

3 P.M.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: It will not be regarded as an Indian ship.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Kunzru we have to take up some other business. We will continue this on Thursday. Tomorrow we are discussing Planning.

DR. R. B. GOURI: The ships can wait for some time. They have run aground.

SHRI JASPAT ROY KAPOOR: I find from the agenda papers circulated for tomorrow that we will have some time.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This will be taken up on Thursday. Tomorrow we are discussing Planning.

SHRI JASPAT ROY KAPOOR: But only for three hours, I suppose.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will get the revised agenda paper.

MOTION RE GANGA BARRAGE PROJECT

DR. A. N. BOSE (West Bengal): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the statement on the Ganga Barrage Project, laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd September, 1958, be taken into consideration."

The statement gives a picture of the problem of the Ganga but it does not go far enough to elucidate all the points involved. It is rather too brief. So, for the enlightenment of the House. I shall go into some problems of the river Ganga. This river, Sir, is the life-line of Northern India. The Ganga river with its branches and tributaries starts from East Punjab.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for this discussion is two

hours. I have got four names with me and so Members will please adjust the time and be short as far as possible.

DR. A. N. BOSE: This river which starts from East Punjab flows right up to West Bengal. In Bengal it bifurcates into two branches, one branch flowing into the East as river Padma and one branch going down through Bengal as Bhagirathi-Hooghly to descend into the Bay. This Bhagirathi-Hooghly channel is fast deteriorating owing to heavy deposits of silt. The drainage capacity of the channel has been seriously affected because of this silting causing congestion and flood. This phenomenon has led to several very serious consequences. I shall deal with them one by one. In the first place, the upward progress of the tidal flow from the sea has ceased causing high bores in the lower reaches of the river. Sand bars have been formed at frequent intervals as a result of which navigation from the sea to the port of Calcutta has been seriously impeded and Calcutta is fast losing her shipping. In the second place, as soon as the monsoon ends every year, the supply of fresh sweet water along the channel goes down alarmingly. Saline water rushes into the channel from the sea. Now, Calcutta is entirely dependent on the river Hooghly for drinking water. The water of the Hooghly is also used for industrial purposes. It is serving factories which have grown up in the riparian regions along the banks of the river stretching up to 70 miles and these mills have been heavily damaged because of the salinity of water. Equally, if not more, has been the casualty in the locomotive engines. The boilers of these engines using salt water have been grievously and irreparably damaged. The result has been irregularity in the running of the trains and further frequent civil commotions. The third result is the chronic visitation of floods. Floods have been caused because of the silting up of the channel. The frequent flood devastations have inflicted heavy injuries on the six prosperous rice grow-

ing districts of Bengal, namely, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Burdwan, Nadia, Hooghly and Twenty-four Parganas. Year before last this flood assumed disastrous proportions so that the food situation which is always acute was badly aggravated. The fourth result of this silting up of this channel is the loss of river communication from Calcutta to the hinterlands of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Sir, the problem is very simple. It is the problem of larger and continuous discharge of spill water into the Bhagirathi from the Ganga. The problem is to maintain a steady and controlled flow of the water along the Bhagirathi-Hooghly. The Port Commissioners of Calcutta have been carrying on intensive dredging operations to keep the channel free for navigation. It has been a highly expensive operation which cannot be continued for long, and, moreover, may temporarily solve the problem of the Calcutta Port but does not solve the problem of navigation along the Bhagirathi-Hooghly and along the Ganga and it does not solve the problem of salinity. Sir, all these eventualities were anticipated more than hundred years ago and in 1853, as briefly referred to in this Statement, Sir Arthur Cotton, a British engineer, anticipated this difficulty. In 1928, the matter was seriously taken up by another British engineer, Sir William Wilcocks. Since then, investigation has been going on for thirty years. Technical examinations have been made by the engineers of the Calcutta Port, by the river experts of the Government of India and finally by the Central Water and Power Commission which took up the matter in 1949. The Central Water and Power Commission after years of labour prepared and submitted a Project Report. Apparently the Ministry was not satisfied with the Report and called in the famous German river and harbour expert, Dr. Hensen, and referred the Report to him. The German expert apparently has confirmed all the previous forebodings and has recommended in unequivocal terms the construction of a barrage across the Ganga as the only remedy to the

situation. This barrage, Sir, will ensure adequate discharge of water for ten months in the year. At present the water supply along the channel is kept only for the peak monsoon weeks, only for about six weeks. The barrage will ensure ten months adequate discharge of water. The load of silt and sand will be drifted into the sea. Sand bars which impede navigation will be cleared. The rising tidal bores will be reduced. Navigability along the river will improve not only up to the port of Calcutta but beyond Calcutta up to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh through a feeder canal, which could be cut near the barrage. The drainage system will start working again. The sand and silt will be pushed into the sea, and floods will cease. It is in view of these facts that the border between West Bengal and East Pakistan was demarcated by the Radcliffe Award. Murshidabad, which is a Muslim-majority area and which is the only place where a barrage could be constructed, was given to West Bengal, and in return West Bengal had to sacrifice Khulna, which had a non-Muslim majority.

Now, Sir, the question is what stands in the way of the project being undertaken immediately. From the note it appears that a decision is not yet taken. "The House will appreciate that a decision on an undertaking, which is estimated to cost over Rs. 56 crores, has to be preceded by collection of the necessary data and comprehensive examination of the technical, financial and other aspects of the project." Have not all these aspects of the project technical, financial and other, been comprehensively examined by a succession of commissions and experts during the last thirty years? Sir, I wonder what more data still remain to be collected and what more examination still remains to be done, in view of the extreme urgency of the situation.

About two months ago Shri S. K. Patil, the then Minister in-charge of Irrigation and Power, when he visited West Bengal and attended the Con-

[Dr. A. N. Bose.] gress Session, assured us that the j Cabinet had accepted the Hensen Report and further declared that any more delay would be dangerous and would amount to playing with the lives of millions of people. Then the reply given by the present Minister to a question of mine on the 21st August came as a rude shock. He said that the Ganga Barrage Project had not yet been adopted because it had not been fully investigated. His replies to the supplementaries were still more astounding. He said that, there was only one copy of the Report, either handwritten or typed, that there was no spare copy to be sent to the Irrigation Minister of West Bengal, who is so vitally interested in this matter. And are we to suppose that there was no spare copy even to be sent to the Planning Commission?

DR. R. B. GOUR (Andhra Pradesh): Only one copy.

DR. A. N. BOSE: And if it is the only copy and if it is lost or stolen or damaged would not the amount of about a lakh of rupees or more spent over this business have gone in vain? Sir, the whole thing appears to be fishy, and I cannot reconcile myself to the belief that any administration could be so irresponsible as to keep only one copy of such a valuable document.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): It is bogus.

DR. A. N. BOSE: I refuse to believe that. Apparently the hon. Minister was hiding some information from the House. Now what is this? Is it the objection of Pakistan? The hon. Mr. Patil had referred to the possible objection of Pakistan in his Calcutta speech. Obviously Pakistan can claim an equitable share of the water of the Ganga. But Pakistan cannot interfere with the equitable distribution of India's share among her own territories. Moreover a barrage at Farakka does not at all impair the supply of water to Pakistan, because the main

stream of the river Ganga flows along the Padma, and as the Padma is in chronic floods this barrage across the Ganga in Murshidabad will rather reduce the floods in the Padma. Recently this diminution of Ganga water has been badly aggravated by excessive withdrawal of its water along the upper reaches of the river. A number of projects have been undertaken without calculation of the consequences on the total flow. The whole of the Ganga valley is now facing a crisis. Sir, it is in anticipation of this crisis that Pakistan is getting alarmed. A bird whispers that Pakistan has sent a strong letter by about the 26th of May to our Minister. I want the hon. Minister to place the cards on the Table and say whether there was a note from Pakistan . . .

DR. R. B. GOUR: He will put the joker.

DR. A. N. BOSE: . . . and, if so, what are the contents of the note? What are the points on which Pakistan has raised objection? Is it to Farakka barrage, or is it to the other river valley projects which have been undertaken in the upper reaches of the valley and which have threatened a grave diminution in the flow of the water along the entire river? Sir, a way has to be found out, and I suggest as the best way out of this impasse the immediate constitution of a Ganga River Board according to the River Boards Act passed in 1956, section 2 of which empowers the Central Government, where it is in the public interest, to take under its control the regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valleys, and it is specifically stated in section 4: "The Central Government may, on a request received in this behalf from a State Government or otherwise, by notification in the Official Gazette, establish a River Board for advising the Government interested in relation to such matters concerning the regulation or development of an inter-State river or river valley or any specified part thereof and for performing such other functions as may be specified in the

notification, and different Boards may be established for different inter-State rivers or river valleys." Now the powers and functions of the Boards are also defined and I need not go into them. Sir, the West Bengal Government has been asking for the constitution of this River Board. Let it be set up immediately to coordinate and integrate the various river valley schemes along the Ganga involving withdrawal of water. In this note it is stated that the cost of Rs. 56 crores at the early stages appears to be somewhat prohibitive. Sir, how many times these Rs. 56 crores are being earned by Calcutta every year? Is not Calcutta Port the biggest of the foreign exchange earners among all the ports of India? Is not Calcutta serving about 14 crores of people? Sir, -this Bhagirathi-Hooghly is the lifeline of Bengal. Although this barrage has been claimed with one voice by the people of Bengal including Government and the Opposition, including the Congress, P.S.P. and the Communists, including experts and laymen, I am not here pleading a case for Bengal; I am pleading a case for India; Ganga is the life-line of northern India. It is the suckling mother of Aryavarta. the cradle of Aryan civilisation. Save this mother Ganga and save Calcutta. If you save Calcutta you will thereby save India. Delay in this, I submit, will be dangerous and this is the view, not of mine but of the experts—I am quoting only the experts—all experts with one voice have said that delay will be dangerous and while the examination goes on, the patient will die. We are racing against time. So I end with an appeal to the hon. Minister for the immediate constitution of the Ganga River Board which may examine the different interests and priorities involved and set up a constructive plan for the integration of the river valley schemes which involve withdrawal of water from the Ganges. Let this Board be constituted immediately and let it start working without the least possible delay.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Motion !
moved:

"That the Statement on the Ganga Barrage Project, laid on* the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd September, 1958, be taken into consideration."

There are eight speakers and we have got one hour and 20 minutes. So ten minutes each.

SHRI ANSARUDDIN AHMAD (West Bengal): Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me permission to speak on this subject which is of such vital importance to Calcutta and to West Bengal. The previous speaker has spoken profusely as to how this Farakka barrage has been a matter of life and death importance to the port of Calcutta and unless the water flows through the Ganga to the Bhagirathi and thence to the Hooghly, the great port of Calcutta cannot be saved. If Calcutta dies who lives in Bengal? Calcutta and Bengal have been bracketed together synonymously as same and there is a lot of truth in it. If you separate Calcutta from West Bengal, there remains nothing to West Bengal except the vast agricultural fields where millions of people toil and work day and night and yet cannot scrape enough food for themselves. This port of Calcutta is not only of importance to West Bengal but also to the whole of India. It has been said more than once by my predecessor that Calcutta is the biggest trading centre in the whole of India; its engineering, its textile and other industries are immense and jute and tea which are mainly exported through Calcutta port are two of the greatest foreign exchange earners of the whole of India. There is no doubt that if this vast and immense trade and industries suffer through deterioration of Calcutta, the whole economy of India will be dislocated. Sir, I do not want to dilate any further on the importance of this Farakka barrage as the previous speaker did enough of it.

In this connection I would refer to the question of the bridge at the barrage over the Ganga. Since the partition of Bengal, North Bengal has been, I won't say completely, severed, but the close connection which existed

[Shri Ansaruddin Ahmad.] before with Calcutta and the Metropolis of Bengal is much less now than before with the result that the economy of this part of Bengal has very greatly deteriorated. Before this partition one could go from the farthest northern point of Bengal to Calcutta in the course of ten hours but now it has increased to 36 hours and you have to make a long journey through Siliguri, Katihar and Manihari Ghat to come to Calcutta. For this you have to cross the border of West Bengal and traverse the whole of North Bihar. The journey is not only long but is so very troublesome that it is* often termed as a nightmare and whoever has performed that journey will never forget the troubles he had undergone. Sir, I come from Cooch-Bihar which was previously a Princely State and was always a surplus area. In the great famine of West Bengal Cooch-Bihar did not suffer so much, and so far as the record goes, not a single person died there while millions died in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal. But after the Partition, there has been a great change and with the influx of refugees the population has increased and it is now two to three lakhs more than what it was before with the result that this part is now always a deficit area and for the supply of food we have to look to other parts of Bengal and other parts of India and with all the difficulties of communication and other things we cannot get food in time. The result has been that in Cooch-Bihar, Jalpaiguri and other parts there have been greater rise in the price of paddy and rice than elsewhere. Now, in" Cooch-Bihar . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are concerned with Ganga barrage now.

SHRI ANSARUDDIN AHMAD: In this connection I am taking up the question of this bridge which is of no less importance.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may take some other occasion.

DR. A. N. BOSE: The bridge is not a separate thing, Sir. It is a part of the oarrage project.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The difficulty is that none of us is an engineer.

SHRI ANSARUDDIN AHMAD: The Chief Minister of West Bengal has repeatedly said that it is extremely difficult to administer North Bengal from Calcutta and unless we have this Bridge which will bring Calcutta closer to the northern parts of Bengal, the administration of these parts will suffer. So under the circumstances I think it is for the Government to see to it that when they take up the Farakka Barrage question they also take into consideration the question of the bridge at the same time which is of no less importance.

Sir, it has been said that the money required for this project is so heavy that perhaps it will be difficult to find. that much money but if you look to the untold miseries through which we are passing and the immense benefits that will accrue to Calcutta and to West Bengal and indirectly to the whole of India, I think the question of finding money should not stand in the way of the construction of the project and the money should be found. It has been held also that Pakistan will stand in the way of the project or parts of the project. I am told that even after supplying the maximum water for the needs of Pakistan, there will be-enough water to let to the port of Calcutta. So. this question also may not be so difficult as it is presumed. I might say that I shall be failing in my duty if I do not inform the House that there is a sort of resentment, a sort of bitterness in the whole of Bengal that this question which has so long before the Government of India has not been finalised. So, Bengal feels not only neglected, but also slighted I would, therefore, make an appeal to the Government that the finalisation of this project should be-done very soon and the sooner it is done, the better for all.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I rise in support of this motion and I fully associate myself with the demand that Prof. Bose has made in this House. I do not know as to why the Central Government is playing a hide and seek game for a number of years over this important demand. As far as the Farakka barrage is concerned, this is a national demand, a demand which has been unitedly put forward by the Congress and other parties, not only outside, but also in the shape of a unanimous resolution on the floor of the West Bengal State Assembly. There is no divergence over this demand and everybody in West Bengal feels extremely cut up that the Government should have treated this urgent national demand of the entire people of West Bengal with such inexplicable callousness. The Government, I hope, would give us a little explanation as to why so much of delay in this matter and so much of indecision is there. It is pointless to tell us about certain political complications that might arise with Pakistan. I do not deny that some people across the border might take exception to the construction of the barrage, but at the same time this is something within our national rights to do so and it is possible also through mutual consultation to iron out any differences and complications that might exist in the relationship over this matter between India and Pakistan. We do not know of any such consultations being held. If they had been held that had been done secretly. The public had not been taken into confidence. What I demand is a clear declaration by the Government that within a definite period of time, and that time should also be specified here, the construction of this barrage will be undertaken. We would not like to be fobbed off with some kind of Vague and hazy phrases. That kind of stand over this matter will never satisfy the West Bengal people. I should like to make it very clear to this House that we put forward this demand in no partisan or parochial or

provincial spirit, because it has been pointed out by eminent writers on the

subject, engineers as well as others, that what is threatened is the future of West Bengal, particularly that of Calcutta. Now, here from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, I will read out just a little bit.

"The Bhagirathi is a dying river and its lower reach, the Hoogly is fast silting. Salinity in our tap water today is a foreboding symptom of what is to come if necessary steps are not taken. In two decades Calcutta is likely to become unsuitable for oceanic shipping; within half a century its importance will diminish and marshy lands, malaria and drainage difficulties will conspire to make civilised life impossible in the immediate surroundings of Calcutta."

It is a special article by one Tapan Ganguli, in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* dated 20th June, 1958. That stresses the significance and the implications of the demand that the people of West Bengal are making. Money should not be grudged. It is possible for Government to find money for the construction of this barrage. Economically it would be beneficial. It would help our agriculture, movement of our goods and also it will prevent the natural decay that has set in in West Bengal as a whole, especially in Central Bengal and Calcutta area. Here, again from the same article I would like to quote:

"In recent years the Damodar along with Mayurakshi has been dammed and much of the water which previously "flushed" saline water and sand from the Ganges mouth is being heavily drawn for irrigation and power generation."

Now, the flushing possibilities are also gone. This is the position. The entire West Bengal is threatened. Along with it is threatened the future of its economy and I think a heavy price will have to be paid if timely actions were not taken in this matter. We are in the twelfth year of independence and nothing has been done.

I do not believe that the Government has got only one copy of the report. I believe they have got more-

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.] copies of the report. Nobody types one copy. Am I to understand that when the report was submitted, only one single copy of it was typed on the typewriter? Am I not to understand that some more copies were taken at least in one round of typing? These cock and bull stories should not be uttered on the floor of the House that they have got one copy of the report and that they do not know whether it is in handwriting or in typewriting. Am I to understand that the Government has become so much inefficient and all that that they do not even know that much? Am I to understand that the Minister has not even had a look at the report to find out whether it is typescript or manuscript? Such fantastic stories have been uttered over this matter in order to cover certain inactivity, supine inaction on the part of the Central Government *vis-a-vis* the very legitimate and reasonable demand of the entire people of Bengal. I accuse the Central Government of utter callousness, of total indifference to a national demand, of complete disregard of the danger that looms ahead. They are menacing West Bengal's economy in that way. Now, I would ask them what is coming in the way? Expert after expert has gone into the matter, has given the report which only justifies and strengthens the case of West Bengal. Everything has been thrown to the scrapheap or has been tied in brown paper with nobody to look at. Why is it so? Obviously it seems that the Congress party in West Bengal does not command that measure of power which other organisations in other States command in order to get the Central Government act according to their wishes. But that is a domestic matter of the Congress party. I do not go into the matter. It is for Mr. P D. Himatsingka and others to look after that. We are concerned with the people of Bengal, as I said, where there is no difference. I hope their voice will be raised equally here and there will not be any discordant note. Government should give satisfaction.

West Bengal is the centre of your commerce, trade and industry. It is in the West Bengal ports that more than half the customs revenue is collected and also other revenues of the Government, a large part, a big percentage of the total, and there you are completely callous. I think this is extremely unfair on the part of the Government and I do not know exactly as to why it is so. There must be some people in the Central Government. I charge that there must be some people in the Central Government who are opposed to the construction of this Farakka barrage for reasons of their own. Who are these people, we should like to know. What are the arguments? Convince us as to why the delay is there. You cannot deny it in principle. No one has the courage and the guts to stand up either on the floor of this House or on the floor of the other House and say that the Farakka barrage demand is something which should be rejected out of hand. They have accepted it in principle, but then there is dithering, and delaying tactics are adopted. Why? What comes in the way? Why this sabotage in this indirect manner, sabotage within the Government circles, within the ministerial circles, within the administration, I would like to know. Government should give proper explanation today, since you have been good enough to allow a debate of this kind taking place in the House. We want here the clearest possible declaration from the Government, clarification as to why there has been delay and the people of Bengal should be told as to when they are going to have the Farakka barrage. They are not going to put up with it. Sir, I hope the members of the Government should know by now that if you go on rejecting a reasonable demand of the people of Bengal for a long time, well, they would know how to get it, and then you will force them into certain activities and actions which may have very serious repercussions later. I submit to the hon. House here and to friends from other States—because this is a partisan clique—that on

merits of economy and having regard to considerations of not only Bengal but of the entire India, this demand is something which has got to be met immediately, and the Government should be prevailed upon by all of us in the House regardless of party affiliations to undertake the construction of this barrage and to set up the Board which has been proposed by my friend Dr. Bose.

SHRI A. N. KHOSLA (Nominated): Sir, the statement put on the Table of the House is an objective picture of the situation regarding the Ganga Barrage. There is unanimity that the Ganga Barrage is necessary for the life of the Calcutta Port, for the Calcutta City, for West Bengal, and for the whole of India for that matter.

One thing which has not been stated here is that this Farakka Barrage will also make it possible to have a navigation canal connecting the Ganges with the Brahmaputra through the Teesta. That is a development which will come later on, but if and when that development does come, it will mean a saving of 400 to 500 miles in the navigation routes between India and Assam, and most of the shipping can go on through India instead of going through Pakistan.

Now a suggestion has been made that the upper developments on the Ganga have influenced the flow of the Ganga. I have been dealing with this thing for many years and I am afraid I do not agree with that statement. The developments on the upper reaches of the Ganga have been relatively very few indeed and their effect on the discharge of the Ganga lower down might be considered to be negligible. But there is a tremendous potential for the development of the upper reaches of the Ganga, and if that development is done in a co-ordinated manner, then not only there will be no loss of water to the Ganga lower down but just at the time when we want this water, more water can be released by the works constructed

higher up. So far as I know the waters of the Ganga are more than enough for the needs of the upper regions as well as of the lower regions, and I visualise that given goodwill and understanding, there should be no practical difficulty between India and Pakistan if they approach the problem in the right way.

A suggestion has been made that the constitution of the Ganga River Board might solve the problem immediately. Well, there again I beg to differ. The Board might be constituted by all means, they can do their work, but as we know about all these Boards their decision is not too quick. Matters become dilatory. But, whether the Board is set up or not, the main thing is that the investigations must proceed as fast as possible. After the investigations are made the Government can take a decision then. But no decision can be taken until the full technical and financial picture is presented to the Government. I do not know if the full technical and financial picture is before the Government yet or it is going to take some more time. So, my appeal to the Government is that these investigations should proceed as fast as is humanly possible, because it is agreed on all hands that this Barrage is going to be the lifeline not only of the City of Calcutta, the Calcutta Port and West Bengal but of the whole of India, and if these investigations are carried out vigorously and also co-ordinated plans are made for development higher up in the river, then I think at a relatively early period it should be possible for the Government to come to a decision. I personally feel that that decision will be that the Ganga Barrage shall be constructed with all the necessary works that are required not only for feeding the Calcutta Port, for removing the salinity and giving good drinking water, but also for connecting the Ganga with the Brahmaputra, so that our navigation can mostly take place through India instead of having to pass through Pakistan.

Dr. NIHAR RAN J AN RAY (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am not a scientist of any reputation at all. Nothing to speak of Prof. Khosla's, but I had been a humble student of the history of Indian rivers, and I know a little bit of the pattern of behaviour of the Indian rivers through the centuries. But I need not go into that question at all so far as the subject under discussion is concerned. I want this House to feel that we are discussing the situation under a deepening crisis. Early in the 1930's at the Bose Research Institute at Calcutta, the late Prof. Meghnad Saha, who was perhaps one of the initiators of the contemporary Indian river valley projects, speaking on this very problem said epigrammatically and also perhaps a little figuratively that, unless certain things were done, in another fifty years Calcutta would be drowned in its own sewage and choked by its own saline water. I was then a research student, not long out of the University. I do not remember anything else of the technicalities that he mentioned, but I do remember these phrases: That Calcutta fifty years hence would be drowned in its own sewage and choked by its own saline water. That has been happening now before our eyes. We are periodically drowned in our own sewage in Calcutta during the rains, and the first choking by saline water came only last summer.

The Government has accepted the fact that the Farakka Barrage issue is an urgent one. They also know that the Farakka Barrage contains many other things along with it. I have had the privilege of studying the scheme through very many sheets of paper. It includes many other things. The navigational canal, which just now Prof. Khosla mentioned, is also a part of the system. It seems that the problem has been presented as one mainly of West Bengal. The way we have been talking is an indication. We forget that twenty million tons of merchandise flow from Calcutta to the sea-mouth every year. We forget that we earn several times fifty-six

crores every year through the Port of Calcutta. We forget that 80 per cent, of the merchandise from U.P., from Bihar, from Assam, pass through the Port of Calcutta. We forget that, five important districts of West Bengal depend not only in respect of its flood hazards on the one hand destructively speaking, but constructively speaking, the fertility of the soil of these five-major districts depends on the scheme. Now, since it is accepted that the project should be carried through as early as possible, I really do not understand the difficulty. Why it is not being taken up immediately? Prof. Khosla said that the complete technical picture may not yet be before the Government. I do not know—if it is not there—why it has not been there for so many years. From 1853 to the year of Grace 1958, the 23rd September, when we are speaking here, is a long, long cry. More than 100 years have elapsed. Even in eleven years after independence what have we been able to do? I am not speaking of Mr. Webster's recommendations. I am neither speaking of the reports of 1949. When the Central Water and Power Commission went into the question, they prepared a report in 1951, but it was not submitted before 1952. Even if it was in 1952, was there not time to include it in the First Five Year Plan? Was there not time enough to include it in the Second Five Year Plan? Now, when we are almost in the third year of the Second Five Year Plan, if the technical picture is not before the Government, I do not know what we have been doing all these days. Prof. Hansen even in his very first recommendation says clearly that the deterioration of the sea-route from Calcutta is progressive and will ultimately lead to complete loss of traffic in the course of another few decades. This is the first finding of that German expert. This is no new finding. This finding was made long, long ago, at least forty years ago. I have a copy of all the recommendations that have been made by the German expert—at least a summary of those recommendations. (*Interruptions*) I have some-

how, obtained a summary of the recommendations.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You can take it away.

DR. NIHAR RAN J AN RAY: It is not a copy of it, but it is just a summary of the recommendations. But none of these recommendations is new. There is not one single recommendation that was not mentioned by experts before. But even then, if we just sit down and think that a scheme which is going to cost us fifty-six crores has to be preceded by the collection of the necessary data and comprehensive examination of the technical, financial and other aspects of the project, then we have only to blame our destiny. I do not know what else to say. Here is a problem that does not await any further time. It is a crying problem. And as my friend, Prof. Bose, said, time is running out fast. The sort of incidents that we have been witnessing—this question of salinity in the railway engines or this and that—are not problem? that have arisen only in our country. The fact that the salinity of water affects railway engines has been known in the United States, in Canada and in very many other river valleys and they solve the problem. I know it did happen in Philadelphia, it did happen in San Francisco. I can give you half a dozen European examples and how these problems were solved. In Philadelphia, it was solved in eight months' time. In San Francisco, it took only one year and six months. Maybe, we have waited from 1945-46, even from 1946-47 after partition, when it was transferred to the Central Water and Power Commission. Since then, we have been through seven or eight long years. What have we been doing all these years? Are we not convinced of the urgency of the problem—a problem that affects not merely five crores of people, but which affects much more not only in terms of population, but in terms of

India's economy? Do we know that we hand over to Pakistan every year several crores of rupees just in railway freight to carry our goods through the Pakistan Railways? This could be avoided if we had the navigational canal which Prof. Khosla spoke of and also the Farakka Barrage Scheme. We could save the Railway much of the heaviness of transport that it carries if we can send our goods and if the Ganga was made navigational through the Bhagirathi right from the ports of U.P. to the mouth of Calcutta much of our goods could travel by the navigational channel, and our railways could carry every traffic. It affects India's economy and there could be a saving of several crores—I mean more than fifty-six crores—if we could have this project. In fact, the Farakka system, as I call it, includes very many things, bridges, cross-canals, for purposes that are not only navigational but also for irrigation and flushing purposes. Thank you.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the hon. Member kindly share his knowledge of the Report with us? That one copy must be in circulation.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, the hon. Member, Shri A. N. Bose, has brought up a very important subject for discussion. If I may say so, the matter was considered by the Bengal Boundary Commission. The Commission had to consider to which State Calcutta should be assigned and whether the waters of the Nadia river system should be assigned to Calcutta or not. There was a difference between the members of the Boundary Commission on communal lines.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI P. N. SAPRU) in the Chair]

Sir Cyril Radcliffe had, therefore, come to a conclusion himself and he decided that Calcutta should be a part of Western Bengal and that the Nadia river system should be assigned to Calcutta mainly because that

[Shri H. N. Kunzru.] would ensure an adequate flow of water to the Hooghly through the Bhagirathi field channel.

4 P.M.

At the time when this question was considered by the Boundary Commission, it was known that the question of having a barrage at Farakka was under consideration. At any rate it had been talked about for some time. It is clear therefore, when Sir Cyril Radcliffe gave his decision that he knew that if the Nadia river system was assigned to Calcutta, a barrage might be built across the Ganges and that it might be located at Farakka. It appears to me therefore that there ought to be no dispute between Pakistan and India on that point. That question was indirectly, if not directly, considered by the Bengal Boundary Commission and decided in favour of India.

DR. NIHAR RAN J AN RAY: I wanted to know if we are still bound by the Barcelona agreement?

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: It is for the Government to reply to it but I don't see how the construction of a barrage at Farakka could now be prevented on political considerations. We have, notwithstanding the Barcelona agreement, undertaken the Bhakra-Nangal Project and although that has led to political complications, the project will be completed in two or three years. I can understand the difficulty of the Government in taking up too many projects at the same time. It has already taken up the Bhakra-Nangal and Hirakud Projects and notwithstanding the importance of having a barrage at Farakka which is of importance not merely to Bengal but to the whole of India, it was perhaps wise for the Government to concentrate its attention on the Bhakra-Nangal and Hirakud Projects but now as the first phase of the Hirakud Project is over and the Bhakra-Nangal project too will be completed in two or three years, there is no reason why immediate attention should not be paid to the necessity

of taking up the construction of a barrage across the Ganges either at Farakka or at some other point which might be considered more suitable by the engineers. What Dr. Khosla has said has made it clear that the construction of a barrage at Farakka or a bridge across the Ganges will not affect the supply of water to Pakistan. There is enough water, he said, in the Ganges to suffice for the needs of both the States. In these circumstances, it seems to me in view of the considerations pointed out by Dr. Bose and by Dr. Ray, that the Government should come to a speedy decision regarding the construction of a barrage at Farakka. One incidental advantage of having a barrage would be that it would be possible to construct a bridge there which would do away with the necessity of leaving the train at Sakrigali Ghat in Sahib-ganj and crossing over by steamer to Manihari Ghat in Purnea district. It would be of great advantage to Railway communications also if a barrage were soon built at Farakka and I have no doubt that the transport of goods, as has been pointed out, would be greatly facilitated thereby.

I shall not go into the considerations affecting the quality of water in the Hooghly and the health of Calcutta and surrounding areas which had been referred to by Prof. Bose. But I can say that the port of Calcutta is in such an unsatisfactory condition that Government have to spend fairly large sums on the upkeep and maintenance of a channel fit for seagoing ships. It is surprising that although the need for doing something to improve the Bhagirathi channel where it takes off from the Ganges has been under consideration for many years, nothing positive has been done by the Government with regard to it so far. Schemes have been under consideration but so little progress has been made that the Government cannot say even now what measures it will be possible to take in the immediate future to improve the present state of things. The Bhagirathi channel is

the most important of the three channels that I have referred to and I think therefore that we ought to devote as much attention to it as possible. Bengal—I must say to its credit—has been as patient as it could be over this question and by its patience it has served the whole of India. I think the time has now come when we should give precedence to the needs of Bengal in regard to this matter, and do whatever we can to expedite the preparation of projects to improve the supply of water to the port of Calcutta and to improve sanitary conditions in Calcutta and the surrounding areas and also improve the Railway communications between part of Bengal and the rest of India with the other part of Bengal. I hope that these considerations will be borne in mind when Government reply to the debate. I shall only say in the end that in view of the very important reasons on which the assignment of the Nandia river system to Calcutta was asked for by the Congress, it is not merely surprising but astonishing that no adequate steps have been taken so far to have a final scheme in regard to the barrage. I don't complain of the barrage not having built so far or not having been undertaken. My complaint is that even a scheme for the construction of the barrage is not yet ready and we must be told now not merely what steps Government propose to take to construct a barrage but also the reasons for the non-preparation of an adequate scheme hitherto.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI P. N. SAPRU) : Mr. Himatsingka. Hereafter 10 minutes only.

SHRI P. D. HIMATSINGKA (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I rise to support the Resolution moved by Dr. Bose. As a matter of fact most of the points that had to be mentioned have been mentioned by the different speakers. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this scheme. It is absolutely necessary for the life

of West Bengal, for the life of the port of Calcutta and for various other improvements which will follow if the scheme is put through. You know at present goods from Bihar cannot be brought to Calcutta by river and if it is brought by river it has to pass through Pakistan and a very much longer route has to be taken. But if this scheme is put through, the distance to these towns of Bihar, towns situated on the Ganga, will be very much shortened and commodities can move to and from Calcutta at a very much cheaper cost than at present. And we will also be relieved of our dependence of having to pass through Pakistan. Various points have been mentioned to show that there is no difficulty except that the Government has to come to a decision after considering the technical and other aspects of the question. And it is high time that Government does apply its mind to this important question which will save the very important port of Calcutta.

We have been told by various experts that ships which are loaded at the port of Calcutta cannot be loaded with the quantity of goods that the ship could otherwise carry if the river had not been silted up. The displacement of water affects the loading capacity of the ships and therefore, a ship that is loaded with cargo in the Calcutta port has to carry much less goods than it might otherwise have carried had the port not been silted up. Therefore, we are losing a large quantity of space so far as the ships are concerned and the cost also is increased.

One of the important points that should be taken into consideration—and it has also been mentioned by previous speakers—is the cost that may have to be incurred, or rather that will have to be incurred in putting through this scheme. Dr. Khosla has also mentioned that this scheme will enable the idea that has been put forward, of having a connection between the Brahmaputra and

[Shri P. D. Himatsingka.] the Ganga through the Teesta river so that navigation may be possible in all the Eastern States of the Indian Union, without any difficulty. Of course, that will be a stage that will come up later on. But this scheme will enable them to put it through.

As regards the possible objection, I remember to have read that even in East Pakistan there was a resolution that the Government of India should be approached for putting up a sort of a barrage like this because that will save them from constant floods which they have to suffer from on account of excessive water flowing through the Ganga to the Padma, overflowing the districts of East Bengal. Therefore, I do not think, apart from the question whether they have a right to object to it or not, as was mentioned by Dr. J. Kunzru, on this matter, before the Boundary Commission presided over by Lord Radcliffe, apart from that political consideration whether they can object or not, I do not think that it will be in their interest to object to such a barrage being put up, because that will also help them indirectly and directly also. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister in charge to take up this question very urgently and save Calcutta from the annual loss and expenditure of very heavy sums spent in keeping the river navigable and in keeping the flow going. As has been mentioned here, only for about six weeks does the water of the Ganga pass through the Bhagirathi and the Hooghly and for the rest of the year, that is to say, for about ten months of the year roughly, the Hooghly becomes a dead river so far as the Ganga is concerned, and it has to depend on the ebb and flow of the sea, and as a result, the water becomes saline and that affects various industries located there and also the Railways and other undertakings which have to draw water for their necessities from the river. Therefore, I support this Resolution and I am glad that we had this opportunity of

bring it to the notice of the Government that it is high time that they took up this scheme and put it through.

श्री अब्दुर रज्जाक खान (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : मिस्टर वाइस चैयरमन, मैं सबसे पहले आनरेबल प्रोफेसर बोस को धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि उन्होंने एक बड़े अहम मामले की तरफ हमारे हाउस की तबज्जह दिलाई है और हमें उस पर बहस करने का मौका दिया है। इस सिलसिले में जो बातें कही गई हैं मैं सबसे इत्तिफाक करता हूँ।

सबसे पहली बात यह है कि जो पेपर यहां टेबल पर रखा गया है इस बारे में, उसको देखकर हमको काफी बेइत्मीनानी हो रही है। इस मामले पर आज से आठ, दस साल पहले से बंगाल के लोग सोच रहे हैं। मसला हम सब के सामने है, हमारी सरकार को भी मालूम है मगर यहां अभी इसी साल हाल ही में लोगों को इसके बारे में पता चला जब हमारे मुल्क बंगाल में कॉन्फ्रेंस हो रही थी और पंडित जी तक्ररि कर चुके थे। तब से "दिल्ली दूर है" वाला किस्सा है, कहां मामला पड़ा हुआ है मालूम नहीं, कहां फाइल है, कहां कागज है, किसी को खबर तक नहीं। वाकई मैं मैं पं० कुंजरू का शुक्रिया अदा करता हूँ कि उन्होंने इस ओर पूरे मुल्क की तबज्जह दिलाई है। बंगाल ने बहुत खामोशी से काम लिया है इसमें कोई शक नहीं है। यह मसला बंगाल के लिये जितनी अहमियत रखता है मैं समझता हूँ उसके लिये इससे बढ़कर कोई दूसरा मसला इस वक्त नहीं है। बंगाल का मरकज कलकत्ता है और कलकत्ते के मरकज की इकॉनॉमी पर तमाम बंगाल की इकॉनॉमी मुनस्सर है। तमाम सन्तें उसको चाहे तिजारत कहिये, जिरात कहिये, अग्रिकल्चर वगैरा कहिये और तमाम रेलवे और ट्रांसपोर्ट वगैरा का काम एक ही जगह से होता है। ये सब कनेक्टेड हैं एक ही हुगली रिवर के साथ और भागीरथी के साथ। वह भागीरथी आज खुदक हो चली है, उसका डॉक खत्म हो रहा है। जहाज उसमें

होकर आ जा नहीं सकते। आठ, दस, पन्द्रह दिन तक जहाजों को समुद्र से यहां तक लाने में लग जाते हैं। इस वजह से हर माल पर लागत ज्यादा पड़ रही है। लोग घबड़ा रहे हैं क्योंकि अब जहाज बंधा आ नहीं सकते। ड्रेजिंग में हर साल करीब दो करोड़ रुपया खर्च हो रहा है। इस पर भी मसला हल नहीं होता। कोई फ्यूचर नहीं है डॉक का, पोर्ट का, नदी का। आप खेती की बात करते हैं कि पैदावार बढ़ाइये, ये नहीं, वह नहीं, तमाम मसला खत्म हो रहा है गल्ले की पैदावार न बढ़ने की वजह से। लेकिन जब तक आप इस प्रोजेक्ट को हाथ में नहीं लेते तब तक कैनालों का प्रॉब्लम हल नहीं होता। इस बैराज को पूरा करने के साथ साथ तमाम इंदारे अपने आप पूरे हो जायेंगे और खेती बाड़ी और खुराक की पैदाइश बढ़ जायेगी। मेरे पास वक्त नहीं बरना तफ़्सील के साथ मैं इसको साबित कर देने के लिये तैयार हूँ।

मुझे मालूम है कि गंगा के पानी से महरूम किया जा रहा है। हालांकि आप जानते हैं कि गंगा के पानी में मैन्युअर बहुत ज्यादा है, वह जहां जायेगी उस जगह को सर सब्ज करके रहेगी और वहां दूसरी मैन्युअर की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी। बंगाल में चूंकि गंगा का पानी जाया करता है इसलिये बंगाल में आर्टिफिशियल मैन्युअर की जरूरत नहीं है। आप उस पानी से भी वहां के लोगों को महरूम कर रहे हैं। कब तक करते रहेंगे यह हमें मालूम नहीं है।

आज अफ़सोस के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि सरकार की तरफ़ से इसके मुताल्लिक यह कहा जाता है कि हमारे पास कायज़ात नहीं है, अब इसके मुताल्लिक छानबीन की जा रही है, टेकनिकल और दूसरी बातों पर गौर किया जा रहा है। बंगाल के लोग जब इस तरह की बात सुनेंगे तो बहुत मायूस होंगे। वहां के लोग कब तक इस मामले में सब्र करें, उनका सब्र टूटने ही वाला है। यह मुझे मालूम नहीं है कि यह सब्र ज्यादा दिनों तक चल सकेगा। इस चीज़ में खतरा बहुत ज्यादा

है। इसके मुताल्लिक यह बात कहना कि पाकिस्तान वालों की तरफ़ से आपत्ति है, एतराज है, यह बात मेरी समझ में नहीं आई क्योंकि मैंने अखबार में इस तरह की खबर पढ़ी थी कि पाकिस्तान सरकार की तरफ़ से वेस्ट बंगाल गवर्नमेंट से बैराज बनाने के बारे में एप्रोच किया गया है। ईस्ट पाकिस्तान में भी फलइस आते हैं, उनके लिये भी इस तरह का बैराज बनाना फ़ायदेमंद है। अगर उनकी तरफ़ से एप्रोच न भी किया गया हो तो क्या हमारी ओर से एप्रोच किया गया है? इस चीज़ के मुताल्लिक कुंजरू साहब ने जो बात कही वह बहुत ठीक है। बाउंडरी कमीशन के मुताल्लिक जब डिस्कशन हुआ था तो लोगों को भालूम होगा कि मुर्शीदाबाद का हिस्सा वेस्ट बंगाल को इसलिये दिया गया था कि यहां हुगली और भागीरथ नदी का पानी पहुंचेगा। यह एक हकीकत है और आप इस चीज़ को बतलाने में घबरा रहे हैं और बहाना कर रहे हैं। खैर, ज्यादा कहने की जरूरत नहीं है। बौंड हो या न हो, गंगा के पानी का मसला टेंडा है। कहीं पर पानी ज्यादा लिया जा रहा है तो कहीं पर कम लिया जा रहा है। इसका एक बोर्ड होना चाहिये क्योंकि यह एक पेचीदा मसला है। अगर इसका एक बोर्ड हो तो मुझे खुशी होगी। यह बोर्ड हो या न हो लेकिन यह स्कीम फ़ौरी कबूल होनी चाहिये। हिन्दुस्तान में बहुत सी स्कीमों के लिये लाखों रुपया बाहर से कर्ज़ के तौर पर लिया जा रहा है। आप इस स्कीम के लिये मुल्क से कर्ज़ लीजिये, बाहर जाने की जरूरत नहीं है। अगर आपको इस स्कीम के लिये ५० करोड़ रुपये की जरूरत है तो आप बंगाल और सारे हिन्दुस्तान के लोगों से अपील कीजिये। फिर रुपया आता है या नहीं, मैं देखूंगा। इस स्कीम के बारे में न पाकिस्तान की तरफ़ से कोई रुकावट है और न ही रुपये की कोई रुकावट है। मेरे खयाल में आप खुद इस स्कीम को नहीं चाहते हैं, आपकी तबज्जो इस तरफ़ पूरी तरह से नहीं है। इसलिये मैं जोरों के साथ कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप इस

[श्री अन्दर रज्जाक खान]
 तरक़ ध्यान दें । इतना कह कर मैं समाप्त
 करता हूँ ।

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI J. S. L. HATHI)
 : Sir, I am glad that this House . . .

DR. R. B. GOUR: ... has accused you of complacency.

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: ... has been given an opportunity of considering the statement laid on the Table of the House. The opportunity is especially welcome because Government will be in a position to clear certain doubts and misgivings. At the outset I would like to mention that this project is considered by the Government not simply as a project in which West Bengal is interested or as a State project only. It is really a project which is of importance to the country as a whole from various points of view. The Calcutta port is one of the most important ports in the country.

SHRI J. S. BISHT (Uttar Pradesh): It is the largest exporting port of our country.

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: True. Calcutta is one of the largest cities and so, from that point of view, it is not a State project, is not to be treated as a State project for which the Government should give some financial or technical aid. It is far from it. This is a project which is being considered as a national project, an important project which, if taken up, will mean benefit not only from one angle but from various angles. Therefore, I would submit that the Government, as has been mentioned in the Statement, is certainly very keen to see that the project report is prepared with as little delay as possible. Therefore, on that ground also, it is not only the question of money. The sum of Rs. 56 crores mentioned is only an estimated amount

but we have taken up projects which cost for more than Rs. 56 crores. We have already taken up, as Dr. Kunzru mentioned, the Hirakud and the Bhakra-Nangal projects costing Rs. 100 crores and Rs. 173 crores. As has been rightly pointed out again, there was a time when we hesitated to take up more projects because of the shortage of personnel and because also of the shortage of experience. Unless we have complete data and complete investigations made, it will be rather difficult to go on with the project efficiently and speedily. We may start a project without proper investigations but the result would be that while we are in the midst of the construction, we might have to change the designs, the estimates might have to be changed and the result being that instead of having speedy execution of the project, we might have delays and heavier costs.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): At what stage is the problem just now?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: Therefore it is that we have to have complete data and carry out all the necessary investigations before we can decide upon this or before we can prepare a project report.

Naturally, questions have been asked, especially when we have been talking about this project for the last thirty years, as to what has been done during all these years. I think, Sir, it is a very pertinent question and every Member of this House is entitled to know why, with all this talk going on for the past so many years, it is said that further investigations are necessary or why further data has got to be collected? Perfectly true. I may mention, however, that the Government does not want to take shelter behind the pretence that data is being collected and investigations are going on. This project actually has been talked of as early as perhaps

1853, when Sir Arther Cotton thought , of a particular scheme. Then again, I in 1928, Sir William Wilcox stated that a barrage on the Ganga would be | needed in time to come.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

That was what was mentioned but no investigations were carried out.

DR. NIHAR RANJAN RAY: He even mentioned the place, Godagari, which is now in East Pakistan. He recommended that the barrage should be there and he gave details of his sketch. These details are there in the Report which can be obtained. It is a printed document.

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: I know. That is what I am saying. In 1928 Sir William Wilcox stated that a barrage on the Ganga would be needed in time to come but proposed the immediate construction of a weir if the barrage was considered to be expensive. So that project was not then taken up. Then the third stage came in 1946 when Mr. A. Webster, Chief Engineer of the Calcutta Port Commissioners also emphasised on the construction of this project and now I shall just read out to the House what he mentioned then, and that will give an idea of the position up to 1946. He said, "An enormous amount of survey work, data collection and perhaps model experiments must be undertaken before the project can be approved, and in view of the constructional difficulties that may have to be overcome and the vast expenditure involved it may not be unreasonable to assume that at least twenty year* may elapse before the barrage can become an accomplished fact." By quoting this I do not want to take shelter behind these observations. What I mean to say is that the Ganga is a very mighty river and the barrage i that is likely to be constructed will be | one of the largest barrages and therefore, unless we have sufficient investigations made and sufficient data collected the House also, I am sure. |

would not want the Government to-embark on the project without proper investigations.

DR. A. N. BOSE: Have the other projects been undertaken along the Ganga?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: Then surveys were carried out and it took 3 to 4 years, and by 1951 the first set of surveys and cross-sections were completed. Till then we had not all the required data and information, but by 1951 the first surveys were complete. Now we should also realise that we are dealing with a river like the Ganges. In between the years 1951 and 1954 there was great inundation on the Farakka side, on the left bank and also on the right bank of the river, for about twelve miles with the result that all the model experiments and surveys that had been carried out till then had again to be rechecked. So the House will understand the practical difficulties, but I want only to assure the House that the Barcelona Agreement has nothing to do with it; it is no longer binding on us now, and therefore that thing does not come in the way. Of course it is true that Pakistan is making enquiries about this project; they have been asking us. Now it may be with the object of having a co-ordinated or co-operative approach to the harnessing of the river water of the Ganga, it may be so, but when we have to prepare a project report it will be realised that we should base it on complete data so that later on we may not have to shift or to change. But there is nothing—as remarked by Mr. Bhupesh Gupta—that the Government wants to play the hide-and-seek game. There is no hiding and no seeking; nothing of the sort. It is a . . .

DR. R. B. GOUR: Your complacency is clear; there is nothing to hope.

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: I told you the progress made. We started from 1951 and the work we have done, I have

[Shri J. S. L. Hathi.] also told you. But I am sure the House realises that such a large project involves some necessary delays on account of various factors. In respect of the Bhakra-Nangal project investigations started even in 1915, but we could start the project only in 1946. It may seem an ordinary thing, to construct a barrage, and it may be asked: Why should it take such a long time? But we must realise that we have to deal with a river which is changing, which is causing erosion, and we will have to construct a barrage which will stand all stresses and strains. Statistics bearing on the behaviour of the river, the erosion it causes, etc. should all be checked and complete data obtained. So what I would like to submit to the House is that the Government is anxious to see that the investigations are completed as early as possible, and there is the statement laid on the Table of the House which says: "The Government is fully seized of the problem of the deterioration of the Port of Calcutta, which, apart from being an important international link, is vital not only to the economy of West Bengal but also to the whole of India." So that is the view of the Government with regard "to that project. Therefore if there is delay and the delay is marked it is unavoidable; it is not with a view to put off the project but it is only with a view to start it and start it on a sound basis, and I hope the misgivings or suspicion, if at all, . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the hon. Minister tell us at what stage are the technical examinations at present?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: We had the technical investigations made and we carried out the first set of surveys during 1950-54. After that there was the erosion, and further model experiments are being carried out; further technical investigations are going on and we shall see that the investigations are completed as soon as possible and the project report

¹ prepared. That is the only submission I can make to the House.

I SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: Is this all j that the hon. Minister could say?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Instead of having the Ganga barrage we have had a barrage of platitudes or excuses. I would like the hon. Minister to tell us exactly what progress has been made over the last two years or three years and when we can expect that the picture of the project will be completed—I mean not the plan of the project. When would the picture be I ready for the work to start? The blueprint is not there, as we have seen, and I ask when will the construction start. We must have some idea of this, not the same kind of story again and again.

DR. A. N. BOSE: I was asking one question when the Minister was replying, namely, whether the other projects have been taken up, along the Ganga.

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO (Andhra Pradesh): You have got the right of reply.

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM) : Mr. Deputy Chairman when I was hearing the hon. mover of the Motion I was trying to find out whether we differed from that side of the House, which is at present taking part in the discussion under a wrong impression that there is something in the mind of Government hidden, on account of which they are delaying or rather avoiding the taking up of the Ganga barrage construction. When facts and figures and past history were being narrated here on the floor of this House I was hearing them and I quite agreed with all of them. Just as my colleague the Deputy Minister has said, as far as the port of Calcutta is concerned; that should be there to everyone of us, not merely to those who are residing in West Bengal. It is an all-India port. It is a port

wherefrom is sent out about 50 per cent of the sea-borne trade of this country. So many other things have already been said, which I need not repeat, but I want simply to impress on those Members of the House, who have got some suspicion about the mind of the Government, that there is nothing of the kind. That sort of suspicion in his mind reached such an extent that the hon. the mover of this Motion, when he was speaking, said that the Irrigation Minister of West Bengal asked for the report of Dr. Hansen and it was not given. That he asked for the text of the report is a fact, and the reply given was that (there was only one copy. In reply to supplementaries in this House I said that there was only one copy. Then the suspicion grew in the mind of the hon. mover, that that was not correct. I that we were telling a lie and that we had got more copies. What reason can there be, Sir, for this Government to conceal it particularly from the Government of West Bengal? The Government of West Bengal have already got a copy of that report.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: When?

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: The officer's name is Dr. Bose and he has got the original copy of that with him.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How many copies?

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: There was the question of a copy being asked from me by the Irrigation Minister of West Bengal. That officer who belongs to the engineering side has a copy of this Report and there was no need for me to conceal that Report from the West Bengal Government or from the West Bengal officers. So there should be no such suspicion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Anyway, I am glad to hear that more than one copy is available.

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: May I request that too many interrup-

tions while speaking probably are not good? They should not be there.

Sir, I want to say only a few things. Now, it has been suggested by the mover of the Resolution that the Ganga River Board may be established. I may say that we have already commenced to take steps in regard to that work which must be done before a Board can function usefully. That work is already in hand and therefore there is no necessity for giving any assurance in regard to the establishment of the Ganga River Board.

Now, there was a reference to Pakistan. Perhaps Pakistan should not have been drawn into this discussion by us. But as far as the position between Pakistan and India in regard to this question is concerned it is only this that they have been hearing that something is going on like that. They have been writing letters and the Government of India have been replying to them that certain investigations were going on. There is nothing more. As far as the interests of Pakistan are concerned, we are doing nothing which will adversely affect the interests of Pakistan.

As for the international agreement or international convention, it has already been said that there is no such thing which has any binding effect on us. There is nothing like that. Now, when there is agreement, when that side also holds the same view, where is the question of difference? I am particularly referring to my very learned friend, Dr. Kunzru. He wanted that we should say something in regard to that point. The difference lies in this only that the investigations in regard to the soundness of the scheme which is contemplated are still going on. This is the position. It has already been stated by the Deputy Minister that between 1952-53 and 1954-55 or 1955-56 there has been shifting of water in the Ganges and the positions already established were upset and surveys had to be made

[Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim.] anew. That is how these years have been spent. Probably they could have been saved if this thing had not happened.

Now, I do not think it is correct to say that Dr. Hensen in his Report has said that the work may be taken up. He did not say that. What he has said and suggested is that such and such experiments, such and such investigations and surveys might be made and after that any step may be taken. This is his recommendation; this is what has been said by him. Therefore so long as there are some things which have to be investigated in order to find out whether by taking up that scheme we will be on surer grounds, it will not be safe for us to take any further steps. As far as the scheme is concerned, it is everybody's desire that this scheme should be taken up. It should be possible for us to take it up within the shortest possible time. We can and we will have to make our best efforts so that we will be able to do something in this connection within the shortest possible time. If it is not enough to infuse belief in the minds of those gentlemen . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Please give us some idea of the schedule, the time by when the blue-print will be ready, the time by when you expect that the construction work will be un-dertaken.

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: Had I myself been an engineer, and had I myself been an astrologer also. I would have been able to fix the time. I am none of the two and therefore personally I am not able to fix any time. All I can say is—and that I have already said—that our effort is that everything which requires to be done should be done within the shortest possible time. We should be in a hurry to do it; we should not waste time.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Can you give us at least the maximum time?

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: I have already said . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You cannot give either the minimum or the maximum time?

DR. R. B. GOUR: It is a simple thing, Sir. Can't he say this? Could it be taken up in the beginning of the Third Five Year Plan? The blue-prints being got ready in the coming two years, could he not say if it would be taken up in the beginning of the Third Five Year Plan?

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: As far as I know it is not correct to say that anyone on behalf of the Government ever said that it would be included in the second Plan.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Did you ever discuss the time factor?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, Order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You ask him whether there was any consultation at any stage about the time factor.

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: I have not followed what he said.

DR. NIHAR RANJAN RAY: One point I would like to make. The hon. Deputy Minister said that the Ganga shifted its course in 1951-52. This shift of the Ganga, of course, has not been very uncommon. I can cite at least six instances when it shifted its course between the years 1928 and 1956, but there is the core of the Ganga—perhaps I am going into engineering matters; you will please excuse me—over which the bridge will be constructed. During the rains the Ganga changes its course for six miles, eight miles or ten miles either north or south. But that is not an engineering problem at all. It is only a question of cross channels. Therefore, this engineering problem should not be a big problem for any river engineer.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Anyway, it is for the experts.

DR. NIHAR RAN JAN RAY: I know a little of it, because I have studied it.

(Interruption)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Let him finish it.

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM: The work had to be re-done on account of those things which happened therein the Ganges. Then, I do not understand how it can be inferred that the thing is a very slight one, a very negligible one and that it could be done without considering anything of importance. I do not think so. Surveys have to be made. I need not say anything further. I think what has been said on behalf of the Government in regard to the interests of the Government and in regard to the time also, would make it clear that they are making efforts to see that this work is taken up very soon, without loss of time, provided everything which is necessary to be done prior to the taking up of the work is done. There can be no objection to it. I think everybody will agree.

DR. A. N. BOSE: Sir, it is very unfortunate that the hon. Minister and the hon. Deputy Minister have not added anything to the statement which was already circulated. Beyond a few platitudes, beyond a few good words, which have not reassured anybody I am afraid, the only thing he added is that a copy of the Hansen Report was in the possession of the West Bengal Government. And it is very clear from his own statement that it was not because he gave the copy, but because this officer mentioned by him was associated with the investigation, being a leading river expert of the country he was associated with Dr. Hansen, and he was the only officer in the secretariat who knew German and Dr. Hansen could not speak English. So, this gentleman had to be

associated with Dr. Hansen and necessarily he was in possession of the Report. And it was also clearly stated in answer to my supplementary question that he refused to send a copy to the Irrigation Minister of West Bengal. So, that does not establish his *bona fides*. The secretiveness on his part is very clear and he has not absolved himself of that charge.

Then, Sir, the hon. Deputy Minister said that the river Ganga is very turbulent and whimsical, it very frequently changes its course and so it takes time to observe it and to tame it.

DR. R. B. GOUR: He meant the Central Government.

DR. A. N. BOSE: Are there not other river projects which have been undertaken along the Ganga and its tributaries? Are there not the Kosi project, the Chambal project, the Gan-dak project, the Sone project, etc.?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: Have they started all these projects, Gandak and Sone, etc'?

DR. A. N. BOSE: I was asking whether you are proceeding with any other plans along the Ganga river system. What is this particular difficulty with respect to this barrage scheme? Moreover the House has been repeatedly asking you to state the position. What is the progress you have made after these repeated surveys, after this expert opinion? Whatever we are speaking, we are not speaking from our own experience. We are merely quoting the experts and your own experts. We have not invented these things. These are not figments of our imagination. We are quoting the opinions of experts. They have been appointed by you. And here is a summary of the recommendations of Dr. Hansen. He did not merely say that investigations should take place. He categorically recommended these nine points: —

"(1) The deterioration of the sea route from Calcutta is progressive

[Dr. A. N. Bose.]
and will ultimately lead to complete loss of traffic in the course of few decades.

(2) A regulated flow of upland discharge is essential; only training works and dredging cannot stay the steady deterioration,

(3) This regulated flow can only be achieved with the help of a barrage across the Ganga and another across the Bhagirathi suitably situated.

(4) This regulated flow of upland discharge will remove completely the salinity of the river water to a point much downstream of Calcutta all throughout the year.

(5) The frequency and intensity of "bores" in the navigable sea-route of the lower Hooghly will be very much reduced.

(6) The flood hazards in the five districts of West Bengal and their drainage condition will considerably improve.

(7) The river Bhagirathi will become navigable for ships of 9 ft. draft all throughout the year.

(8) The navigable sea-route from Calcutta will improve admitting ships of higher drafts into the Port. Some training works will be required for a few of the crossings while other bars will deepen without training works."

He concludes by saying that a minimum flow of 20,000 cusecs of water will have to be maintained from the Ganga to the Bhagirathi-Hooghly river to achieve these objectives. These are positive suggestions. This is not merely a recommendation for taking up of investigation. We definitely want to know what has been done with respect to these positive suggestions. Again, these positive suggestions are not anything new. These only emphasise and underline ...

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: They are suppressed!

DR. A. N. MOSE: . . . what has been recommended by other investigations, by other experts, experts of the Calcutta port, experts appointed by the Government themselves. What we wanted to know is what has been the Government doing, what concrete steps have been taken in order to implement these recommendations, and if any other investigations are necessary, what are they? They may be auxiliary; they may be ancillary. But the main recommendations are there. Model experiments are being carried on. Will they be carried on *ad infinitum*? Meantime, within two or three years, Calcutta will be finished. They do not even say whether it will be started during the beginning of the Third Five Year Plan. I am afraid it cannot wait even up to the beginning of the Third Five Year Plan. It should be taken up right now, at this very moment. It cannot brook a single day's delay. The hon. Minister, Shri S. K. Patil, when he was in Calcutta, had to confess, he said clearly that delay would be dangerous to the life of millions of people. It was stated by him two months ago . . .

DR. NIHAR RAN J AN RAY: He was his predecessor in office.

(Time bell rings.)

DR. A. N. BOSE: I have nothing much to add. I can only ventilate my sorrow, my grievance and the grievance of the House that no reply was given to any of the charges placed by us and nothing was done to remove the doubts and misgivings in the House or outside the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I have to make a request. It seems that Dr. Hansen's report has found its way to some of us. I should like you to request the Government to make copies of this report available to us, to Members of this House. The House has been seized of this somehow or other. We should be acquainted with the full text of this report. It is proper Parliamentary practice. I think Government will have no hesitation in having this report circulated . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Half-an-hour discussion. Dr. Gour.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You kindly make that, request in due course.

5 P.M.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

SUBSIDISED INDUSTRIAL HOUSING SCHEME

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Half-an-hour Discussion. Dr. Gour.

DR. R. B. GOUR (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I rise to raise a discussion on points arising out of the answers given in the Rajya Sabha on the 8th September, 1958, to Starred Question No. 410 relating to the Subsidised Industrial Housing Scheme.

Sir, the hon. Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply laid a statement on the Table of the House that day concerning the progress made in the construction of industrial housing by the State Governments, by the employers and by the co-operatives of the industrial workers in the years 1956-57 and 1957-58. Even in the sup-plementaries that I put to the hon. Minister that day and also in the discussion that I am going to raise today, the points that I wish to make out and make out very sharply are that the Housing Ministers' Conference held at Bangalore in October 1957 was seized of the entire delay that is there in the construction of industrial houses. The Conference was also seized of the fact that the question of the cooperatives of the industrial workers coming into existence is also being hampered because certain legislative measures that Government should take are not being taken by them. It was also brought to the notice of the Government and to the notice of the Housing Ministers Conference at Bangalore in October 1957 that the employers were not taking this matter

seriously, and it was also suggested at that Conference that even decisions have been taken to bring about certain legislations in the country to force the employers to come forward with the construction of houses. Sir, at the 16th Indian Labour Conference this subject was discussed at length by the employers, the employees and the Government representatives who attended that Conference. It was at the 15th Indian Labour Conference that the employers agreed that houses might be constructed by them, but when it came to the 16th Conference, the employers cleanly escaped their responsibility. The 16th Indian Labour Conference was held after the Housing Ministers' Conference in Bangalore. When the Housing Ministers' Conference itself had come to certain conclusions that legislative measures would be necessary in order to force the employers to construct the houses, when the Labour Ministers' Conference at Naini Tal this year also came to the conclusion that legislative measures would be necessary, that certain coercive measures would be necessary in order to force the employers to construct the houses, the National Housing Construction Bill' that was suggested and contemplated at the Bangalore Conference is not yet even under the consideration of the Government. Sir, mere decisions by the Government are not going to come to the rescue of the houseless employees. The question is that certain legislative measures have become absolutely necessary and inevitable.

Sir, the hon. Deputy Minister told us the other day that the number of houses constructed by the employers in the year 1957-58 has increased, has been more than the number constructed in 1956-57. Now, Sir, they say that in the year 1956-57 1694 houses were constructed, but in the year-1957-58, 3260 houses were constructed by the employers. But, Sir, if you compare the percentage of the houses constructed by them with the total number of houses constructed in the