

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 31st March, 1970/10th
Chaitra, 1892 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the
clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SLUM CLEARANCE SCHEMES

*654. SHRI KRISHAN KANT :
Will the Minister of HEALTH AND
FAMILY PLANNING AND WORKS,
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOP-
MENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have evolved
in collaboration with the State Gov-
ernments, slum clearance schemes in
the Capital cities in the country ; and

(b) if so, what are the details there-
of ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY PLANNING AND WORKS,
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOP-
MENT (SHRI B. S. MURTHY) : (a)
and (b) The Slum Clearance/Improve-
ment Scheme is in the State Sector.
Central assistance for the implementa-
tion of State Sector schemes is provided
to the States by way of "block loans"
and "block grants" without its being
tied to any specific head of development,
and the States have the freedom to in-
cur expenditure on any item of devel-
opment according to their own require-
ments and priorities. The State Gov-
ernments are themselves competent to
formulate projects under the above
Scheme and finance them from the
block loans and block grants.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : May I
know whether it is a fact that the last
Housing Ministers' Conference had also
recommended that slum clearance
schemes should be taken up in the Cen-
tral sector and, if so, what further
action has been taken in this respect ?
Further, Sir, may I know what is the
total population of slum-dwellers in
different parts of the country ? Is it not
a fact that 25 to 30 per cent. of the
people in many places like Calcutta—
may be even 40 to 50 per cent.—live
in slums ? The magnitude of the pro-

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blem has to be assessed. May I know
what are the Government's figures about
slums in the different capital cities ?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, a Reso-
lution was passed by the Conference
requesting that the slum clearance
schemes may as usual be in the Central
sector. This Resolution has been con-
veyed to all those concerned with it.
The Planning Commission is of the view
that this must be taken up by the Chief
Ministers in the National Development
Council. In short, Sir, they said that
it is the State Governments which have
to move in the matter and then only
the Centre can help.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : I asked
about the total population of slum
dwellers in the capital cities of India,
particularly in Delhi. Is it not a fact
that 25 to 30 per cent. of the people
live in slums ? Secondly, Sir, what you
are actually doing is you are removing
them from one slum and putting them in
another where the conditions are very
clumsy and insanitary and they are
away from their places of work. May
I know what the Government of India
is going to do about it ? Have the
Government of India studied the prob-
lem, how to solve the whole problem ?
What is the total amount of money that
will be required for slum clearance
schemes for the country as a whole ?
How much money has been allotted by
the LIC, whether they have asked the
LIC to allot some money for this
purpose ?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, the
conjecture of the hon. Member, as far
as the figures are concerned, is correct.
It is said that four families out of every
ten families in Calcutta are not having
any shelter whatsoever. As far as the
total population is concerned, the num-
ber of slum-dwellers will go on in-
creasing as the population of the country
goes on increasing.

As far as the money spent on the
slum clearance schemes is concerned, in
the First Plan there was no such scheme.
In the Second Plan Rs. 1,299 lakhs were
allotted and only Rs. 945.12 lakhs were
drawn. With regard to the units, 49301
units were sanctioned and 21010 houses
have been constructed. The total
amount of Rs. 5210.3 lakhs has been
allotted. Out of this only Rs. 3431.80
lakhs have been drawn. As far as

the dwelling units are concerned, 113550 units were sanctioned and only 72584 have been completed.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Have they made any estimate about the total amount required for slum clearance schemes in the whole country, especially in the capital cities? He has not given me that figure.

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, I cannot just now give that figure.

SHRI A. D. MANI : May I ask the Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the description in the foreign press that Calcutta is the biggest slum in the world, and it is a disgrace to us? In view of the fact that Calcutta is the centre of our export trade and also the centre of the engineering industry, may I know whether he would persuade the Prime Minister to make a block grant to the State of West Bengal for constructing tenements to remove the slums which are infesting the city of Calcutta?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, the Centre is aware of the situation that is now prevailing in Calcutta. Because of that a special grant has already been made and proper action is being taken to see that the people of Calcutta do not suffer from slum nuisance.

SHRI DALPAT SINGH : Since a large portion of the population is living in slums, may I know what special arrangement the Government is making in the matter of drinking water and medical facilities, in view of the unhealthy localities in the various cities?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, once the slums are cleared, the insanitary conditions will automatically disappear and water supply and other facilities will be provided.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Sir, may I know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the study conducted by a Department of the Government of India with regard to the deplorable condition of slums in Calcutta, where it has been suggested that a high percentage of slum-dwellers are suffering from TB and there is no arrangement for drinking water and the other minimum facilities like sanitation, etc. are not available? In view of this, may I know whether the Government proposes to make some special grant to the Government of West Bengal to

meet the situation? May I also know to what extent the revolving fund which has been recently created will meet the situation that has developed in Calcutta with regard to slums?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : This question was discussed in this very House some time back as a result of the Resolution brought forward by the same Member. We discussed this question at that time. I can only say that special care is being taken about Calcutta. If I remember correctly, more than Rs. 40 crores have been allotted for the city of Calcutta.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Rs. 30 crores have been allotted for the development of Calcutta. But the question here is with regard to slum clearance. My question is : To what extent the present revolving fund for housing will meet the situation regarding slum clearance in Calcutta?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, slums are part of Calcutta and whatever is meant for Calcutta will also go towards slum clearance. As far as the revolving fund is concerned, it has not come into existence; when it comes into existence, naturally Calcutta will be remembered.

SHRI S. D. MISRA : As the Minister just now stated, there is a Government of India scheme for slum clearance, etc. which was started in 1956. We find that during the last 14 years hardly about 60 thousand small houses have been constructed under this scheme. May I know whether the expenditure, if I am not wrong, is about Rs. 32 crores? And if I understand correctly, 87½ per cent. of the money is being given by the Government of India probably by way of loans and also subsidy, and 12½ per cent. is being borne by the States. And for the welfare of scavengers, etc. it is 100 per cent. in the form of loans and subsidy. Then how is it that the pace of progress in terms of both money and construction of houses is so slow though the scheme is so attractive? Moreover, may I know, Sir, why is it that some of the State Governments have done almost nothing to spend this money and utilise this money for the construction of houses? How is it that, in spite of these incentives they are not coming up and taking up this scheme? What is the matter?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, the hon. Member is aware that the States are enjoining autonomy, and of course it is for the Centre to provide the facilities and request them and sometimes beg of them to utilise these resources in order to clear the slums. I think the hon. Member is not well informed; his figures are not correct. It is not 60,000 it is 72,584 units built. It is not Rs. 32 crores; it is Rs. 34,31,80,000 that have been spent. Then, Sir, from 1969 this scheme of slum clearance has been transferred to the State Governments, and to the State Governments we are now giving block loans and block grants. Therefore it is for the State Governments to see whether the money is spent on clearing the slums. Or, if they prefer some other scheme to this, they are at liberty to do so. Therefore, the Centre has now no hold on how this money is being spent.

SHRI K. K. SHAH : It is true, Sir, that we used to provide 50 per cent. as loan, 37½ per cent. as grant, that is 87½ per cent., and 12½ per cent. used to be contributed by the States. Now we had allocated certain sums for the States but, unfortunately, except in the case of *harijans*, which is 12½ per cent.—another 12½ per cent. is subscribed by the Social Welfare Board—(*Inter-ruptions*) Even then the hon. Member is quite right because, when the outlay in the Second Plan was Rs. twelve crores and ninety-nine lakhs, the money drawn by the States was only Rs. 9,45,12,000, and also when the outlay in the Third Plan was Rs. 28,58,25,000 the money drawn by the States was only Rs. 16,51,73,000. Unluckily the whole amounts were not drawn by the States; it is a fact. We tried our best to persuade them, but these amounts were not drawn in whole. I have got the Statewise figures, but it will take long to read them.

DR. K. RAMIAH : The hon. Minister will agree that slum clearance is intimately tied up with employment opportunities. We have been told that the people, who have been cleared from the slums and have been given new quarters, have migrated back to their slums after some time because they find it very inconvenient to go to their places of work from the new quarters. If that is a fact, will the Minister examine this question?

SHRI K. K. SHAH : We tried this experiment of taking them to the periphery while clearing the slums, but it is true that after staying for fifteen days or twenty days or sometimes for a month they again came back to their former places. And some of the new quarters have been sub-let. Therefore, we have now come round to the idea that unless we provide living accommodation at or near their places of work it will not be possible to remove them from there. Therefore the new idea is to clear the slums and construct vertically on the same spot, meanwhile keeping them in some camps nearby. This is also being done in Bombay.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Since the Central Government can say with authority and with complete information regarding Delhi, may I know, Sir, what percentage of the total slum population has been cleared and what percentage remains? May I also know whether the rate of growth of slums is less than or more than the rate of clearance of slums? Thirdly, may I know, Sir, the people, who have been evicted or taken to new places and settled in what are known as *jhuggi-jhonpri* colonies, whether the Government have given or intend to give them ownership rights of the small plots on which they have been rehabilitated, because that would give them a stability and status and a sense of dignity in life? Have the Government that programme? Lastly is it not a fact that the people who are taken to those places make this biggest complaint that there are no employment opportunities in the neighbourhood? So, have the Government any plan to provide employment opportunities to such people near about the places where they are resettled?

SHRI B. S. MURTHY : Sir, as far as the slum clearance work in Delhi is concerned, we have some figures. The sanctioned units were 7,074 out of which only 2,928 units were built. As far as employment facilities are concerned, as my senior colleague has already said, now the idea is not to remove the slum-dwellers to the periphery of the cities. They are not willing to stay there because it is far away from their places of work. As far as ownership rights are concerned, the question is being considered.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : This question has not been answered whether the Government have made any assessment of the rate of growth of slums

in Delhi and the rate of clearance of the slums coming up, as to which is more and which is less.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That question has not been answered.

SHRI K. K. SHAH : My hon. friend is aware that the assessment was made in 1966 if I remember correctly. We have given these figures on a number of occasions. It was 50,000 or somewhere round about that number then. Now it has become one lakh. It is true that the construction has not kept pace with the clearance; it is a fact.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

VIEWS EXPRESSED BY SHRI G. D. BIRLA

*655. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the views expressed recently by Shri G. D. Birla about the impending "era of serious shortages and unemployment" ;

(b) whether it is a fact that investment in shares has declined from Rs. 561 crores (1966-67) to Rs. 384 crores in (1967-68) as stated by him ; and

(c) if so, what are Government's reactions in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P. C. SETHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Consents for the issue of capital amounted to Rs. 486.0 crores in 1966, Rs. 233.7 crores in 1967, Rs. 135.2 crores in 1968 and Rs. 143.5 crores in 1969. Capital raised was Rs. 308.2 crores during 1966, Rs. 284.1 crores in 1967 and Rs. 299.9 crores in 1968.

(c) The Government keeps a continuous watch on the trend in investments. The Budget proposals for 1970-71 contain several features aimed at stimulating investment in the Corporate sector.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, the answer attempts to touch only one part of the question. My question related to the statement by Mr. G. D. Birla about the impending era of serious shortages. I think that has not been even touched at all. What was meant

by the 'shortages' which that particular gentleman had in view ? Is it clear to the Government and have Government any comments to offer on this ? So far as unemployment is concerned, Sir, I would like to know whether the Government are aware of the fact that in a recent article it appeared that President Giri had also emphasised the need of a network of countrywide multi-purpose pilot projects for absorbing the surplus man-power. In the same article it has also appeared that he had also referred to the right which has been assured in the Constitution itself, the right to employment, and said that this right would remain on paper and we shall be nowhere near the goal of socialism unless a great programme of action for mobilising the productive channels of the country was undertaken. I would like to know, Sir, whether the Government have given serious thought to the emphasis that the President also has underlined the need for a wide-scale programme for generating employment in the country.

SHRI P. C. SETHI : Sir, the hon. Member has referred to two points. One is with regard to the question of shortages. I would also like to draw his attention to this particular sentence mentioned by Mr. Birla that India has survived many crisis and would survive the present one also.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Is that the consolation you are having ?

SHRI P. C. SETHI : Therefore it is no use quoting a particular portion out of context. As far as the question of shortages is concerned, shortages of steel and aluminium were mentioned in the speech of Mr. Birla. After the recession is over the demand for steel is stepping up and the demand for aluminium also is going up. To be in a position to meet those requirements the production programme is being stepped up and is being followed up and when steel production picks up in Durgapur and when Bokaro goes through I think we will be able to take care of the steel demand by adjustment of imports.

As far as the question of employment is concerned the rate of investment declined during the recession period. Now that period is over and it is expected that during 1969-70 and in the current year 1970-71 the rate of investment would be to the tune of 12 to 13 per cent. Therefore there should be no