

SHRI C. M. POONACHA. This is a matter for the Parliament to decide and it is a suggestion for action.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED STATEMENT OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF PAKISTAN IN REGARD TO FARRAKA PROJECT

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Madam, with your permission I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the reported statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Pakistan National Assembly on June 15, 1967, that his Government would do its best to prevent India from proceeding with the Farrakka Project.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): Madam Deputy Chairman, the Government of India are not yet in possession of the text of the statement made by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Pakistan National Assembly on 15th June, 1967. The same has been called for from our Mission in Pakistan and on its receipt due consideration will be given to it. Reports which have appeared in Indian and Pakistani newspapers mention that in a statement laid on the Table of the House, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan has charged India with pressing ahead with the Farrakka Barrage Project to present Pakistan with a *fait accompli* thus foreclosing the possibility of, what he called, a reasonable solution. The Pakistan Foreign Minister is also reported to have assured the House that his Government would do its best to prevent India from proceeding with the Project.

The facts relating to the Farrakka Project are already well known to the House. This is a simple Project to save the premier port of Calcutta from a process of sure extinction and

it has no element of irrigation or power. Farrakka Barrage Project has not been conjured up over-night, but has been the result of a continuous search for ways to save the port of Calcutta, spread over more than a century. Starting from Sir Arthor Cotton, who as far back as 1858 planned a barrage across the Ganga, to Dr. Walter Hensen, an expert German engineer, a century later, a galaxy of engineers who devoted their attention to the problem of Bhagirathi-Hooghly has unanimously asserted that the construction of a barrage with the objective of supplying additional water into the Bhagirathi-Hooghly system was the only measure by which the alarming rate of deterioration of the Hooghly approaches to the port of Calcutta could be arrested. This Project is of great national importance to India and will not be detrimental to Pakistan. Pakistan's objections to the construction of the barrage are also not new but have been continuing for the last several years. It was with a view to allaying the fears of the Government of Pakistan that the Government of India had agreed to the exchange of technical data relating to river projects of mutual interest to the two countries. For this purpose four meetings of water resources experts of both the countries were held between June 1960 and January 1962. The Government of India had written to the Government of Pakistan in 1965 to arrange the 5th meeting of the experts but the outbreak of hostilities between the two countries stood in the way of such a meeting being held and this proposal is still pending with Pakistan.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: It is quite good for the Minister to accept the importance of Calcutta port and also to accept the importance of the Farrakka Barrage which has been characterised a project to save the Calcutta port. This project was originally conceived to increase the navigability and also to reduce the salinity of the river Hooghly but Pakistan raised certain protests and so far as

[Shri Chitta Basu.]

I know the project was redesigned in order to meet some of the protests of Pakistan Government. That redesigning of the project was presumably due to pressure from Pakistan Government and it is reported by certain technicians that that would not improve the situation in the river Hooghly to the desired extent. Pakistan has not only raised certain objections but has also expressed its determination not to allow the Government of India to proceed with the project itself. Under these circumstances may I ask the hon. Minister whether he is prepared to give an assurance, bold, specific and firm assurance, that under all circumstances, under all pressure from any quarter, whether from Pakistan or from any other country allied to Pakistan, the project will be completed within the scheduled period?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: I am prepared to give the assurance that we will not succumb to any pressure whatsoever in this regard. This is a very vital project for our country and we are going ahead with it at full speed. This much is true that Pakistan has actually objected to the building of the barrage there. The two main objections that Pakistan has come forward with are that if this barrage is built there, it will reduce the flow of water in summer to their part of the river in East Pakistan and secondly if we built this barrage, it will aggravate the flood situation in their country during the monsoon season. We have assured Pakistan that both these things will not happen and that their interests will not be put in jeopardy. As far as we are concerned we propose to go ahead with it and we shall see that it is completed within the scheduled time.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS (Orissa): May I know whether, after the statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Pakistan National Assembly, the Government of India has got any communication from them, any protest about this barrage? I also

want to know from the Minister whether it is a fact that this barrage has been redesigned only to appease Pakistan and not to serve the interests of Calcutta as it is being said and secondly whether, in the case of the Mangala Dam with the construction of which Pakistan is going ahead, we have lodged any protest and if so, what is the result of this?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Madam, we have not received any communication or protest from Pakistan about the Farrakka Barrage. As regards the question of modification in the design of the barrage, it is a technical question which I cannot actually answer but as far as I know the design of the barrage has not been actually modified or changed to such an extent as to have any adverse effect on the Calcutta port. The main purpose of building this project is to supply additional water to the Calcutta port and this objective will always be uppermost in our mind.

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO): Sir, may I add that the design of the project is exactly the same as was decided upon and we are not deviating even an inch from the original design?

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE (Maharashtra): Madam Deputy Chairman, the statement of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Pakistan National Assembly about Farrakka Barrage is not justified. I think the waters of the Ganges near the Farrakka Barrage could be utilised by both the nations, in the interests of both the nations. A lot of research has been done in this matter during the past few years and as has been pointed out by the hon. Minister this scheme was evolved after deliberations over a long period. It is learnt, Madam, that at Farrakka Barrage about 70,000 cusecs of water flow out of it and only about 40,000 cusecs would be required of Farrakka Barrage to save the Calcutta port from the effects of silting and Pakistan requires only

about 25,000 cusecs of water. As I have already said we have about 70,000 cusecs and out of this 20,000 to 30,000 cusecs can be saved for Pakistan and another 20,000 cusecs can be regenerated after, Farakka Barrage. for use of Pakistan, which may be required for irrigation purposes there. In view of these facts there is no substance whatsoever in the complaints made by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Pirzada. The hon. Minister has said that four or five meetings were held between the experts of both the nations but due to the hostilities that broke out no further meetings could be held. There is no difficulty now. From this morning's papers we learn that our Foreign Ministers are meeting—Mr. Chagla and Mr. Pirzada in New York to find out whether we can settle our outstanding disputes in an amicable manner. This information has been given by the Indian spokesman today.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your question now?

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: I am coming to that, Madam. Our High Commission in Rawalpindi, Mr. Sen, has announced that perhaps in New York Mr. Pirzada and Mr. Chagla will be meeting to discuss all the outstanding disputes. In view of these latest developments and in view of what I have already said, there appears to be some kind of change in the thought process of Pakistan and they want that the outstanding disputes between the two countries should be solved amicably. So if there is a change in the attitude of Pakistan I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to call a meeting of the experts of both the nations to resolve the differences so far as the Farakka Barrage is concerned. Secondly as both the Foreign Ministers are meeting in New York I would like to know whether this question will also be discussed between them so that this source of conflict is removed.

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Madam, we are willing to thrash out

all our differences with Pakistan; there is no doubt about that. As regards the meeting of the experts, as I have already said in the main reply, we had invited Pakistan for the fifth meeting but because the war intervened the meeting could not be held. Our invitation is still open and it is up to Pakistan to accept the invitation and have this meeting. As regards the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York, I take it that a number of subjects will be discussed when they meet but I cannot say whether this specific question will be taken up or not.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (राजस्थान) :
पाकिस्तान के साथ फरक्का बैराज के प्रश्न पर उन्होंने अब विवाद उठाया है। पाकिस्तान का खैया पहले भी पंजाब की नदियों के बारे में इसी प्रकार का रहा, इसकी वजह से अपने देश में जो नहर योजना हमने चलाई थी उसमें हमें काटछाट करनी पड़ी। मैं राजस्थान नहर के बारे में यह कह सकता हूँ कि उसका जो दूसरा फेज रुका हुआ है, उसके लिये भी यह कारण बताया जाता है। प्रश्न यह है कि फरक्का बैराज के मवाल में भी उसी तरह से पुनरावृत्ति नहीं हो और हम अपनी योजना पूरी तरह से, ठीक तरीके से, लागू कर सकें, इसके लिये सरकार किस प्रकार का निश्चिन पग उठाना चाहती है?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Madam, we agree with the hon. Member that there is no justification whatsoever on the part of Pakistan to have any objection to this project and as I have already said before, while we are prepared to meet Pakistan's demand to some extent to allay her fears in regard to the supply of water and control of floods, we do however intend to go ahead with this project and there is no question of giving it 'up or modifying it despite Pakistan' objections which we do think are unreasonable.

DR. K. L. RAO: I may also add this. The Rajasthan Canal phase two is not being taken up at the moment not because of any objection by Pakistan but we have got to finish the first phase first and then take up the other stall. It is purely a question of funds; it has nothing to do with Pakistan's objections.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal): May I know whether the Minister is aware that the original flow of this Ganges water was diverted and that is why the Hooghly river is drying up and the Calcutta port is in danger? In that case, by the diversion, some of the flow down to the river Hooghly is not likely to be of any threat to Pakistan, as far as their water resources are concerned. That being so, may I know whether it is a fact that this was brought to the notice of the Government of Pakistan that the well-being of West Bengal depends on the navigability of the Hooghly river? May I also know whether it is a fact that the construction of the Farakka Barrage is being held up to some extent because of some wrangling over the giving out of tenders to the contending firms and due to that the works have been held up to some extent? May I also know whether it is the opinion of responsible engineers that, alongwith the construction of the Farakka Barrage, the river Hooghly should be trained, so that the channel is made narrower and there is deeper flow of water, so that it can improve the river bed and also the river Rupnarain should be trained so that its navigability is served? Otherwise merely by the construction of the project it would not serve its purpose. May I know whether this opinion is correct or not? We have this information from responsible engineers. May I know whether the Government is taking this into consideration and in view of the objection by Pakistan whether they would speed it up and complete the construction of the project even before the scheduled time, by giving it top priority?

DR. K. L. RAO: Whenever occasion arose we had pointed out to Pakistan that their objections were not correct and that the construction of the Farakka Barrage would not in any way affect the interests of Pakistan. With regard to the second question, the hon. Member said something about the contractors and that there were delays. It is incorrect. The contract for half the canal work has been given and the work is going on according to schedule. The contract for the other half is now being settled. Tenders have been called and the Tender Committee is negotiating it. We hope to let it out shortly. With regard to the third question about proceeding with the works on the Bhagirati itself for navigability, it is under consideration. We have appointed a Committee, it has submitted a report and that is under examination now.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): May I know from the hon. Minister what was the original target date for the completion of the Farakka Barrage, what were the reasons for the postponement of the original target date, whether any new target date has been fixed and can we have an assurance that the project will be completed by the new target date?

DR. K. L. RAO: For the last two years the project has been taken up seriously. By the middle of 1970 there will be a substantial completion of the project and we are sticking to that date.

SHRI N. PATRA (Orissa): May I know what amount has been spent already on the preliminary works of the Farakka Project?

DR. K. L. RAO: Forty per cent of the work has been done.

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
कद. सरकार को इन बात की जानकारी है
कि अगलर यह फरक्का बैराज बन जाय,

तो आसाम, उत्तरी बंगाल तथा देश के अन्य भागों में आनागमन का एक अच्छा नक्का हो जाएगा। यदि हा, तो सरकार ने इतना तत्काल बावने की कोशिश क्यों नहीं की।

DR. K. L. RAO: We are fully aware of what the hon. Member has said. We have investigated it very thoroughly, the project to connect the Ganges with the Brahmaputra in Assam. Now, the project is not being taken up. It is purely due to financial conditions. An amount of the order of Rs. 200 crores would be required for the project. We have to wait for better conditions.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

I. THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION RETURNS AND INFORMATION (AMENDMENT) RULES, 1966

II. THE INDIAN WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY (AMATEUR SERVICE) AMENDMENT RULES, 1967.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): Sir, on behalf of Dr. Triguna Sen, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (3) of section 25 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, a copy of the Ministry of Education Notification S.O. No. 504, dated the 9th February, 1966, publishing the University Grants Commission Returns and Information (Amendment) Rules, 1966. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-789/67.]

I also beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (5) of section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, a copy of the Department of Communications Notification G.S.R. No. 883, dated the 26th May, 1967, publishing the Indian Wireless Telegraphy (Amateur Service) Amendment Rules, 1967. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-719/67.]

NOTIFICATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): Sir: I beg to lay on the Table:

- (a) A copy each of eight Notifications of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation (Department of Labour and Employment), under section 7-A of the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Bonus Schemes Act, 1948. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-721/67.]
- (b) A copy of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation (Department of Labour and Employment) Notification G.S.R. No. 908, dated the 2nd June, 1967 publishing the Industrial Disputes (Central) Amendment Rules, 1967, under sub-section (4) and (5) of section 38 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-720/67.]

NOTIFICATIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND INSURANCE)

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): Sir, on behalf of Shri K. C. Pant I lay on the Table a copy each of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue and Insurance):—

- (i) Two Notifications under section 38 of the Central Excises and Salt Act, 1944. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-742/67.]
- (ii) Two Notifications under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-740/67.]