

[29 April, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

CAG report on failure of IDSMT scheme

*484. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to do away with the Centrally sponsored Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) scheme;

(b) whether this scheme was launched in the year 1979-80;

(c) whether the CAG Report in March, 2001, had criticised Government for the scheme's failure to achieve its objectives;

(d) whether Government have replaced this with the State Pooled Financing Mechanism; and

(e) the reasons for failure of IDSMT scheme?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRIANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) The Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) in its Report No. 2 of 2002 for the year ended 31st March, 2002 has observed inadequate coverage of towns under the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) Scheme, non-satisfactory project execution, non-availability of financial resources, etc.

The Pooled Finance Development Fund (PFDF) has been conceived as a State Pooled Financing Mechanism and is not a replacement of the IDSMT Scheme. It seeks to enable a group of small and medium urban local bodies to access domestic capital markets in a cost effective and efficient manner for undertaking urban infrastructure projects through a State/Regional level financial intermediary.

It may not be appropriate to say that the IDSMT Scheme has failed. Though there may be delay in project execution and inadequate mobilisation of institutional finance in some cases, the Scheme has helped in improving infrastructural facilities and creation of durable public assets in the selected

small and medium towns. By promoting resources generating schemes it has helped, to some extent, in improving the overall financial position of the urban local bodies.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the philosophy of development of small and medium towns in the country which started in 1979-80, under the integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns Scheme, is very important. The importance was felt because the population growth in large cities was so much, almost 250 per cent, whereas in small towns that was 33 per cent. But the reply of the Minister on this important issue is one of touch-me-not. On the one side, he says that they are doing a very good job and on the other, he says that nothing much is being done. Therefore, I would like to know this from the hon. Minister. When 4656 schemes were planned in two decades, you could hardly achieve 1200 projects. What is the reasons?

The second part of my question is, in these ten years also, you planned for 3686 schemes, projects, in 541 towns whereas you could achieve only 821 projects. I would like to have a categorical answer. How are you going to do it? Do you have any financial problem? Keeping in view the importance of the scheme, are you going to get more funds for this scheme or not?

SHRIANANTH KUMAR: Sir, there are different types of problems. No. 1 is paucity of funds. For example, in the Ninth Plan, there was only Rs. 275 crores allocated; of course, only Rs. 240 crores was spent. We have proposed the allocation in the Tenth Plan to the extent of Rs. 1500 crores. Out of this Rs. 1500 crores, it was planned to get Rs. 300 crores every year. This year, out of the Rs. 300 crores, we have got only Rs. 105 crores. I will be pursuing it with the hon. Finance Minister to give us more allocation for this challenging task. That is one part of it. The second part of it is, under the IDSMT, 60 per cent of the money is given by the Union Government and 40 per cent of the money is given by the State Government. And, nowhere are the State Government coming forth with their share of the money and the utilisation certificate. The details of the CAG report are in front of us.

SHRI T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: My second question is this, Sir. The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India, in its Report No. 2 of 2002 for the year ended 31st March, 2002, has observed inadequate coverage of towns under the integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns Scheme, Non-satisfactory project execution, non-availability of financial resources, etc. On

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the one hand, the Minister says so. But, on the other hand, he does not accept that this scheme has not been given much importance by this Government. I call upon the Minister to assure this thing to this august House. He should not lay the blame on the Finance Ministry. It is the responsibility of this Government to see that the medium and small towns are given more importance so that the people may not migrate to the big towns.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, it is very eminent that this Government has given more impetus and focus to this programme; and instead of Rs. 275 crores allocated during the Ninth Plan, we have proposed Rs. 1500 crores for the Tenth Plan. But, the problem is that the implementing authority, in this respect, is the State Government. They have to choose and priorities the various small and medium-level townships, and it has to be implemented there, and for implementing the said programme at the State level, they need to give their 40 per cent of the share. When they do not give their 40 per cent of the share, how can the Government of India release 60 per cent of the share? That is the problem.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: We are not satisfied with the answer of the hon. Minister. By saying so, he is trying to shift the responsibility.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, we are not shifting any responsibility. I assure the House that we are revising the various guidelines. In the revised guidelines, instead of five categories of towns, we will be making only three categories of towns. Secondly, we will be giving 40 per cent of the total allocation for water supply and sanitation only. Thirdly, we will be increasing the project cost limits also. Right now, the project cost limits are from Rs. 100 lakhs to Rs. 750 lakhs. We are going to review that also. We are proactively pursuing the project. But, we require more cooperation from the State Governments.

श्री मोती लाल बोरा: माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि 1979-80 में यह योजना शुरू की गई थी और आपने इस बात को देखा है और अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि इसका सम्पादन संतोषजनक नहीं है। माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि इसके अंतर्गत पूल फाइनेंस डेवलपमेंट फंड की योजना बनाई गई है और वह लघु और मध्यम शहरों के लिए धनराशि आवंटित करने का काम करेगी क्योंकि शासन के पास राशि नहीं है क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि जिन राज्यों ने अपना प्रतिशत, चालीस प्रतिशत अथवा पचास प्रतिशत नहीं दिया है, वे कौन-कौन से राज्य हैं? दूसरे, पूल फाइनेंस डेवलपमेंट फंड के अंतर्गत आपने लघु और मध्यम शहरों को कितनी धनराशि दी है। ताकि उन शहरों का विकास हो सके?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: So far as the first supplementary is concerned, I will place the details on the Table of the House. Secondly, regarding the

Pooled Finance, it is only for the small and medium towns, and we are actually coming out with the details of the whole project. We have sought Rs. 500 crores. But, how to scale that Rs. 500 crores, how to leverage that Rs. 500 crores by going to the market? That is the question.

श्री मोती लाल बोरा: सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा कि उन्होंने रिपोर्ट देखी है और जो दूसरी बात उन्होंने कही कि पूल फाइनेंस डेवलपमेंट फंड से हम लघु और मध्यम शहरों को धनराशि देंगे, तो माननीय मंत्री जी ने इस बात की जानकारी इस सदन को देनी चाहिए कि कितने शहरों को इस फंड से उन्होंने धनराशि दी है। मेरा यह सीधा-सा सवाल है।

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, the question is that the hon. Finance Minister, in his Budget, has said that we will come out with a pooled finance programme. That means, various small towns do not have a physical platform to access the capital market. For that, they do not have professional training, or, they do not have the instrument for that the Government of India will help. therefore, that whole scheme has to be worked out. We will work out the scheme and come before you.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, four years back, a conference of the Chief Ministers had observed that all the Centrally-sponsored schemes were suffering because the Central Government was acting as a mere post office, and there was a major time loss due to the transfer of the schemes and money going from the Centre to the States. Therefore, all such Centrally-sponsored schemes should be transferred to the States, alongwith the funds. I think, a majority of the States have taken such a view. If we see the CAG Report, which Vohraji has mentioned, one of the major problems is that the money reaches the States at a much later period, and there is a little time left for the States to execute. In respect of infrastructure projects, there are seasonal variations all over the country. The receipt of money is also not in conformity with the specific climatic variations in that particular region. Therefore, in our wisdom, it would be better to transfer that Centrally-sponsored schemes to the States, alongwith the funds. What is the view of the Government on this?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Number one, regarding the delay in sending the funds to the State Governments, Sir, that happens because the State Governments do not provide us the utilisation certificates, and, if at all they provide, they provide the utilisation certificates at the end of the fiscal year. That is one of the major problems. Secondly, I don't think there is variation in the release of amount vis-a-vis the requirement of the project amount because, before any project is prioritised, that project is evaluated.(Interruptions)...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: All these problems can be solved if it is shifted to the States. You entire problem of utilisation certificates will go(Interruptions)....

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I will definitely reply to that question also.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It is completely executed by the States. Why should the Central Government have to remain as a trustee of this money?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I am answering your question, my dear friend. Thirdly, Sir, regarding the project cost *vis-a-vis* the allocation of money, the project cost is well known; it is Rs. 100 lakhs to Rs. 750 lakhs. Therefore, each State knows that when it takes a Rs. 100 lakhs project, it has to pay 40 per cent of it, and when it takes a Rs. 750 lakh project, it has to give 40 per cent of it. That is one part.

So far as the question of transferring all the Centrally-sponsored schemes to the State Governments is concerned, Sir, there are two opinions. Number one, whatever amounts of money are going to the various State Governments for the schemes, in many of the States, they are being utilised for ways and means also. Sir, it is a larger question. Therefore, I request you, Sir, to allocate separate time for a discussion on this subject.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let a separate notice come for this.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, it is a very vital question, because all the problems that he is citing are arising precisely because there is no control of the Central Governments on those schemes. They are kept as Centrally-sponsored schemes. If they are given to the States, the States will have all flexibility in implementing the programme.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, the main question which remains and which has not been answered by the hon. Minister, is that there is a proposal that a large number of schemes should be transferred to the States, along with the funds—the schemes which are totally executed by the States in order to avoid delay. And, it is equally a fact, which has been commented upon in the draft document of the Tenth Plan by the Planning Commission, that the Central Ministries are unwilling to part with their authority. That is why they are standing in the way of transfer of the Centrally-sponsored schemes to the States. May I know from the hon. Minister when he is going to take—I mean, the Government also, not he alone—a final view? It is going on from the Eighth Plan period itself, in the Ninth Plan and the Tenth Plan also. You please see the comments of the Planning Commission in the draft document which was discussed in the

NDC. The NDC, the Chief Ministers' Conference, all of them have recommended, that it would be better if the schemes are transferred to the States—the schemes which are hundred per cent executed by the States—alongwith the funds. Only then expeditious completion of these Centrally-sponsored schemes would be possible.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, this is a very vital question of Centre-State relations. The Planning Commission is engaged in deliberating on this question. Secondly, the National Development Council has also appointed a Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to look into the matter. Of course, we are awaiting its deliberations and recommendations.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी: सभापति महोदय, इस स्कीम के तहत जो संख्या बताई गई है वह केवल 1058 फुलफिल हुई है जबकि प्रोजेक्ट का टारगेट 3870 का था। मैं केवल यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो ओब्जरवेशन कम्पट्रोलर एंड आडीटर जनरल का है, जो कांस्टीट्यूशनल आथारिटी है, उस ओब्जरवेशन की सीरियसनेस को देखते हुए उन अधिकारियों के खिलाफ या उन संबंधितों के खिलाफ अभी तक सरकार ने क्या कार्यवाही की है जो इन प्रोजेक्ट्स को कंप्लीट करने में असफल रहे हैं? यह मेरे प्रश्न का पार्ट (ए) है और मेरे प्रश्न का पार्ट (बी) यह है कि इस स्कीम को स्टेट पूल्ड स्कीम में रिप्लेस करने की सरकार ने मंशा व्यक्त की है, उससे सरकार को क्या लाभ मिलेगा, क्या उपलब्धि मिलेगी और कैसे यह सुनिश्चित करेंगे कि इन प्रोजेक्ट्स का जो रिमेनिंग पार्ट है, उसका फुलफिलमेंट हो पाएगा?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, regarding the first part of his question, I am going to appoint a review Committee to review not only the guidelines but also monitoring by the Central Government about the speedy implementation of these projects in various States. Regarding taking action against the erring officers, the thing is that they belong to different States. Therefore, we will advise the various State Governments to look into this matter of tardy implementation and give them warning so that they will comply with the schedules.

Secondly, I have not shown any inclination that this scheme should be transferred to the State Governments. I only said that the Planning Commission is taking a view on transferring such schemes to the State Governments and the National Development Council has also appointed a Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to look into these matters.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: What he was saying is that the hon. Minister should show some inclination.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: The Planning Commission has already taken a view and adversely commented on the disinclination of different Ministries of the Central Government to transfer the schemes. That is a fact.

*485. [The questioners (Miss Mabel Rabello and Shri Munavvar Hasan) were absent. For answer, *vide* page 30 *infra*.]

गुजरात में साम्प्रदायिक दंगों का समाचार

*486. श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन':†

श्री राम जेठमसानी:

क्या सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि गुजरात के साम्प्रदायिक दंगों को, प्रसारण माध्यमों विशेषकर इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया द्वारा प्रसारित चित्रों और समाचारों के कारण बढ़ावा मिला था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है;

(ग) क्या यही कारण था कि कुपित स्थानीय प्रशासन ने मौका मिलते ही प्रेस के लोगों की बाद में जमकर पिटाई की थी; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो इन घटनाओं का ब्यौरा क्या है?

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री (श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज): (क) से (घ) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) और (ख): साम्प्रदायिक दंगों वाली स्थिति में मीडिया रिपोर्टिंग के प्रभाव पर हमेशा भिन्न राय होती है। तथापि, भारतीय प्रेस परिषद के अध्यक्ष ने 4 मार्च, 3 और 8 अप्रैल, 2002 को मीडिया को यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए प्रेरित करते हुए अपील जारी की थी कि उनकी रिपोर्टिंग, विशेषकर गुजरात में साम्प्रदायिक मामलों सम्बन्धी रिपोर्टिंग के नीतिपरक मानदंडों के अनुसार हों और उसमें गुजरात में मौजूदा स्थिति में साम्प्रदायिक दंगों को बढ़ाने और उकसाने के लिए किसी भी रूप में कुछ न कहा जाए।

(ग) और (घ) गुजरात सरकार ने सूचित किया है कि पुलिस को गांधी आश्रम, साबरमती, अहमदाबाद में लगभग 200 व्यक्तियों की भीड़ को तितर-बितर करने के लिए 7 अप्रैल, 2002 को बल प्रयोग का सहारा लेना पड़ा था। राज्य सरकार ने गुजरात के उच्च न्यायालय के एक सेवानिवृत्त न्यायाधीश से घटना की जांच कराने के आदेश दे दिए हैं।

† सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन' द्वारा पूछा गया।