

- (a) whether it is a fact that a large number of coaches are lying damaged due to burning or accidents;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government is planning to get these coaches repaired so as to put them on routes;
- (d) if so, by when;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (f) how much loss the Railways has suffered due to the damage to coaches in accidents or burnt or damaged by mobs in the last five years; and
- (g) how much revenue the Railways would get after putting them in use?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI):

(a) and (b) About 73 coaches are presently ineffective on the Railways, owing to accidents and incidences of fire.

(c) to (e) All of these, except for 4 coaches, have been found to be beyond economical repairs and not worthy of being put back in service. Most of these have been processed for condemnation, pending clearance from various Investigating Authorities. The repairs to the identified coaches shall also be taken up only after clearance by the Investigating Agency/Agencies.

(f) Railways have incurred a loss of approx. Rs. 40.8 crores in last five years owing to damages to the coaches in accidents, incidences of fires, arson/agitation by mobs etc.

(g) Does not arise in view of (c) to (e).

12.00 Noon

### SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

#### Environmental clearance to Polavaram Project

1. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that environmental clearance for the multi-purpose Polavaram project in Andhra Pradesh is pending with the Ministry since long;

(b) whether it is also a fact that forest clearance was already given to the State Government to declare it as a national project; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Ministry to clear the project and the present stage of the final clearance to the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

*Statement*

(a) to (c) The Environment Clearance to the Multipurpose Polavaram Project in Andhra Pradesh was accorded on 25.10.2005. However, due to a number of writ petitions and due to the conditions laid down in R&R and Forest Clearances that no submergence and displacement of people including Scheduled Tribes shall take place in the States of Orissa and Chhattisgarh, the Government of Andhra Pradesh proposed construction of protective embankments on Sabari and Sileru Rivers in the States of Chhattisgarh and Orissa. The proposal was referred to the Ministry of Environment and Forests and after consideration by the Environment Appraisal Committee (EAC) for River Valley and Hydro Power Projects (RV&HEP); an amendment to the earlier Environment Clearance was communicated on 9.3.2009 to the Government of Andhra Pradesh by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for conduct of Public Hearing in the States of Chhattisgarh and Orissa.

The Project involves diversion 3731.07 ha of forests land (3473.00 ha notified forest area plus 258.07 ha deemed forest land as per Hon'ble Supreme Court's definition). After following due procedure, the Polavaram Project has been accorded forest clearance on 28.07.2010 with certain specific conditions.

Since the requisite Public Hearings in the States of Chhattisgarh and Orissa have so far not been held, the Ministry of Environment and Forests had issued a notice to the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 1st November, 2010. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted the reply to this notice requesting the Ministry to review change in the scope of the Project, which is under consideration.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a very important multi-purpose project, which is going to affect around 15 districts of Andhra Pradesh. Its foundation was laid in 1980 by three

successive Chief Ministers. More than Rs.3,589 crores have been spent on this project. Is the hon. Minister aware of it? Then, how much time is he going to take further to give final clearance? Let the hon. Minister be specific. Last time also, we have raised this issue. At that time, the hon. Minister said that he has written to the Andhra Pradesh Government and awaiting response from them. Is the hon. Minister in agreement with the Andhra Pradesh Government regarding contention about the project?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the environment clearance and forest clearance has already been granted for the Polavaram Multi-purpose Project.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, I am not able to hear the hon. Minister. Please, use the mike.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: It has already been cleared. The forest clearance was given. The final stage-II forest clearance for the Polavaram Project was given way back in July, 2010. The issue before the Government of India is the declaration of the Polavaram Multi-purpose Project as a national project. That is being handled by the Ministry of Water Resources. The matter is under consideration of the Government of India. The limited point in which the Environment and Forest Ministry comes into play is the environment and forest clearance. The hon. Member, being from Andhra Pradesh, is rightly concerned about this Project. I would request him to also persuade his colleague, the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh who has written a four-page letter to me, arguing against continuing the forest and environment clearance for the Polavaram Project on the grounds that there is going to be submergence in the State of Chhattisgarh. There have also been questions that have been raised by the Government of Orissa. Now, Sir, one of the conditions for giving clearance for this Project is that there will be no submergence in the State of Orissa and in the State of Chhattisgarh. For this, protective embankments have to be built along a 29 kilometres stretch on the river Sabari in Chhattisgarh, and along a 30 kilometres stretch on the river Sabari and Sileru in the State of Orissa. This is the factual position. Without the protective embankments being built, the submergence will take place, a condition of clearance will be violated. The condition for clearance is that there will be no submergence in the State of Chhattisgarh and Orissa.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, the Andhra Pradesh Government has communicated to the hon. Minister saying that these protective bunds are going to be constructed and there will be no submergence, and there is no need for pending clearance on that account. Is the hon. Minister aware of this fact? If so, is he going to clear it because they are going to provide protective bunds? Sir, the Project is getting delayed. The original cost of the Project was Rs.800 crores, and now it is Rs.16,600 crores. Already Rs.3,600 crores have been spent on it. And, if you just go on prolonging like this, for whatever reasons it is, it will further delayed. As the hon. Minister has rightly said, it is already under consideration for status of a national project also. Keeping that in mind, will he take initiative and see that the clearance is given at the earliest, basing on the assurance given by the Andhra Pradesh Government?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the protective embankments have to be built physically in the territory of Chhattisgarh and Orissa. I am the Union Minister. I don't represent any particular State. I have to take Chhattisgarh and Orissa also along with me in this process. Now, the hon. Member's own colleague, the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh has written to me, saying 'that we will not allow this Project to proceed'. Now, if he is so keen on this Project, he should persuade his colleague, the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh to do so. Sir, what the Ministry of...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, please give me one minute. Sir, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has said that there should be public hearing for the construction of these protective embankments. The public hearing has to be held in Chhattisgarh, and the public hearing has to be held in Orissa. Almost two years have passed, the public hearings have not taken place. Unless the public hearing takes place one of the conditions of the environmental clearance gets violated. Orissa and Chhattisgarh are not agreeing to the holding of the public hearings. We are in a difficult situation. I appeal to the hon. Member to ensure that, at least, Chhattisgarh is on board and we will discuss the matter with the Government of Orissa. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Normally, I do not seek permission, you must protect it. As he has rightly said, when the other State Governments are not allowing public hearing, do you expect

the one State Government to go into the other State Government's territory and hold a public hearing. It is the duty of the hon. Minister at the Centre and not that of political parties to take initiative to call all the three Chief Ministers, hold a meeting and try to sort out this issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a good suggestion.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: No, no, I would like the Minister to respond. He is a proactive man. I hope he will do something. Incidentally, he hails from Andhra Pradesh and in Rajya Sabha he is from Andhra Pradesh, to my knowledge.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Mysura Reddy.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Let him respond. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you have asked your two supplementaries. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: We cannot simply go by rules only. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the public hearing, according to law, is conducted by the project proponents. There is nothing in the law which says that the Ministry of Environment and Forests should arrange for a public hearing. ...*(Interruptions)*... But I can take the hon. Member's suggestion. I have written to the Chief Minister of Orissa, I will write to the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh and, if need be, we call a tripartite meeting to sort this issue out. This much assurance I give to the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Mysura Reddy. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: The Minister of Environment and Forests is conducting public hearing directly in Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you interfering? ...*(Interruptions)*... Let the question be answered. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, you do not have the floor. Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Sir, as per the Minister's reply, it is not possible to conduct public hearings in Chhattisgarh and Orissa because the States are objecting. My request is that if the Government of Andhra Pradesh submits a plan of re-visiting less submersion, is it acceptable to the Ministry?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, if the Government of Andhra Pradesh decides to reduce the height of the dam that will obviate the need of the protective embankments, which is the easier solution. That means you do not need to construct the protective embankments in Chhattisgarh and Orissa. So, it is entirely up to the Andhra Pradesh Government. If the Government of Andhra Pradesh reduces the height of the dam, that would be the best solution. As of now, with the present height of the dam, we have to build the protective embankments in Orissa and Chhattisgarh. Sir, I have given you an assurance that I will call a meeting of the three States to find a way forward. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Sir, is there any time-frame if a particular State delays deliberately? The public hearing has to be conducted in the State of Orissa. Suppose for any reason or deliberately, it is getting delayed, is there any time-frame that the Government has in mind? Will the Government think of bringing a legislation in this regard? This may be happening in so many cases, Sir. It will be contributing to the national food security. It is not only important for Andhra Pradesh but it is for the entire country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have asked your question. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: The giving of national status should be expedited, Sir. It is an advanced stage. We are requesting the Government of India for this. It is not entirely the fault of the Andhra Pradesh Government. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have asked the question. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, on the national project status, I have already clarified that the administrative Ministry is the Ministry of Water Resources and my colleague, the Water Resources Minister, is the appropriate person to answer the question. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Sir, I have asked about the time-frame. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: On time-frame for public hearing, according to the law, within 45 days public hearing has to be conducted. This is one of the unusual projects where you require a public hearing in three States. Sir, 99 per cent of the projects require the public hearing in their home

States. This is a case in which public hearing is required both in Chhattisgarh and in Orissa. That is why the Ministry of Environment and Forests has issued a show-cause notice as to why the public hearings have not been held. I am perfectly in sympathy with the argument that is put forward by the Government of Andhra Pradesh that public hearings have not been held because Orissa and Chhattisgarh have been reluctant to allow the public hearing, for legitimate reasons. I am not criticizing any State Government, Sir. I assured you that I will try to find a way out by bringing all the three States together. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Mohapatra.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Sir,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Mr. Seelam. I will not allow this.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: It is a very vital thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, please sit down. This is not going on record. Please resume your seat. Allow Mr. Mohapatra to put his supplementary.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: \*

SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Sir, actually we will be seeking protection. I put it to the Minister. He was not concerned in this particular matter when there was an agreement about the height of the dam between the three States. Central Water Commission had approved it. It was an agreed project. Now, suddenly without involving the States of Orissa and Chhattisgarh, the Central Water Commission with the connivance of and on the assurances of the Principal Secretary of Andhra Pradesh Government's Water Resources Department agreed to increase the height of the dam. That is the problem. As the Minister very correctly said if the height could be restored to the previous agreed height, there is no problem in Orissa and Chhattisgarh. Why has the height been raised and on the raised height, Minister is concerned. On the raised height, his Ministry has given the clearance which they should not have, without finding out whether Orissa and Chhattisgarh have been parties to this new increased height.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the matter is sensitive because eight villages of Malkangiri district of Orissa and four villages in the Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh are involved. In fact, these are all left wing extremist-affected districts. There are larger issues involved here on the submergence

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\*Not recorded.

issue. Sir, when I gave the forest clearance in July, 2010, I gave it on the information and the understanding that Chhattisgarh and Orissa were party to the agreement that the dam would be built subject to the construction of river bed protective embankments on the Saberi and the Sileru. Now the hon. Member has raised a doubt. I will go back to the records and check on this. But, Sir, I have to take all three States together. I understand the importance of the Polavaram multipurpose project. I have myself visited, not in this portfolio but in an earlier portfolio I have visited the project site but, I have also to be sensitive to the needs of Orissa and Chhattisgarh. I have got a long letter from the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh objecting to this project. I cannot ignore the views of two very important States where submergence has to take place.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Papers to be laid on the Table, Shri Srikant Jena.

### **SCANCELLATION OF CVC's APPOINTMENT**

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Sir, the other day we raised the issue of cancellation of CVC's appointment by the hon. Supreme Court. We demand a response from the Government. When is the response coming? When is the Prime Minister coming here to give a response to this? It is a very important issue. It is very shocking.

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair)

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD (Bihar): I think, hon. Minister had said it on the floor of the House that he will respond to us.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): I had said yesterday in response to the observations of the Leader of the Opposition that the sentiments of the hon. Members of the Opposition will be conveyed to the leadership of the Government. I have done so. I believe that next week, if necessary, a suitable statement on behalf of the Government...