

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

I. BREAKDOWN OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN DELHI AND THE STRIKE OF SUPER- VISORY STAFF IN DESU

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL (Delhi): Sir, with your permission, may I call the attention of the Minister of Irrigation and Power to the recent breakdown of electricity supply in Delhi and the strike of supervisory staff in DESU?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED): Sir, it is a fairly long statement and a copy has been laid on the Table [See Appendix LVI, Annexure No. 5]. If the hon. Member would like me to read it, I shall read it.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): That is enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I do not know the details of the statement laid on the Table of the House, because I was not given a copy of it. Anyhow, I am not questioning it. I assume that the reply must be on the same lines as that given in Lok Sabha. Now, having read that, may I ask the hon. Minister if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the chronic disease of power failure is primarily due to the fact that all the schemes undertaken for the generation of electricity in Delhi are behind schedule? Is he aware that the 50 MW unit, which should have come into operation by the end of February or early March, is behind schedule, that the 'C' power station, which he has been promising would come into being in September, is not likely to come in September? It will be delayed. Thirdly, the big power project in Badarpur, work on which should have been started—the Planning Commission has cleared it—has not started even at the level of

the Planning Board. And to crown it all, the callous way in which the strike of the supervisory staff has been dealt with is an indication of the fact that both the Government and the Corporation are indifferent to the supply of electricity in this town. The demands of the supervisory staff have not been discussed. The supervisory staff have been on strike now for quite some time and if it goes on, then it would take longer to set right the breakdown. May I ask the hon. Minister if, keeping all these facts in view, he has come to the conclusion that something vitally is wrong in the whole operation? Unless the Government is in a position to tighten up things, unless the schedule is kept in respect of the generation programme of the new plant, unless the demands of the supervisory staff are dealt with more expeditiously and settled, Delhi is in for a bad time, both in regard to electricity and water supply. The water supply position is worse in this summer.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO): Sir, I may submit that the question relates to power failure, which is due to an accident in this particular case. The calling attention notice deals with power failure. The power failure occurred accidentally due to the severe lightning that occurred in the Panipat sub-station. As hon. Member know, power for Delhi is supplied half from Bhakra and half from local generation. The Bhakra power given to Delhi costs only half the rate, half of what it costs in the Delhi thermal station. Therefore, I am sure the hon. Member would not like to give away the power that we are getting very cheap from the Delhi-Bhakra station. The power failure occurred due to the lightning arrestors having got damaged. This could have happened as well in Delhi. There is no reason why it should not have happened in Delhi. This kind of power failure is absolutely accidental and there had been no knowing of any particular thing for which we could be prepared. In regard to power generation, I am afraid the hon. Member is not quite correct in this. We are having no power-cut in Delhi, while the rest of the

[Dr. K. L. Rao.]

country is suffering from power-cut. It is only Delhi city which has not had any power-cut. We are completely meeting all the power requirements of Delhi. We are expecting the 15-MW power unit to come up in the next one week. When we complete power station 'C', as also the Bhakra Right Bank station which we are expecting to commission in the next few months, the latter in one or two months, I am sure there will be no difficulty in Delhi.

Incidentally the hon. Member referred to the water supply. The water supply in Delhi is far better than that in other cities. Realising the importance of Delhi as the capital city and the pride the nation is taking in it, the two neighbouring States, Punjab and U.P., have very generously come to the aid of Delhi and met all our water requirements. The other day when there was a shortage in the reservoir at Wazirabad, we appealed to Punjab and immediately they sent twice the quantity that is usually due to Delhi. When we get twice the quantity, I do not think we can complain against the very generous gesture that has been shown by the States of Punjab and U.P.

In regard to the strike, I am afraid there are some people among them who are indisciplined. I am sure the House will support that every kind of discipline must be maintained. The hon. Minister also heard the DESU Technical Supervisory Staff Association, which is an unrecognised body. After going through their various demands, I am afraid we have to accept that the supervisory staff are in the wrong. They are not prepared even to offer a simple apology for the very undisciplined act of theirs and for going on a strike absolutely without any kind of justification, for a very simple reason, saying that the two persons who have been suspended for being absent, have not been reinstated. I am sure if the hon. Member will go into the case himself, he will not support the demand of that organisation.

II. REPORTED ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF SHRI G. M. SADIQ, CHIEF MINISTER OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR AT BARAMULLA ON THE 16TH MAY, 1966.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, with your permission, I rise to call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the reported attempt on the life of Shri G. M. Sadiq, Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, at Baramulla yesterday.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA) : Sir, it is a very distressing occurrence. Fortunately the Chief Minister escaped unhurt. I have received a report from the State Government and I would like to read it out because this will give all the facts.

The Chief Minister, Mr. Sadiq, in his programme of touring the Kashmir valley decided to start with the Baramulla district. A tour of the Baramulla town by the Chief Minister was accordingly publicised for the 12th of May. On account of incessant and heavy rains, the tour was put off for today, the 16th of May. In keeping with this announcement, the Chief Minister accompanied by two Ministers of State, left Srinagar at about 13.00 hours for Baramulla. All along the route the Chief Minister had a tumultuous reception at all the villages falling *en route* the men, women and children of the locality turning up in large numbers. When the Chief Minister arrived in Baramulla at about 15.30 hours, his vehicle was surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd of the people who had travelled from all the villages around Baramulla to the town for the occasion. The procession wended its way through the main crowded street of the town to the Cariappa Park, which was the venue of the public meeting. The Chief Minister alighted from the vehicle on the road just outside the park. When he had entered the main gate of the park where thousands of people in an all-time record for Baramulla had gathered to hear him, a hand grenade suddenly burst on the road at a distance of nearly fifteen feet from the Chief Minister.