

moving away from the Doordarshan either by taking voluntary retirement or by resigning from the service. In order to get better emoluments, they are also joining other television services.

Has it been examined by Doordarshan that this is the threat because of which they are resigning or taking voluntary retirement ?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : We are aware of it.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA : He is avoiding all the questions.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV : There is no dearth of talent in our country. It is not a matter of concern that a few people are leaving Doordarshan and going to other places. This is happening all over. Many good people, talented people from newspapers are now joining the electronic media. From one electronic media they are moving to another. That is the real issue today. This is happening all over. Therefore, the real question is, that the Government is not able to take the decision at the right time. There are a number of vacancies and they are not being filled up; there is no cooperation between one Ministry and another. So, will the Government have a time-bound programme as the number of channels is increasing, the demands are increased, so that we may have qualified young people who are available ? We should recruit them on time.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : It is only qualified people who come into this and they are selected by the UPSC and the hon. Member's suggestion is very good. We would like to have the best talent available. But then, the Fifth Pay Commission also must play the ball with us.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is whether the Ministry has planned the expansion and recruitment. The Fifth Pay Commission will give its Report after four years.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV : That is right.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : With the present environment of pay and allowances and things only 25 out of 1,039 people have left. Out of that

MR. SPEAKER : He is asking whether expansion and recruitment will have any co-relation.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : We are not expanding the staff content at the moment. In fact, we are doing an exercise of 10 per cent as per the orders of the Finance Ministry. All the Departments of the Government are doing that 10 per cent cut. We are not expanding.

MR. SPEAKER : Expansion of your activity, having more powers, having more channels, having more time, should have some co-relation to the persons employed by you. That is what he is asking.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : With the present staff which is about 20,000 – a little below 20,000 or 19,000 and odd – and with a 10 per cent cut, there has been a substantial expansion in the rise of telecasting because most of them are satellite; and we are depending on outside producers, that is, the general public of India to take advantage of the platform which has been provided by Doordarshan. Therefore,

the question of increase of staff at the moment is not under consideration.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV : Is it a fact that the Information and Broadcasting Ministry has not agreed to the Finance Ministry's 10 per cent cut and rather they approached them that it will have an impact on their efficiency ?

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Chandra Jeet Yadav, we may have a detailed discussion later.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : We have effected a 10 per cent cut in the month of April.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI GIRIJA DEVI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to say that hon. Minister has not read this question carefully "Key personnel" do not mean some people in services. I would like to know as to how many prominent persons earlier engaged in Doordarshan, Arts, management and other fields have left the governmental organisations. How many artists and managers have left ? But instead of this detail in group 'A', the number of voluntary retirements opted and resignations tendered by IAS and candidates selected through UPSC has been given in the information given by the hon. Minister. Therefore, it seems that details given in the reply by the hon. Minister are not complete.

Sir, whether he would like to explain the word "professional" and restore its dignity.

MR. SPEAKER : He has agreed to do that.

[English]

SHRIMATI GIRIJA DEVI : These are not servants but professionals.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that something will be done.

Privatisation of Irrigation and Multipurpose Projects

*224. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH :
SHRI CHITTA BASU :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have set up a high level Committee to examine the feasibility of privatisation of irrigation and multi-purpose projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said Committee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have examined the said report;

(f) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir, A Committee under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources has been constituted on 5.7.1995 with a view to examine the feasibility and scope of private sector participation in the irrigation and multipurpose projects.

(c). No, Sir.

(d) to (g). Do not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir the written reply given by the hon. Minister is a vague one. I would like to know whether recently the Government have since constituted a committee ? If so, whether the Government accepts that working capacity of the officers and staff has been exhausted and that is why the Government is making efforts to invite private sector under economic liberalisation policy ?

Secondly, if the Government has constituted this committee whether it has convened its meeting as yet or not.

[English]

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Sir, the first meeting of this Committee is scheduled to be held on Monday, 21 August, 1995.

The question of Ministry of Water Resources not being able to manage the projects does not arise because the projects are constructed by the State Governments and not by Ministry of Water Resources. We are only trying to find out whether we could make some suggestions or create some policy guidelines for the State Governments in the light of liberalisation of the economy and because of the constraint of resources for both Plan and non-Plan expenditure, whether such river valley projects could be privatised. So, everything is in a nebulous state and nothing is finalised. It is only in the process of thinking and unless something comes out of it, we will not be able to say ultimately what is going to be the policy of the Government in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, what was the need to formulate this multipurpose scheme when this issue relates to State Governments. Whether it is not a fact that under the pressure of the new economic policy, the Government is tilting in favour of private sector even in case of a project which could be executed by the State Government ? Is it not true ?

[English]

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : No, Sir, it is not true. Though the State Governments execute the projects, yet we help them in preparing the policy. Even under the Constitution the Central Government can guide the State Governments in various river valley projects. There is no harm in Central Government making a study and passing it on the State

Governments for their consideration and implementation.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister while replying has stated that one of the reasons for appointment of this Committee to examine the aspect of privatisation of irrigation and multipurpose projects is the constraint of resources.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this Committee will examine the aspect of encouraging participation of the beneficiary farmers by inviting some financial assistance in the form of irrigation bonds for the specific projects. When the farmers come forward for participation both the Central Government and the State Government should see that financial assistance is provided from their side also and the projects are completed at the earliest so that in other areas also this step will induce the farmers to come forward to share some cost of the projects.

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Sir, already we have schemes for Command Area Development with farmers' participation. The hon. Member's suggestion will be kept in mind while making the policy.

SHRI K.P. REDDAIAH YADAV : Sir, in 1992, in the same House, the hon. Water Resources Minister, while replying to one of my questions, had said : "Dr. K.L. Rao, during his tenure, had conceived the feasibility of linking the Indian rivers". At that time, the estimate was said to have been nearly Rs. 12,000 crore. But due to resource crunch, they have not taken up the project. Now, in view of the New Economic Policy and in view of the urgency of bringing the vast barren lands under cultivation, will the Minister consider giving this linking of water projects to multinationals because during these four years, we have brought more than Rupees one lakh crore of foreign investment into telecommunications, power and other sectors. Will the Government think that this linking up of the Indian rivers is more profitable and more necessary than telecommunications and other things ? I want an answer from the Government.

MR. SPEAKER : You may not give your opinion, you may give the facts.

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Sir, the project for linking up of Ganga and Cauvery, as envisaged by Dr. K.L. Rao, has been given up for various reasons, both technical and financial, and that scheme is no longer in force.

The question of linking up of rivers, as I said in my answer to a question some time back, is under consideration of the National Water Development Agency. As and when reports are ready, we can think of these projects. The other things will follow later on.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Committee constituted under the chairmanship of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources to examine the feasibility and scope of private sector in this field, Sir, through you, I would like to know whether it has been suggested to examine the potential of private sector in the field of harnessing rain water which often goes waste, construction of small irrigation projects, construction of anicuts, deepening the existing wells and digging up new

deep wells to irrigate hitherto unwatered fields. Whether this issue has been included in the agenda of this committee? Whether the multinationals are being invited to take up viable big projects in which crores of rupees are involved ?

MR. SPEAKER : From where multinationals have come into it ?

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Whether it has been given to committee for review ?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Are you going to help the small projects also through this policy ?

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Yes, Sir, we shall also consider the small projects.

[Translation]

SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, small irrigation systems like tank irrigation and lift irrigation have involvement of private sector. Would you like to give details of the terms and conditions laid and multipurpose provisions made in the agreement which is going to be signed in this field ?

MR. SPEAKER : What are the terms and conditions given to the Committee ?

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Sir, the terms of reference are as follows :

- (1) examine the feasibility of privatisation in irrigation of multi-purpose projects,
- (2) determine the extent of privatisation, that is, one or more components of the projects, such as dam, power house, main canals etc.
- (3) identify the projects for privatisation,
- (4) examine administrative, legal and financial aspects in privatisation and suggest specific measures to be taken in these regards,
- (5) framing the guidelines for implementation of privatisation in irrigation of multi-purpose projects, and
- (6) any other issue which is under the subject matter.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister said that K.L. Rao Committee's recommendation has been given up. I want to know whether it has been given up only because of resource constraint or it has been given up due to some other reasons also, because the recommendation was very good.

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : Sir, it was given up even on technical grounds.

MR. SPEAKER : Was it given up on technical grounds also or was it given up only on technical grounds ?

SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU : It was given up on technical grounds also.

Coal Mine Accidents

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*227. SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE :
SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of accidents which occurred in the coal mines during the current year;

(b) the number of persons killed/injured in these accidents;

(c) whether the Government are taking adequate steps for the safety of the coal miners; and

(d) if so, the efforts made by the Government to reduce the accidents and eliminate all potentially dangerous occurrences and unsafe practices in the mine working ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT PANJA) : (a) and (b). As per provisional data provided by Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS), the number of coal mine accidents during 1995 (January – June) was 433, out of which by accidents involved fatalities and 366 involved serious injuries.

As a result of these accidents, there was loss of life of 73 persons and serious bodily injury to 398 persons.

(c) and (d). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The following activities are being pursued for reduction of accidents and to eliminate all potentially dangerous occurrences and unsafe practices in the mine workings :

- (i) Surprise inspections by officers of Internal Safety Organisation (ISO) to check the safety status with special attention in the areas of roof support in underground mines;
- (ii) Alertness on the part of the Chiefs of ISO of subsidiary companies of Coal India Limited (CIL) against the sources of danger as revealed by inspections and by accident enquiry reports;
- (iii) Periodical review of safety performances of each subsidiary company at CIL level in coordination meetings, and of the progress of corrective measures;
- (iv) Scrutiny of Safety audit reports to find out the safety lapses existing in the mines and Chiefs of subsidiary ISO's are directed to follow up for rectification;
- (v) Monitoring of implementation of the recommendations of the Safety Conferences, and decisions taken in Standing Committee on Safety as well as CIL Safety Board;
- (vi) Monthly monitoring of the safety status of each individual mine of CIL is undertaken by subsidiary companies of CIL. The safety status is examined by Coal India for follow up and remedial measures,