

provision of medical facility for pilgrims falling sick there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister has said that arrangements will also be made for providing medical facilities.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: We will provide evacuation facilities also. Let us draw a small comparison. A Haj pilgrim spends about Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 55,000 and the Government spends Rs. 10,000 per pilgrim there whereas the expenditure incurred by a Mansarovar pilgrim is about Rs. 8,000 and the subsidy which is given to him is more than Rs. 3,000. So if you compare percentage-wise, you will find that a pilgrim to Mansarovar perhaps gets a little more subsidy than a pilgrim going over to Haj.

[Translation]

SMT. JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: He did not tell about U.S. dollars being paid to the China Government. Will the Government bear that amount on its account and not charge that sum from the pilgrims? Will such a policy be devised by it ?

[English]

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: That is not so. It is not there. 7000 US dollars are paid...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you have to sit down now. You cannot go on arguing your case in the Question Hour.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARDWAJ: Will the Hon. minister tell for how many years the figure of 400 Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrims as told by him continues? I have information with me about the figure of 400 mentioned by the China Government. Will that Government allow only 400 pilgrims? Has any diplomatic move been made by our Government to China Government in this regard? I am not prepared to accept that only 400 Hindu pilgrims want to go on Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage every year. Has any demand been made by our Government to tell the Government of China about the realistic number of pilgrims by enhancing the figure from 400? Will the Government tell about its stand and action to be taken in regard to the Jewish community people intending to go to Jerusalem?

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: This question did not arise till now. Since you have raised it will be studied.

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ: What are you doing about the figure of 400? I am not prepared to admit that only 400 people want to go every year on this pilgrimage. Did you demand any increase in this number?

[English]

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: There is no limitation on the number of *yatris* trying to go to Mansarovar. This is a very tedious journey and very few people undertake it... (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ: Let not the Government decide what the people want to do... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. You can listen to the answer. You cannot be arguing like this.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: It is our experience that people give their names in the first instance. The list is a big one. But when the occasion for going there comes, many people drop out.

[English]

Last year 426 people went although the list was much bigger.

[Translation]

In fact, a group consists of 35 persons. But in reality only 28-30 people remain in a group, because some more persons drop out here later on. If more persons want to go, there is no problem, facility will be provided to them.

SHRI NITISH BHARDWAJ: I am not asking about the facility...(Interruptions)

Reply has not been given about U.S. dollars...(Interruptions)

[English]

Height of SSD

*503. SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Madhya Pradesh have refused to raise the height of Sardar Sarovar Dam;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the reaction of the Union Government and other State Governments (viz. Gujarat, Maharashtra) to this refusal;

(d) the details of Union Government's stand on the issue; and

(e) the minimum height to be attained/required, to divert water for starting of power generation in the aforesaid dam?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

There have been difference of opinion between the party States with regard to the final height of the dam. To sort out the matter the Hon'ble Prime Minister convened a meeting with the Chief Ministers of the party States on 15.7.96 and 16.7.96 wherein the views expressed by the Chief Ministers/Ministers of the four States, Union Ministers of Welfare and Water Resources and the representatives of the Union Ministries of Water Resources and Power were heard and based upon the intervention of the Prime Minister, it was agreed as follows:

"Construction of Sardar Sarovar Dam may proceed as planned, limiting the Full Reservoir level to 132.68 metres (436 feet) in the first instance. Thereafter the data for actual flow of water in the dam will be observed for a period of five years. If during any three out of these five years, the flow of water-discharge is adequate as assessed in the award, the decision regarding raising the reservoir level to 138.63 metres (455 feet) could be considered.

Construction of the dam will proceed pari-passu with the resettlement and rehabilitation of project affected persons as per terms of the Award and relief and rehabilitation policies laid down by the States in this regard. The States shall ensure speedy and proper implementation of the relief and rehabilitation measures."

However, Madhya Pradesh has expressed some reservations about raising of the height of the dam from EL 436 feet to EL 455 feet on account of water availability in the river.

To derive partial benefits of power generation from the Sardar Sarovar Dam the minimum height to which the dam is required to be raised is EL 110 metres.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Narmada Project and Sardar Sarovar Project are connected with four States of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh and these are in particular reflective of the ambitions and expectations of four and a half crore population of the Gujarat State. Its original estimate of Rs. 6500 crores has gone up to Rs. 12,000 crores today. Some elements put it to confusion during the last 5-7 years and the Central Government acted as an mediator to solve the problem and the disputed points. But I am sorry to say that it was an unnecessary dispute. Recently an agreement has been reached in regard to the dam. I do not want to go into that. But when the Central Government takes the role of a mediator, it was settled under the Water Distribution Tribunal that all the four States should be given their respective share of water. An amount of Rs. 507 crores is due from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra in this connection upto 31 March, 1996. I do not want to go any further. I would urge upon the Govt. and ask:

[English]

- (a) Whether the Central Government knows the areas from where the payment of share cost for Sardar Sarovar Project by the participating States is done. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan are not paying their share to Gujarat regularly;
- (b) Whether the Central Government propose to take suitable effective steps in this regard; and
- (c) If so, what are those steps?

[Translation]

I want to tell the Government that so much amount due is needed for early completion of the project of Gujarat and also needed for the people of other three States. Is the Central Government aware of it, and if so, what steps it proposes to take to ensure payment of this amount for the project.

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Sardar Sarovar Project has become a matter of dispute in regard to four States lying in the basin of the river Narmada. A tribunal was constituted to resolve the dispute. In the first instance efforts were made by the Central Government for solution of the problem mutually among the four States, particularly Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. But after the failure of the efforts, a judicial tribunal was set up, the award of which

has to be acceptable to all the concerned States. The difficulty is that the electricity and irrigation related projects fall in the list of subjects to be dealt with by State Governments, and the Central Government can act only as a mediator between/among them. That work cannot be done very effectively, because when the Central Government starts taking very effective steps in regard to the projects relating to electricity and irrigation; federal structure of our country will break-down. Personally also I do not appreciate such a step. The State Governments, which are unable to make payment of their due amounts, within the time schedule, are being urged upon repeatedly to make the payment of their share promptly and within the time limit.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: My question is that when the Central Government assumes the position of a mediator, and the State Governments find themselves unable to pay such big amounts, do the Central Government think that out of the share of money receiveable by the State Governments from the Central Government the necessary amount should be given to the State Government for this project to ensure its early completion? I shall take up my other supplementary question later on.

MR. SPEAKER: No, not later on, but ask just now ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, my second question is that our other friends sitting here will ask questions in their own way as they belong to other parties. We want early completion of this project. I had stated in my initial statement that the estimated cost of this project has since gone up from Rs. 6500 crores to Rs. 12000 crores and it will go up to Rs. 20,000 crores in the days to come. Such a big project concerns more than 10 crores of people of the four states. Has the Central Government no responsibility of its own toward it?

Mr. Speaker, when there was discussion on the budget two years back in this House, I was present. The issue of taking assistance of 55 billion dollars from the world Bank was being discussed. On that day, just during the discussion on the budget, a decision was taken by the Central Govt. in this House for not taking assistance of 55 billion dollars from the World Bank. That decision of the Centre resulted in putting such a big burden on the state government. Is it not the duty of the Central Government to provide financial help to State Governments. Through you, Sir I want to ask the Hon. minister whether the Central Government will consider to declare this project as a national project and spend necessary amount on it, or not?

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the first information sought by the Hon. Member, I may state that once some of those state governments, which are not extending their full cooperation to this Tribunal, were given this proposal that the necessary amount may be given direct to the Tribunal out of the funds allotable to the State Governments under the plan by the Central Government. But the concerned State Governments did not agree to our proposal.

It is a fact that with the increase in prices of commodities, the estimated cost of the project is also increasing. The Central Government is concerned over it and it wants to extend its full cooperation. But if the State Governments do not cooperate in the matter, the Central Government will fall in difficulty, because it cannot interfere very much in this regard, as I told earlier also.

SMT. SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this project is equally important in so far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned, because M.P.'s about 2.7 thousand hectare forest land, 11.4 thousand hectare government land and 6.6 thousand hectare agricultural land coming in its ambit is water-logged and out of 245 villages adversely affected thereby, 193 villages are of M.P. In the settlement worked out recently by mutual discussion among the Chief Ministers of all the four States with the good offices of the Hon. Prime Minister, it was agreed that its height will be kept at 436 feet, and it will be examined for five years. I want to know whether it is true that back storage level in it has been kept high. Is it also true that hydro-electric study in the entire project has been taken above the rainfall recorded during the earlier 50 years, after conducting a study, although a difference has been recorded in the rainfall after 1949. Will a new hydro-electric study be conducted?

The second thing I want to know is that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh has made a statement in regard to this project in the Supreme Court. Will you please tell me about it in detail?

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: In regard to hydro science the position is that a committee meets intermittantly and examines whether water level is really going down or not and such a committee has met many times. There was no indication of fall in water level in the award of the Tribunal given on the basis of the water level. It is true that during the rainy season when more water falls in rain, the water level goes up, and when rainfall is less, the water level goes down. But a final view is taken in connection with a river after recording its water level for some years. No downfall has been recorded in its water level. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh has made an affidavit in the Supreme Court. I

shall not be able to say anything here about the affidavit. But the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh was present in the meeting in which the Prime Minister took this decision. The M.P. Chief Minister did not show much disagreement with that decision. He did mention some disagreement with the profile and design of the dam about which we shall have a discussion with the Chief Minister in the meeting of the Consultative Committee and Review Committee.

[English]

SHRI SANAT MEHTA (SURENDRA NAGAR) Sir, I want to ask my question with reference to the statement submitted by the Hon. Minister. It is only pertaining to the meeting referred here and not on any other issue. He has said, "However, Madhya Pradesh has expressed some reservations about raising of the height of the dam from EL 436 to EL 455 on account of water availability in the river. I would like to know three things from the Hon. Minister:

When the Prime Minister calls the meeting and when there are three or four Chief Ministers present, minutes are drawn. In the minutes, this paragraph was produced that this has been agreed to. How can it happen that after the Government of India have issued a statement and after the minutes have been drawn, the Minister replies in the House that this has been agreed to? What were the reservations expressed by the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in the meeting? I want to know the specific points and not the general points.

Is it a fact that the Government of Madhya Pradesh filed an affidavit totally contradictory to the agreement and the minutes given by the Ministry of Water Resources and said that they have not agreed to it? In the affidavit, there are two annexures and one annexure is a reply of the Chief Secretary to the letter of the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources that they have never agreed in the meeting as whatever has been published in the minutes. How can this happen? This is a very serious question. If the Prime Minister calls a meeting, minutes are drawn. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not repeat that now.

SHRI SANAT MEHTA: And if the Chief Minister files an affidavit, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister when did the Minister come to know that the Chief Minister had reservations and what steps do the Ministry of Water Resources and the Prime Minister want to take

to implement the agreement arrived at as stated by the Minister of Water Resources.

[Translation]

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had stated in my reply to the question of the Hon. lady member that in the presence of the Prime Minister the agreement among the chief ministers of the four states was taken for the height of the dam to be 436 feet. The Chief Minister of M.P. had expressed his objection in regard to the profile and design of the dam, which is purely a technical matter, over which a discussion will be held later on. (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not try to catch my ear, you only have to catch my eye. Please do not call the Chair like this.

[Translation]

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Which party files in the court, we feel that we should not discuss about it in the House.

[English]

Historical Sites

*504 SHRI DINSHA PATEL
SHRI SATYAJITSINH D. GAEKWAD

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of historical sites discovered during various excavations conducted during the last three years
- (b) the steps taken to preserve these sites and
- (c) the total expenditure to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. R. BOMMAI): (a) The list of sites is laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Depending on the importance of the excavated remains, steps to conserve some of the sites are taken.

(c) The allocation made for excavation/exploration of ancient sites for the year 1996-97 is Rs. 54.75 lakhs.