पर रोक कैसे लगाई जाएगी? तमाम नियमों-कानूनों के बावजूद, कहीं भी इनकी कटाई में कमी नहीं आ रही है। इसका स्पष्ट कारण यह है कि नियम चाहे जितने बनाए जाएं, लेकिन जिन अधिकारियों की नाक के नीचे उन पेड़ों की कटाई हो रही है और जिनकी मिलीभगत के बिना एक डाली भी नहीं कट सकती, जब तक उनके खिलाफ कोई कड़ी कार्रवाई नहीं होगी, जब तक उनकी कोई जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित नहीं होगी, तब तक आप चाहे कितने भी कड़े कानून बना लीजिए, किसी भी तरह वनों की कटाई, पेड़ों की कटाई रुक नहीं सकती। महोदय, जितना ये जंगल कट रहे हैं, उतना ही मानसून की गड़बड़ी की आशंका उत्पन्न हो रही है, इसकी वजह से मानसून में कमी आती जा रही है। तो यह एक गंभीर विषय है और जैसा कि अभी मुझसे पूर्व शुक्ल जी ने भी कहा कि सरिस्का अभयारण्य में जिस तरह बाघों की संख्या में कमी हुई है, जो बाघ गायब हुए हैं, यह बड़ी चिंता का विषय है। इसकी जिम्मेदारी केवल केंद्र सरकार की ही नहीं है, इसके लिए सीधे-सीधे राज्य सरकार जवाबदेह है। मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहूंगी कि वे अवश्य ही राज्य सरकार से इस बारे में पूछें कि उन बाघों का क्या हुआ है और उनके लिए क्या कार्यवाही अब तक की गई है?

महोदय, राजस्थान ऐसा क्षेत्र है, जो रेतीला तो है, लेकिन वहां अनेक खानें हैं। वहां मार्बल की खानें हैं, ताम्बे की खानें हैं, ग्रेनाइट की खानें हैं, इसके अलावा सोने की खान भी निकल आई है, गोयनका जी मुझे बता रहे हैं। रेगिस्तानी क्षेत्र में गैस और तेल के भी बहुत भंडार मिले हैं, लेकिन एक बात मेरी समझ में नहीं आती कि अरावली श्रृंखला में पहले खनन के लिए पट्टे आवंटित क्यों किए गए? अब कोर्ट से उन पर स्टे लाया जा रहा है। मैं कहती हूँ कि इतने लोगों को उससे रोज़गार मिलता है, खनन के कारण पूरे प्रदेश को रेवेन्यू मिलता है। अब खानों में पेड़ तो उगाए नहीं जा सकते। उनको बंद करके जरूर रेवेन्यू और रोज़गार से प्रदेश की जनता को वंचित किया जा सकता है। तो बेहतर यह होगा, ज्यादा बेहतर और व्यावहारिक भी यही है, प्रैक्टिकल भी यही है कि जिनको खानें आवंटित की गई हैं, उनको कहा जाए कि जितने पेड़ वहां थे, उनसे पांच गुना पेड़ वे अन्यत्र लगाएं, पहाड़ों पर लगाएं, उस क्षेत्र में लगाएं जहां वनों की कमी है, जहां खानें नहीं हैं। जहां खानें आरंभ हो गई हैं, या तो वे पहले ही नहीं दी जानी चाहिए थीं, तो वहां मुझे यह कुछ व्यावहारिक दिखाई नहीं देता, इसलिए इस बारे में भी विचार करके कोई नए नियम बनाए जाने की आवश्यकता है। महोदय, पेड़ों की कटाई तो तभी रुक सकती है, जब विश्वोई समाज जैसी प्रतिबद्धता समाज में आए। विश्वोई समाज में प्रतिबद्धता है कि एक पेड़ का कटना वे इस प्रकार मानते हैं जैसे कि किसी एक मनुष्य को मारा जा रहा हो। वन्य जीवों को संरक्षण देने के लिए, पेड़ों के संरक्षण के लिए उनकी जो प्रतिबद्धता है, जब तक वैसी प्रतिबद्धता नहीं होगी, जो आम जनता है, उसमें जब तक वैसी प्रतिबद्धता नहीं आएगी, और जब तक जो संबंधित अधिकारी हैं, उनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई नहीं होगी, जब तक वे रोज़ी-रोटी से वंचित नहीं होंगे, तब तक यह सिलसिला इसी तरह चलता रहेगा।

महोदय, गंगा की सफाई के नाम पर, उसे प्रदूषण-मुक्त करने के नाम पर, पांच सौ करोड़ रुपए से अधिक उसमें लगे, पांच सौ करोड़ गंगा में बह गए। इसी प्रकार इलाहाबाद संगम के लिए भी करोड़ों रुपया दिया गया है, अच्छी बात है, होना चाहिए, लेकिन यह कब तक चलेगा कि गंगा किसी के घर पहुंचे और प्रदूषण जनता के हिस्से में आए? किसी के आंगन में हरियाली हो और सूखा जनता के हिस्से में आए? किसी की झोली में फल-फूल हों और किसी के हिस्से में धुआं और कांटे आए? इसको जरूर देखने की आवश्यकता है। जिस तरह दिल्ली में वायु को प्रदूषण-मुक्त बनाने के लिए सी.एन.जी. के द्वारा आज वाहन चलाए जा रहे हैं, अन्य नगरों में भी इसी प्रकार से सी.एन.जी. वाहनों की आवश्यकता है।

महोदय, प्लास्टिक की थैलियां अब तक बन रही हैं, उस पर कोई पाबंदी नहीं है। प्लास्टिक एक बहुत बड़ी ऐसी बीमारी है जो जल और वायु को प्रदूषित करती है, उसकी भी सख्ती से रोकथाम करने की आवश्यकता है। महोदय, कई पर्यटन स्थल हैं, जो प्रसिद्ध पर्यटन स्थल हैं, प्रसिद्ध धार्मिक पर्यटन स्थल हैं, वहां पर भी इतना कूड़ा-कचरा है, इतनी अव्यवस्था है कि लोग वहां जाने से कतराते हैं। प्लास्टिक की वजह से उस वातावरण का सौन्दर्य नष्ट होता है, पवित्रता नष्ट होती है, इस ओर भी ध्यान देना जरूरी है। यह तो अच्छा है कि नीलकंठ जैसा एक समुद्र है, जो प्रदूषण का विष पी रहा है। इस धरती पर तीन हिस्सा समुद्र है, इसीलिए यह दुनिया जीवित है, इसीलिए मनुष्य और प्राणी जीवित हैं, वरना ऐसे लोगों के हाथों में अगर समुद्र पड़ जाए, जो कचरे में से सीरिज भी उठाकर, बोटलें भी उठाकर नकली दवाएं भरकर बेच देते हैं, तो ऐसे मौत के सौदागर, यह तो अच्छा है कि समुद्र का जल खारा हुआ। वरना, शायद वे उसे भी बेच देते और लोग पानी के लिए, वर्षा के लिए तरसते रह जाते। मान्यवर, आप मुझे सिर्फ एक मिनट का समय प्रदान करें। मैं अंत में, कुछ चंद सुझावों के साथ सिर्फ इतना ही कहूंगी कि वनों की कटाई को रोकने के लिए, वन क्षेत्र में, अतिक्रमण रोकने के लिए, कड़ी कार्यवाही होनी चाहिए। इसके साथ ही, सीएनजी वाहनों की व्यवस्था भी होनी चाहिए और अन्य नगरों में भी यह व्यवस्था लागू की जानी चाहिए। जो बढ़ता हुआ भ्रष्टाचार है, जो बढ़ती हुई जनसंख्या है, जिसमें गंगा-प्रदूषण का रुपया बह जाता है, उसको रोकने की बड़ी सख्त आवश्यकता है। उस पर नियंत्रण किया जाना चाहिए। आज पर्यावरण के लिए, जनचेतना का सबसे प्रभावशाली माध्यम, दूरदर्शन और आकाशवाणी है। इसके विभिन्न चैनलों द्वारा जनता में जागृति लाई जाए और लोगों को यह बताया जाए कि आपके अपने स्वास्थ्य के लिए और आपके बच्चों के लिए, यह कितना हानिकारक है, ताकि उनमें चेतना आए। जगह-जगह जो कूड़े के ढेर हैं, ये बीमारियों के घर बन गए हैं। इन कूड़े के ढेरों को हटाने के लिए समाज में एक जागृति आए ताकि लोगों को इनसे बीमारियों से मुक्ति मिले। इसके लिए सरकार की तरफ से भी एक व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए, ताकि कूड़े को समय पर उठाकर फेंका जा सके। इन तमाम सुझावों के साथ, मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करती हूँ क्योंकि मेरा समय हो गया है, इसलिए आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

DR. RADHAKANT NAYAK (Orissa): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak. I will take only a few minutes because I am, perhaps, the last speaker.

Sir, I have gone through the Annual Report of this Ministry. It is an excellently drafted Report, but, at the same time, it looks to be a very

modest Report. It, perhaps, hides much more than it could speak to this House. Perhaps, there is some amount of confusion between the purposes and the functions, between the agenda and the activities. That is what I came across. The Report, perhaps, needs some kind of a vision, some kind of a mission, some strategy, some objectives and some activities. There is no correlation between the regular activities along with the vision that it is expected to spell out.

Sir, there are many more issues in this Report, but I would briefly draw the attention of the hon. Minister to a few other items. The first is about the forest cover. The forest cover, of course, according to the National Forest Policy, is expected to cover one-third of the landmass. But it does not spell out, neither the Policy nor the other programme, what is the spread of the forest cover, what are its intensities and what are the territorial distribution of forests. Neither the Report gives us any indication of this forest cover nor does it tell us what are its future prognoses as to how exactly they are going about it. It does not spell out anything.

Sir, the Report also mentions about the state of Forest Report 2003-04. Now, Sir, this should be an annual feature because between three and four, and five and six, there is a lot of difference. Every year, we find that the rate of desertification, the rate of destruction of forest is much more than the rate of reforestation. Therefore, every year, we should be able to monitor the progress of growth of forest cover. The three-fourth Report is also on the draft stage, and it is not even a final Report. And, therefore, when you perfect the draft, it may bring out many more lacunae, which they should be able to make up in the mean time.

There is a mention of the forest type mapping. I understand from the Report that stage-II is already completed, but it is also delayed. The first stage is completed, but the evaluation of this first stage report is not available. And how exactly they are going to complete the stage-II operations is also not indicated in this Report. There is a mention about the tiger reserves. There are 28 tiger reserves. The Report says that the preliminary interpretation has been completed and that they have collected the data. But the ground verification is yet to be taken or it is being taken up now. It is the ground verification which will give you the realistic and true report of the tiger population. There is a preliminary interpretation. I don't know what exactly it is. It is there. We are not sure of what it contains, though the number has been spelt out very broadly. There is no time-frame, as regards the ground verification. How long will it take? What

are the modalities? Of course, there are Forest Manuals and all that. At the same time, the Report should have indicated this.

There is another item mentioned, inventory of forests and trees. I understand 80 per cent of this work is completed. Now, until and unless you spell out the species of the trees and their ages--at least, in Orissa, I know that the trees which are older than 500 years or 1000 years have been decimated; they are totally destroyed--or the kind of trees and forests which you are making inventory of, a quality debate can't be possible in this House.

There are a number of points which I thought I could bring to your notice. But there is not enough time now. But I want to bring to your notice the perennial debate which is going on about development and forests, and mining and forests. It is all going on since a long time. The entire debate started, if you remember, Sir, in 1970 by the Club of Rome where they published the famous book called "Limits to Growth". Then came, if you remember, the Brundtland Report. The United Nation's system initiated the action in 1983. Mr. Brundtland was the Prime Minister of Norway. He was appointed as the Chairman of this Commission. Then came the Earth Summit, 1992 and the Earth Summit, 2002, I mean, the Rio plus ten. The debate is going on. We don't know what exactly the steps that our Government is taking, especially, with regard to Agenda 21 and various other action programmes, which these Reports spelt out.

There is one thing to which I want to draw your attention, before I conclude. One of our hon. Members has mentioned that we have a very able scientific community in this country, who are taking care of environment and forest wealth. He also mentioned how it could be protected and how it could be developed. Forest is not an indestructible item. It is a depleting item. Now, what we have done is to replace the very rich Sal forests with Eucalyptus forests, neither can the birds sit there nor can it give any shades. This is what is happening. This is a big challenge to our scientific community. They should do a lot of heart searching. Even the Brundtland Commission Report has brought out a very startling observation. I can mention that. It is applicable not to the third world countries alone. It is actually more important to the first world countries. The Report spells out very drastically and it says, "The rate of change--change of environment, change of forest wealth and all that--is outstripping the ability of scientific disciplines and our current capabilities to assess and advise. It is frustrating the attempts of political and economic institutions, which evolved in a

different, more fragmented world, to adapt and cope". In other words, when the scientific community of the first world countries or the northern countries are feeling that they are getting frustrated to cope with this change in environment and forests, we are very much self-satisfied. We feel very complacent about it. Therefore, I would suggest that a scientific community should be developed, a scientific discipline should be developed, in order to protect the forests, as also the environment.

Sir, the last but not the least important point is this. Sir, we have, all the times, been condemning the Tribals. As stated by some of the hon. Members, there are some reports which have said that the Tribals were destroying forests. It is not true. It is totally false. The Tribals will never cut a tree which gives shade and which bears fruits. Who does it? It is only the Government because we are still being governed by the Indian Forests Act of 1912 which was promulgated in the context of treating forests as a source of revenue, not as a source of life sustenance. With that psychology, we cannot protect the forests. In this context, the entire outlook of not only of the Ministry but also of the Government should change. Only then it will be possible for us to survive in this planet. We know that the Brundtland Commission has suggested many strategies for our future, but at the same time, we should also find out the indigenous knowledge system by which the Tribes have been able to protect the forests. Wherever the Tribes are concentrated today, the forests are staying. I was really surprised to see the state of the forest report which indicated that we are now trying to adopt a strategy of splitting the dense forest. We have the experience of the working plan methods by which the forests were planned. But what has happened? Most of the species which were very valuable and precious, have all vanished. Therefore, the entire strategy, the entire objective and also the activities should be re-modified. If they have been modified, they need to be re-modified. Then only it will be possible for us to save the forest wealth in the country. Thank you.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH (Assam): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, so many Members have already addressed different aspects of environment and forests. Environment is a matter of global concern, as on today. So far as environment is concerned, a lot of concern is being expressed not only in India, but all over the world. I would like to make some points in this regard. Last year, I had read in a newspaper that every year we are losing 1.3 million hectares of forest cover in the country and that too in the hilly areas. This is happening because a lot of mega

hydroelectric projects are coming up in hilly areas, for example, in Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and other North Eastern States. We are losing forest cover in these areas and a massive earth cutting is going on there because of these projects. This is a matter of concern for all of us. We have to assess the consequences of these mega projects, hydroelectric projects and other earth cutting programmes in the hilly areas because earth cutting is affecting us in various ways. Because of earth cutting and deforestation in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, etc. a lot of areas are getting affected by floods. It is causing a lot of damage to the environment which is a matter of grave concern for all of us. Many hon. Members have expressed their anguish over deforestation and environmental problems. At the same time, there are some positive reports also which I would like to mention here. Recently, about a month back, the Centenary celebration of the Khaziranga National Park was held. Also, Sir, a report was published by the World Wide Fund for Nature, wherein it was mentioned that the North-Eastern region of India has the second richest forest reserve in the world in terms of plant diversity. The area surveyed by the World Wide Fund for Nature is called the North Bank Landscape covering 3000 sq. kms. of the Himalayan foothills, north of the river Brahmaputra, in Assam, parts of Arunachal Pradesh, North Bengal and Bhutan. So, these are some positive things which are coming up. But there are a lot of problems which I would like to mention, particularly, in the North-Eastern region. One major problem in the hilly areas is earth-cutting. The other problem emanates from cement industries, small and big cement industries. There was particularly one report on Meghalaya. There is a long cave in Meghalaya which is going to be destroyed by pollution being emanated from cement industries. There is another problem in Meghalaya; that is, Uranium mining. The excavation work being done there for Uranium would pose a major problem for us. We should be very careful about it because the radio-active elements spread on account of that will be very dangerous for the humanity. So, I would request the hon. Minister to address these major problems pertaining to the North-Eastern region, particularly, earth-cutting, pollution emanating from cement factories and mining of uranium, especially in Meghalaya. We have to address these problems, particularly for the well-being of our next generation. Preservation of forests and protection of environment are essential particularly for the next generation of our people, and I hope, the hon. Minister will take care of these things.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, it is a new experience being the last speaker. It is also a new experience speaking when so many of my colleagues are present at 5.20 p.m. You would have noticed that the attendance in our benches is very, very high. I hope this remains for tomorrow as well.

Sir, I would make five very quick points in the nature of queries to the hon. Minister. He may or may not respond to them today. But these are concerns that I have, and I just want to bring them to his notice.

I find that one-third of the Budget of the Ministry of Environment and Forests is for river cleaning projects defined in very generic terms. This has been going on for the last 20 years. The first announcement of Shri Rajiv Gandhi on 3rd January, 1985, was towards the National Programme to clean the river Ganga. Now, if one-third of the Budget is going to be devoted to river-cleaning, I would like to ask the hon. Minister, what it is that we have to show for this. I am yet to come across any positive evaluation of our river cleaning efforts. I have seen two very major studies that they have done on cleaning the river Ganga. They have presented a very negative picture of the situation on the ground. I am willing to be educated on this. But the question that I have is this. If we are going to spend a third of the Budget of this Ministry on river-cleaning and on projects to clean up our rivers, what do we have to show? Do we have any success stories? Or, is it that we are putting in money only for building up sewage treatment plants -- essentially it is the sewage treatment plants that are being put up -- but we are not just able to cope up with the pressure of the dirt that is being put into the rivers? This is my first query.

Sir, my second point is that afforestation and eco-regeneration is also a very important activity of his Ministry, consuming a fourth of his Budget, perhaps. From the figures that I have got, about a million or so hectares of tree plantation is taking place year after year. Again, one can get into the debate whether it is actually there on the ground, what the satellite imagery shows, what the actual reality is, but I do not want to get into that whole debate. I want to make one practical suggestion to the Minister here. Good success stories of eco-restoration involve Ex-Servicemen's cooperatives. From what we have seen in many parts of the country, it is the Ex-Servicemen's cooperatives that have done very good work in terms of eco-restoration and afforestation. However, only about zero point one per cent of this one million hectares today is being done through Ex-Servicemen's cooperatives. I want to ask the Minister whether he would

consider expanding the role of these Ex-Servicemen's cooperatives, considering that this is also a very important aspect of this Government's programme; this Government has set up a separate Department of Ex-Servicemen's Welfare. A large number of Servicemen become Ex-Servicemen every year. So, would the Minister consider giving them a much larger role than they have in afforestation and eco-regeneration in order to ensure that what is actually done leads to eco-restoration?

Sir, my third point is on Biodiversity. When we discussed the Ministry of Health, the Department of Indian Systems of Medicine, we were told that biodiversity, medicinal plants, herbal medicines, aromatic plants, is a focus area for that Ministry. When we had a discussion on the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), we had the same story. If you look at the Annual Report of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, a very substantial portion of this Report is devoted to biodiversity, to what the Botanical Survey of India is doing, for example, to preserve, catalogue and inventories our medicinal and herbal plants. Now, we have the National Biodiversity Act. I am sure, we have the National Biodiversity Authority, as also the State Biodiversity Boards. I was associated with the setting up of the State Biodiversity Board in Karnataka. I am sure that a lot of these activities are taking place at sub-critical levels through different mechanisms. Is it not possible for us to have a National Initiative on Biodiversity Conservation and Utilisation involving the Department of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and the Ministry of Health which is looking into it? The point that I want to make is that a lot of this activity is taking place in different wings of the Government of India. Is it not possible for us to bring all these together, since we all realise that biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilisation is a major area of priority for us, particularly in the area of herbal and medicinal plants in which India has a competitive edge?

Sir, my fourth point deals with the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee. The Department of Biotechnology has put out a discussion paper for a National Biotechnology Policy which envisages the setting up of a single window regulatory authority for biotechnology products. Now, this country has been seeing for the last few years a big debate on BT cotton, and this debate has not been complete. I am sure this controversy will not die down. I want to ask the Minister what his position is on this proposal for setting up a National Biotechnology Regulatory Authority which would essentially mean, as I understand it, taking away the role that the GEAC

performs, which is now under his Ministry, and creating one unified regulatory authority for biotechnology products. Here again, I am waiting to be educated by the Minister. Finally, Sir, on climate change, I want to raise one concern that I have. The Kyoto Protocol has come into operation, and India and China have escaped the discipline of emission reductions and it is, as it should, because although we are 16 per cent of the world's population, we contribute less than five per cent of green house gases. But, my own feeling is that when the next round of negotiations come, may be in 2012, for which the negotiations will start in 2006 or 2007, India and China will not get away lightly. I think we should realise it. We should keep on saying that it is the Americans or the Westners who are polluting, who are putting the green house gases, Indians are not doing it, we can keep saying this. That is a good negotiating position, political position that we must stick to. But, we must also have a fall back position, we must also realise the political reality that it is possible that in the next round of Kyoto Protocol India and China will not get away lightly, and we may have to agree to some form of emission reductions. What is the country doing to prepare ourselves for this eventuality? Thank you, Sir.

SHRI A. RAJA : Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, more than 15 Members...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Nineteen Members.

SHRI A. RAJA: Yes, nineteen Members. That is why I was telling carefully that more than 15 Members have spoken on this discussion. Some of the Members have showered encomiums on the Ministry, and some of the Members have pointed out some deficiencies in the Ministry. Notwithstanding the encomiums and deficiencies, I weighed the expressions made by the hon. Members. Within a short time, I will attempt to give some replies on the performance of this Ministry. I will assure the Hon. Members that for the minor problems that they are facing in their constituencies or in their States, because of the time constraint, I will revert back to them in person by way of letters. With this assurance, I may be permitted to say a few words by way of reply.

Sir, I am fully aware, but it is needless to submit before the House that my Ministry deals with the consideration of bio-diversity, eco-system, flora and fauna, rivers, other natural resources and man-made heritages. As a Minister in the Ministry, my role is, to some extent, constructive, to some extent, destructive, to some extent, it is protective and in some of the

areas, it is having its own role as a regulatory Ministry. Before going in the details of my submissions, I want to inculcate in the minds of the hon. Members that environment and forests is a State subject. Under the Constitution, it is a Concurrent subject. Though it is a Concurrent subject, the administration of forests and implementation of projects are totally well within the purview of the State Governments. And whatever be the success or the pitfalls on the part of the Central Government, must be shared with the State Governments. Without the State Governments, I cannot succeed in reaching the targets. So, the performance of the State Governments is essential to weigh the performance of the Ministry as the Central Government and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, as a whole.

Sir, much has been said during the course of the discussion. I will give answers topic-wise. Before going to the topics, I must recall that when the Forests Act came into existence – I have gone through the wordings of Mrs. Gandhi – what she said is that this world has been entrusted to us. It is not treated, as it has been inherited from our forefathers, and it should be treated properly. It has been given to me for its safety and protection because it is going to be handed-over to my future generations. So, I know the careful considerations given by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, when the Bill was passed by the Parliament. So, the duty of Ministry is to save the world, not by way of inheritance from our forefathers. It should be protected and saved to reach the future generations safely, without causing any harm. Since this concept is fully inculcated in the mind of my Ministry, we are doing our job almost to the expectations of the hon. Members and of the people of this country.

Sir, before going to the general issues, I must talk about the tribal issues. No doubt, this Ministry has its own achievements. After Independence, in fifty years, this is for the first time that we will be coming out with a comprehensive Environment Policy. No doubt, we are having some Acts on air pollution, water pollution. Of course, we are having many rules and regulations to protect environment. But this is the first time we want to come out with a comprehensive Environment Policy and it is going to be released soon. We have consulted the NGOs and State Governments. Of course, my predecessor, Mr. Soz, has expressed his own apprehensions and wanted to know whether this political document, namely, Environment Policy, has been aimed at taking the schemes down to the lowest ebb of this country since it has been discussed only among the intellectuals. No doubt, it has been placed on the website.

We discussed, at length, with the NGOs, State Governments, and State Ministers. We are very transparent in interacting with the NGOs and other organisations. There are some allegations against the Ministry with regard to the policy. One main allegation that has been levelled against the Ministry is that this policy has been drafted by the Ministry and not by the NGOs. Without going into who is the author of the document, I requested the NGOs and other public bodies to go through the merits and demerits of the document notwithstanding who has mooted this and who has drafted the document. I hope, the document would speak volumes on the history of the environmental issues of this country.

Another important achievement that has been made by us is on preventing the wildlife crimes. Hon. Prime Minister was kind enough in declaring for the first time setting up a Wild life Crimes Bureau on par with the CBI, to control wildlife crimes. He wants to set up a wildlife crime bureau on par with the CBI. Since it is a State-subject, on many occasions, we felt handicapped to punish the culprits—whether it is tigers or elephants or any endangered species. Whatever it may be, there are frequent offenders in States; or, the State Government machinery are not sufficient to tackle the problems. It is for the first time that the Central Government has come forward to constitute a Wild life Crime Bureau and it is a milestone in the history of Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The third thing is, we are involving Joint Forest Management Committees in 21,262 villages. They are doing afforestation work with people's participation. Sir, unless people participate, whatever be the efforts, whatever be the targets contemplated in the Ministry, it cannot be fulfilled. Knowing this, the Joint Forest Management Committees are constituted in and around 62,000 villages and the Government is committed to cover all villages and all places in the country in the forthcoming years and set up such Forest Management Committees through which afforestation programmes go on in this country. Sir, this is the major achievement of this Ministry.

Sir, what about the allegations levelled against the Ministry? I would like to reply. The first and foremost thing is on the tiger issue. Sir, as I have already said, it is a State-subject. The protection of wildlife is well within the purview of the States though the enactment of the law, namely, the Wildlife Protection Act, is enacted by the Parliament. There is a confusion in the minds of the public. Hence, I must say, with respect to the Press and to the hon. Members that there is a crisis in Sariska, and some Press people

attempted to say that the same crisis is prevailing all over the country. I would like to refute this in a strong manner, with strong words. Maybe, some deficiency might be there in other reserves, but not on par with Sariska. The research is going on, work is going on for enumeration. The Prime Minister has written a letter to the Chief Minister of Rajasthan. In the opening sentence itself, there is a great concern for tigers of Sariska. Thereafter, he says that the problem should be removed. By noting these words, some Press people wanted to make a hue and cry in the media, in the Press stating that tigers in the country have disappeared as a whole. Sir, this is not tolerable and this is not true. So far as Sariska is concerned, yes, we must admit before any forum, not only Parliament, that disappearance is there. It is because of the biotic pressure that has been felt in this reserve. As Mr. Shukla put it before the House, there is a temple and unregulated traffic is there. Apart from that, tourism is not regulated as contemplated in the Forests Act and the Wildlife Act. The motor vehicles are being used. As a result, this shy animal is disappearing. In such a pressure even tigers cannot do breeding. It is a shy animal that has been disappearing in Sariska. Of course, as a matter of fact, I want to share with this House, in one of the areas, namely, Bharatpur, which is not notified for tigers, tigers were visible. It was not reserved for the tigers. So, we can come to a conclusion by drawing an inference – it may not be wrong, I think – that because of this biotic pressure that is put on Sariska, some of the animals may flee to some other areas like Bharatpur. This is apart from poaching. I must admit before the House that a special investigative team was constituted by the Prime Minister to find out the main reasons for disappearance of tigers in Sariska. No doubt, poaching is also there. Apart from poaching, these are the problems prevailing in Sariska. I must be categorical before the House that the problems of Sariska cannot be equated with other reserves since 28 tiger reserves are being maintained in this country. Sir, the first and foremost thing, so far as tigers are concerned, that I must share with the hon. Members is, the methodology of census so far adopted by the States has its own loopholes. I should admit that. In some of the tiger reserves, this census is exaggerated. We are matching the census by way of measuring the pugmarks and direct sightings. There should be a correlation between the pugmarks and direct sightings. So, some correlation is made and average population is arrived at. Either this methodology should be strengthened or some other methodology should be adopted for locating the correct number of animals. So far these censuses have been carried out by the State Governments.

This is for the first time that the Central Government has taken a decision and implemented it that it would be done with the help of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. It is an international body. With the help of this international body and in consultation with the Wildlife Institute of India, we carried out a new methodology. Sir, 14 reserves have been measured by this methodology adopted by this international body. Out of these 14 reserves, none – I can read out the whole list, but there is no time and they are apart from Sariska – has been termed as bad. It is 'satisfactory', 'good' and 'very good'. What we are waiting for is that they complete their study in all the 28 reserves within 15 days. They are also identifying the problems attached with each and every tiger reserve. I cannot say that problem in Sariska is identical and symmetrical and it is applicable to all reserves in this country. Sariska's problem is one thing, Kanha's problem is one thing, Pariyar's problem is one thing. All reserves have their unique problems. This international body is not only giving this new methodology, but they are also suggesting what are the problems attached to each and every tiger reserve available in the country. After getting this report, I have decided that the first and foremost I would do is to call a meeting of all the Wildlife Wardens of all the States and Directors of Project Tiger. We will have consultation and we must be able to pinpoint what are all the deficiencies prevailing in each and every reserve.

After that, we are committed to build a political will also. After that, I want to call a meeting of the Environment and Forest Ministers of all the States. I want to give a message through this House, Sir, that there is no danger throughout the country for the tigers. There are some dangers in some of the tiger reserves.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): There is danger for the goats, not for the tigers.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, this is the concern I wanted to share with the House.

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Have you got any probe report?

SHRI A. RAJA: Preliminary report has been filed by a special investigating team appointed by the CBI. They are waiting for the final report. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister constituted a task force to suggest what are the measures to be taken to protect the tigers in a broad level. It is also going on separately.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Why are there no tiger reserves in Tamil Nadu?

SHRI A. RAJA: Tiger reserves are there in Tamil Nadu. In Periyar, tiger reserves are there.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, Tamil Nadu issue should be the last.

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: How about tigresses in Tamil Nadu?

SHRI A. RAJA: Tiger includes tigresses. That is the uniqueness of animals. They will not split between female and male as we do. They will not cry for 33 per cent. Don't worry. Coming to the welfare of the tribal affairs, Sir, the Government is committed right from 1980 when the Act came into existence. Sir, the real problem that we are having is, though the Government is committed for the tribal people, whether they are giving *pattas* to them or recognising their possessive title, they are having two things. The Government was committed even before 2000, 3.66 lakh hectares of land have been given to the forest tribals and 384 forest villages have been converted into revenue villages. The problem is, notwithstanding the legal lacuna, even now we gave standing orders to all the State Governments, unless and until the Central Government issues any order, till then no forest tribal from any forest village should be evicted.

PROF. P. J. KURIAN (Kerala): The Supreme Court order is there.

SHRI A. RAJA: That is right. The Supreme Court order is there. There is a stay order.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY (Karnataka): Please bring an amendment.

SHRI A. RAJA: I will come to that point. There is a stay by the Supreme Court. Sir, with due respect to the Opposition, though they are not here, I want to submit before this House, in the erstwhile Government, they have brought guidelines. I do not think that the guidelines got the approval in the Cabinet. They issued a guideline stating that our cut-off date is the date on which the Forest Act came into existence. Those who were in possession on the date of the Act should be given rights. What about the period between 1980 and 2005? So, the erstwhile Government gave a guideline stating that even for 12 years or 13 years or for a minimum 10 years, if a person is having possessory title over the forestland, he

should be given *patta*. They should be given the title. Even we are admitting the same. There is no political rivalry in this matter. But somebody through *amicus curiae* have filed a suit before the Supreme Court stating that the guideline itself is politically motivated and it should be stayed. Accordingly, it was stayed. Still the stay is not vacated. We filed an affidavit before the Supreme Court stating that 'whatever modifications you need, we are ready to modify it. If you want to scrap the entire guideline or want to give fresh guidelines, we are ready. If the court directs that new amendments should be brought in, we are ready'. In spite of that, hearing is posted to next month. I do state that if the stay is vacated, according to the guidelines or by way of new guidelines, the Government is committed to give *pattas*, to give legal entitlement for all tribals living in these forest areas. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, it is a burning problem throughout India. His predecessor, Mr. Baalu, when he was Minister of Environment and Forests, also spoke about the Supreme Court stay. Then, he said, "If all the Chief Ministers are prepared for any amendment to the Act, I am going to bring it before Parliament." Afterwards, when the UPA came to power, it has promised in the CMP that there will be an amendment and nobody would be affected. Now, the question is: I have written to all the Chief Ministers and in response to that they also have written to me saying that they are prepared and there will not be any objection for an amendment. Now, it is a very, very serious matter. It is a burning issue. You know what is happening in Karnataka and in other States about the plight of those people. So, whether the hon. Minister give us an assurance that the amendment would be brought before the House.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, the only deadlock is the stay of the Supreme Court. We are trying to vacate the stay as early as possible. I also met the Solicitor-General twice in person. He wanted to have some modification in the affidavit which was filed earlier by the Central Government before the Supreme Court. We have consented to that. Accordingly, we have filed the affidavit. Notwithstanding any efforts made by the Forest Ministry, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in consultation with the Prime Minister and with the Ministry of Environment and Forests, I think, also wanted to have some codification. The discussions are going on. If necessary – I carefully put my words – either through this Ministry or through the Ministry of Tribal Affairs,

6.00 P.M.

I can definitely say that this Government, either by way of an enactment or by way of vacating the stay, which is pending before the Supreme Court, will, in the near future, remove all the impediments of deadlock that have been put by the Supreme Court and we are committed to give legitimate rights to the tribals living in the forest area very soon.

Now, I come to the river conservation programme. I have high regards for Mr. Ramesh. He said that 1/3rd of the Budget is being spent on this programme. I don't know wherefrom he got this information. Of course, I am the first person to feel happy and shower encomium on the Finance Minister if 1/3rd of the total Budgetary support is given to me for river conservation programme ...*(Interruptions)*... I think, Mr. Ramesh, might mean 1/3rd of the Budget of this Ministry...*(Interruptions)*... In fact, it is more than that...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: I am quoting right from your own Annual Report for 2004-05. It says...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, what has been given so far is this. Around Rs. 4,600 crores have so far been approved by the Central Government for the NRC Programme. But, actually, what we wanted is more than Rs. 10,000 crores. The sanctioned cost of the DPR is Rs. 3,343.66 crores. Expenditure by States is Rs. 1,724.62 crores. The number of schemes sanctioned is 905. The schemes so far completed are 505. The pollution load to be tackled is 5331 mld; whereas pollution load tackled so far under the Ganga Action Plan--I is 1,234 mld. There is a gulf between what is the essential need to combat the pollution load and what we are having on hand. I met the hon. Finance Minister and the Dy. Chairman of the Planning Commission. Of course, there was an assurance from the Planning Commission, during the Mid-Term Appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan, to give us Rs. 1,400 crores to complete the projects that have already been taken up by the Ministry. We are waiting for that.

One thing I can say before the House is that cleaning the rivers does mean that we can clean a river in one go. Cleaning a river includes erecting treatment plants, giving crematoriums for dead bodies, setting up low-cost sanitation centres, diverting the raw sewage in order to avoid its mingling in the rivers. Apart from that, in some of the areas, we want to promote afforestation. These are the four basic steps involved in river

cleaning. The treatment plants, given to the States, are erected on sharing basis between the Central Government and the State Governments – 85 per cent by the Central Government and 15 per cent by the State Governments. We have erected more than hundred treatment plants on the Ganga and the Yamuna. As soon as a treatment plant is complete, we hand it over to the State Government in a working condition. But after one or two years we find the treatment plant as defunct because the State Government does not bear the maintenance cost. This is one of the problems. The second problem is, if a treatment plant that had been put up earlier by the Central Government, with the State Government's share, is not working, the working of the other treatment plants will be futile because the polluted water spoils the other treatment plants also. Sir, what I can say before the House is that it is an honest attempt, a perpetual exercise done by the Ministry to tackle the problem. I should share with the hon. Members that by way of these efforts the BOD level is coming down. In some areas of the Ganga, after the treatment, I can assure, the quality of water is fit for bathing, if not drinking. I can't say that it is fit for drinking, but it is fit for bathing. ...*(Interruptions)*... I can't say that it is fit for drinking. However, the pollution level is considerably less. When it is said that the Ministry has done nothing towards rivers cleaning, with all my sincerity, I can submit before the House, imagine for a moment, had all these efforts not been made, the reality would have been worst. Despite making so many efforts by the Ministry and putting Rs. 5,000 crores, the level of pollution is this much, what would have been the pollution level had these efforts not been made.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then, what are you going to do for the treatment plants that are non-functional? ...*(Interruptions)*... So much of investment has been made on them.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, we are interacting with the State Governments. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Sir, is the hon. Minister trying to give some consolation that it could have been worst? What is this 'worst'? It is worse, it could have been worst. Are you trying to say that had that much amount not been spent, the situation could have been worst? But the situation is not at all up to our requirements. That is what we are trying to point out. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. RAJA: I do admit that. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I must admit that we have not reached the target. What I am attempting to say is that unless the work is done, you can't hope for a miracle. There would not have been any water to touch. ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, it is a continuous process. Or, you allot us Rs. 50,000 crores, we can clean all the river at one go. Technology is there. So far as the YAP is concerned, some of the hon. Members have pointed out that there is a delay. The delay had been caused because of the consultant. The consultant was not available in India at that time. We have engaged some consultants from abroad, those who had knowledge of cleaning the rivers like the Thames and some other rivers abroad. So, we are having technology. But we are not having resources. Within the limited resources we have, with my full honesty I can say, we succeeded to some extent in our endeavours, in our efforts, that I can say before the House, Sir.

Sir, coming to the Coastal Zone Regulation Management (CZRM), some of the Members have referred to the Swaminathan Committee's Report and other things. Sir, after Tsunami, we are very much concerned about it. No doubt, some new ideas will come up in this area. Right now, we are having three categories, CRZ-I, CRZ-II and CRZ-III. We are having standard norms. The first 500 metres between the HTL and the LTL should not be permitted for any developmental activities. The Swaminathan Committee Report suggests that we need not have that rigid measurement for all over the sea-shores. We can go according to the vulnerability. In some of the areas, there may not be danger; in some of the areas, there may be some danger; and in some of the areas, the grievances will be more. So, we can draw a line, not so rigidly as we are having now. We can draw a line according to the vulnerability, including the disaster management, and taking into consideration all the disasters that have happened by way of Tsunami. In principal, the Report submitted by the Swaminathan Committee has been accepted by the Ministry, notwithstanding the merits or demerits contained in the Report. We will go through the Report. After careful consideration of the Report, the Ministry will come forward with a new rule, in accordance with the new proposals given by the Swaminathan Committee. The areas which are necessary will be taken up, the areas which are not necessary will be discarded. After a careful consideration, we will bring forward some amendments in the rules which are existing now. This is so far as CRZ is concerned.

Some of the hon. Members mentioned about the mining projects available in this country. Sir, the Supreme Court has asked more than 800 or 900 mines to close their mining activities, because of some environmental issues. I must admit before the House that there is a conflict between the development side and the environmental side. There is a contradiction on this even in this House. Mr. Narayanan submitted before the House, "developmental activities should be permitted in this country because it is a developing country. Don't scuttle these developmental activities by giving the excuse of environmental issues." Whereas Mr. Soz and Dr. Karan Singh are saying that we should not take up any developmental activities at the cost of the environmental issues. This contradiction is going on, not only in the Parliament, but this contradiction is going on in each and every State of this country, up to the Supreme Court. Sir, after a very careful and balanced approach, we must have a synchronised approach between the developmental side and the environmental side. As a Minister of this Department, I can say, we will not give up any environmental issues, at the same time, the Ministry will not cut down the reasonable development and the social obligations. With these words, I conclude, Sir.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, for Tsunami-affected people, construction work is going on now. The respective State Governments have to rehabilitate those people. They are going to construct the houses there. Sir, you have rightly said that as the coastal regulation zone comes in between, they are not allowing them to construct in that area. Sir, fishermen community has to go for fishing. They should be nearby to the sea. Sir, you have rightly said that vulnerability should be the criteria. You should bring forward the policy as early as possible, so that it will help the people who have been affected by Tsunami. That is my request.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, we are committed to that. The Swaminathan Committee has submitted its Report. We are considering the Report. We will take up the positive sense of the Report. And we are committed to help the poor, those who are residing at the coastal areas. That does not mean the coastal regulation rules can be demolished *in toto*. We are going to modify some rules...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Do you have the information about Princess ship...(Interruptions)... If you have it, give it; otherwise, you write to me.

SHRI A. RAJA: Okay. I will write to you.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: You don't have that.

SHRI A. RAJA: Yes.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): I have one question to put. Well, the entire country felt for them. My question is about the CRZ Regulations. Now, after Tsunami one thing was clear that the mangroves which were there on the coast, were destroyed, and wherever, they were still intact, the destruction was much less. What is the Ministry going to do to revive the plantations and the mangroves in the coastal belt, to restore the ecology? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: How much time the Ministry will take to consider the Swaminathan Committee Report? When are you going to come back to Parliament? Would you please tell us the time-frame by which you will be taking action on the Swaminathan Report and come back to the Parliament? That is the point.

श्री मूल चन्द मीणा (राजस्थान) : उपसभापति जी, माननीय मंत्री जी आदिवासियों की भूमि के संबंध में बता रहे थे। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि जहां पर आदिवासी आदि काल से, वन क्षेत्र में अपने पशु चराते थे। पिछले कुछ दिनों से, कुछ सेंक्चुरी के अंदर उनको रोक दिया गया जैसे सवाई माधोपुर में ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री उपसभापति : इसको तो इन्होंने क्लेरिफाई कर दिया है। He has clarified it.

श्री मूल चन्द मीणा : नो क्लीयर। सर, आप पहले मेरी बात सुन लीजिए। आप क्लीयर कर रहे हैं। सवाई माधोपुर सेंक्चुरी के अंदर जो ट्राइबल्स रहते हैं, उनको पहले तो बाहर निकाला गया उसके बाद जिस एरिया में वे पशु चराते थे, उस एरिया को भी बंद कर दिया गया, हर साल फॉरेस्ट वालों के साथ झगड़े में एक-दो ट्राइबल मारे जाते हैं। मंत्री महोदय, मैं आप से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो आप ट्राइबल्स को अधिकार देने की बात कर रहे हैं कि हम वन भूमि में आदिवासियों, वनवासियों को उनका अधिकार दे रहे हैं, तो जो सेंक्चुरी के आस-पास के गांव निकाले थे, जहां आदिवासी रहते थे, क्या उनमें पशुओं को चराने की इजाजत देंगे?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, whether it is a Sanctuary or a National Park or it is forest land, there is no disparity between these lands. Our stand is, substantiating the right, which is being prescribed to the tribal; just substantiating the right. This substantiating of right is yet to be decided by the Supreme Court; they are having the right. That is the crux of this point. Notwithstanding the crux, we have already directed all the Chief Ministers, not to evict anybody from the forest villages. If there is any deviation, or if you are having any problem with a particular National Park or Sanctuary, write to me. I will take up the matter with the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will take up the matter with the State

Government. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, hon. Member, Shri Sharmaji ...*(Interruptions)*...

डा. प्रभा ठाकुर : महोदय, आप मुझे भी पूछने का मौका दें। जैसा कि माननीय सदस्य जय राम रमेश ने पूछा था कि पर्यावरण का 1/3 बजट नदियों को स्वच्छ करने के लिए है। मैं सिर्फ इतना जानना चाहती हूँ कि उस नदियों की स्कीम में, तालाब और नदियों को स्वच्छ करने और शुद्ध करने के लिए, क्या वे उसी में इनक्लूडिड हैं या उनका बजट अलग है?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, so far Rs. 53 crores have been spent for the lakes. Some of the lakes were identified in consultation with the State Governments. In consultation with the State Governments, some important lakes were identified and cleaned up. About Rs. 53 crores have been spent so far.

Now, coming to the query being put by hon. Member, Shri Sharmaji, I would say that we are having no exclusive seed scheme to promote mangroves. We are already having existing schemes like the National Afforestation Scheme and the Forest Protection Scheme for which we are spending Rs. 1600 crores. After Tsunami, what we decided is this. We have already written to the State Governments that when you are using Rs. 1600 crores, which has been earmarked for the afforestation, you give priority to the mangroves in and around the coastal areas.

Sir, with these words, I conclude my remarks. If there are any specific issues left out, I will write to the concerned hon. Members.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Manoj Bhattacharya wanted to know within what time-frame, you are going to consider the Swaminathan Report. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: What is the time-frame? When are you going to consider the Swaminathan Report?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: His question is, within what time?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, I will write to him.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The discussion on the Working of the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the reply are concluded. The House is adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

The House then adjourned at nine minutes past six of the clock till eleven of the clock on Tuesday, the 3rd May, 2005.