

Fourteenth Lok Sabha

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Participants : Tripathy Shri Braja Kishore, Dasmunsi Shri Priya Ranjan, Acharia Shri Basudeb, Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan, Mahato Shri Sunil Kumar

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Title : Shri Adhir Choudhury called the attention of Minister of Water Resources to the situation arising out of non- implementation of Subarnarekha Project in West Bengal and steps taken by the Government in this regard.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (BERHAMPORE, WEST BENGAL): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Water Resources to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

“Situation arising out of non-implementation of Subarnarekha Project in West Bengal and steps taken by the Government in this regard.”

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, Subarnarekha is an interstate river flowing through the States of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Orissa. A tripartite agreement was concluded between the Chief Ministers of undivided Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal in August, 1978 in New Delhi. Under this Agreement, the 75 per cent dependable annual yield of 5.55 BCM of Subarnarekha assessed at Kokpara will be shared by the three Co-basin States of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal in the ratio of 71 per cent, 27 per cent and 2 per cent respectively.

*Consequent to the tripartite agreement, each of the three Co-Basin States have drawn up their own programme to harness the water resources of the Subarnarekha river basin.

Subarnarekha Barrage Project (West Bengal) envisages construction of a barrage across Subarnarekha river downstream of Chandil dam and Galudih barrage near Bhosraghat to irrigate 1,14,198 ha annually in the Midnapur District

of West Bengal through a left bank canal and its distribution system covering a culturable command area of 96,860 ha as approved by the Planning Commission in 1995. The project was taken for construction in the year 1995-96 at an estimated cost of Rs.215.61 crore (1987 price level).

The latest estimated cost of this project is Rs.595.34 crore (1996 price level). The cost of the project, if updated to the present day price level, would work out to around Rs.1350 crore. The actual expenditure incurred up to the end of March, 2006 is Rs.41.44 crore. Tenth Plan outlay and proposed outlay for 2006-07 are Rs.30.198 crore and Rs.2.358 crore respectively. As regards the

physical status, the actual project works have not yet been started and only infrastructural works are in progress. No potential has been created so far.

The project was included under AIBP during 2001-02 and provided Central Loan Assistance (CLA) of Rs.13.288 crore (Rs.2.050 crore during 2001-02 and Rs.11.238 crore during 2002-03) up to March, 2003. No CLA was released during 2003-04. As the desired progress in respect of the project works could not be achieved, the State Government has proposed during August, 2004 for exclusion of the project from AIBP and for transfer of the unspent balance amounting to Rs.10.25 crore to the Teesta Barrage Project. This proposal was accepted by MOWR during November, 2004.

Government of West Bengal has included the Subarnarekha Project under their programme of Bharat Nirman. Government of India may consider to provide assistance to the project under AIBP after getting the necessary proposal from the State Government along with indication for matching budget provision made by the State for the purpose. *

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Sir, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once depicted the irrigation projects in our country as temples of modern India. As we know, irrigation always plays a pivotal role in the development of agriculture. India is a country where 67 per cent of population still ekeing out its livelihood from agriculture[[KMR6](#)].

It is really well appreciated that the production in agriculture in the irrigated areas always exceeds the production of agriculture in the rain-fed areas. However, only 40 per cent of the net-sown area is being irrigated now.

It is in this context, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister. Subarnarekha project was a multi-purpose inter-State irrigation project where three States – erstwhile Bihar now Jharkhand and West Bengal – concluded a tripartite agreement to harness the water resources available in the Subarnarekha Basin. Insofar as Subarnarekha Basin is concerned, replenishable groundwater resources is estimated as 1.82 Billion Cubic Meter per year; available groundwater for irrigation is estimated in this Basin as 1.55 BCM; and groundwater potential for exploitation is estimated in Subarnarekha Basin is 1.40 BCM. The profile clearly justifies the construction of Subarnarekha Barrage project because that particular region is starving for water over the years.

We have already expressed our concern from West Bengal also that Subarnarekha project should be completed as expeditiously as possible. You would be surprised to note that in the Fifth Plan period, Chandil Dam project was proposed to be set up in Jharkhand. In the Seventh Plan period, Guladi and Kokpara Barrage projects were proposed to be set up in Orissa to cover Mayurbanj and Balasore districts. In Jharkhand, it was proposed to cover Singum district. For West Bengal, it was proposed to cover East and West Midnapur districts.

But the fact is that the statement made by the hon. Minister clearly reveals the dazzling incompetence of the State Government, which has not been able to even initiate any construction so far as Subarnarekha Barrage project is concerned in West Bengal. From the Statement, we come to

know that as regards the physical status, the actual project works have not yet been started and only infrastructural work are in progress. No potential has been created so far.

In 1995, an hon. Minister of NDA Government has written a letter that the Government had a proposal to construct a canal on the Left Bank of the River in Midnapur district of West Bengal under Subernarekha Barrage project. The proposal envisages construction of 19 to 20 km. canal which is scheduled to be taken up in 2001 and is likely to be completed in seven years. However, the project has not seen the light of the day. For the entire Subernarekha Basin, only 9.32,000 hectare potential have only been created by Subernarekha Barrage project.

As far agreement, the cost of the construction of Chandil Dam was to be apportioned among the three States. West Bengal Government has already paid its share for the Dam but no progress has so far been made and no potential has so far been created in west Bengal. In that particular region, poverty and penury are ubiquitous. Already naxalites have been rearing their ugly head in the entire area. Farming community is clamouring over the years for water and irrigation facilities from the Subernarekha Irrigation project[s7].

Sir, this is the first time that I came to know about this; and this is given in the statement also.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : As the desired progress in respect of the project works could not be achieved, the State Government has proposed during August 2004 for exclusion of the project from AIBP and for transfer of the unspent balance amounting to Rs.10.25 crore to the Teesta Barrage Project. The State Government of West Bengal has proposed to the Union Government to transfer the sanction amount of this project to the Teesta Barrage Project, which is some other project.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : I do not know whether the Union Government has approved the proposal. I would request the hon. Minister and the Union Government that in view of the emerging grim situation in the agricultural scenario, only irrigation can save us from further devastation. ... (*Interruptions*) We shall be happy to know that the present UPA Government – under the National Common Minimum Programme and with the special interest shown by our leader Madam Sonia Gandhi Ji – has brought all the outstanding irrigation projects under AIBP, that is, Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme. I would request the hon. Minister to include Subernarekha Barrage Project as a fast track programme under the AIBP.

Secondly, if it is not possible, then this programme must be included in the 11th Five Year Plan or under any bilateral assistance programme, like the scheme for Jharkhand and the scheme for Orissa, which were sanctioned under the World Bank scheme. So, I would request the hon. Minister – I would also like to draw the attention of Madam Sonia Ji – to expedite the Subernarekha Barrage Project.

MR. SPEAKER: Do not ignore the Speaker; you will be in trouble then!

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : It is the demand of the local farming communities in West Bengal.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is a very important project.

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask only one clarification.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is for the benefit of three States of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. This project was cleared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Planning Commission in the year 1995. The State Government has already spent an amount of Rs.40 crore; but the Central Government has not taken any concrete measures to implement this project. This project was included under AIBP; only a small amount was sanctioned by the Central Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put a question. We have got a list of 65 hon. Members wishing to make submissions under 'Matters of Urgent Public Importance'.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Land acquisition has been completed. ... (*Interruptions*) Infrastructure has been completed. ... (*Interruptions*) In the year 2002-03, this project was stopped. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let both the State Government and the Central Government agree to complete the project as soon as possible. That is the best thing. All should work together and complete this programme.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Now, the State Government has sent a proposal to include this important project; the estimate is now more than Rs.1,300 crore. It is not possible for the State Government to bear such a huge amount to complete this project because this project is necessary for irrigation as well as for flood control.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put a question and get a clarification. Please cooperate with the Chair.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Since the work of barrage is not completed, the two districts of Midnapore East and West are facing flood situation. May I know this from the hon. Minister? The State Government has sent a proposal to include it under Bharat Nirman.

MR. SPEAKER: It has already been done; you can read the statement.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : May I know whether the Government will consider including this under Bharat Nirman so that the project is completed?

MR. SPEAKER: It has already been included. You were not here and you did not read it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: May I know whether the Government of India will sanction adequate amount so that the construction work can be started and completed within a stipulated time limit?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Prabodh Panda -- Not present.

Shri B.K. Tripathy. Please ask only one clarification[V8].

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (PURI): I would just put a question.

MR. SPEAKER: Your name is not there in the list but I am allowing you to seek a clarification only because you have made a request.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Subarnarekha is an interstate river having the water sharing pattern of 2 percent with West Bengal, 27 percent with Orissa and 71 per cent with Jharkhand. This river is considered as the sorrow of North Orissa. We are at the receiving end. It originates from Chota Nagpur of Jharkhand and outflows at Bay of Bengal in Orissa. Today, the entire North Orissa is flooded due to this river. The multi-river project will help to control flood and to irrigate the entire land of 3 states. Considering the importance of the project, will the Government declare it as hundred per cent Centrally-sponsored project and also include it in the Eleventh Plan? Three States have three different projects. Will the Government consider Orissa Subarnarekha Irrigation Project as the Centrally aided project so that it is completed. We are at the receiving end and are suffering but are not getting anything. My question is, will the Government consider to aid this entire project as a Central project.

अध्यक्ष महोदय : बृज किशोर त्रिपाठी जी, आपने अपनी बात कह दी है। आप कृपा कर बैठ जाइए। श्री सुनील कुमार महतो, आप एक प्रश्न पूछिये।

श्री सुनील कुमार महतो (जमशेदपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, थोड़ा बोलने दीजिए।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : बोलने का मौका नहीं मिलता है। आप प्रश्न नहीं पूछना चाहते हैं तो बैठिये।

...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: You are not entitled to put any question, but I am allowing you.

श्री सुनील कुमार महतो : अध्यक्ष महोदय, आज वहां विस्थापितों की जो स्थिति है, वे यायावर की तरह ज़िन्दगी जी रहे हैं। वहां करीब 25000 लोग विस्थापित हो गए हैं। ऐसी स्थिति है कि आज कहीं भी उद्योग लगाने के नाम पर या डैम लगाने के नाम पर लोग आतंकित हो जाते हैं। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि सिर्फ बंगाल और उड़ीसा को फायदा पहुंचाने के लिए इतनी विशाल परियोजना झारखंड में लगाई गई है। उनकी नागरिक सुविधाओं के लिए सरकार ने जो घोषणा की थी, उनमें से एक भी आज तक इंप्लीमेंट नहीं हुई। विस्थापितों के पुनर्वास के लिए न घर दिये, न ही मकान बनाने के लिए पैसे दिये। विस्थापित लोग उस एरिया में डूब रहे हैं, मर रहे हैं। उनको नागरिक सुविधाएँ उपलब्ध नहीं हो रही हैं। ... (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : माननीय सदस्य, आप हमारी मदद कीजिए। आपने अच्छा प्रश्न पूछा है और मंत्री जी ने उसको नोट भी किया है।

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I will be very brief in responding to the questions being asked by the Members. First of all, I would like to say that this Calling Attention is limited to the project in West Bengal and not in Jharkhand or Orissa. So far as this project is concerned, we have received no complaint from either Jharkhand or Orissa.

MR. SPEAKER: You are right.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Therefore, I am sorry I cannot respond to the issues relating to Orissa and Jharkhand.. The UPA Government, soon after it took Office, in its Common Minimum Programme laid greater emphasis on irrigation. I may inform the House that for the time I was in

the Water Resources Ministry, to my utter dismay no State Government, irrespective of the Party which was ruling there, for the last three Plans gave any emphasis to irrigation, which has resulted in this crisis... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions) **

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is going on record. You may leave it. Do not respond him.

*(Interruptions) **

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: The most important thing is, irrigation is left to the States. Since Independence no irrigation project is considered as a Central Government project. It is always a State Plan project with the matching grant from the State and the Centre.

I do not want to embarrass any of my colleagues from West Bengal, but I think Shri Basu Deb Acharia will agree with me that on the desire of the West Bengal Government, Subarnarekha Project was sponsored as an AIBP project. It

* Not Recorded.

was the West Bengal Government who chose in August 2004 to shift the money from AIBP fund, meant for this project, to Teesta. They had responded accordingly. Now, if the West Bengal Government wants to put it in proper track by again shifting to AIBP, we are prepared to release the fund even tomorrow. Therefore, it is for the State Government to decide. If they want to backtrack and continue with AIBP, let them ask for the fund.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : They have already submitted the proposal.... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions) **

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded. You have already said this.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I officially say that we have not yet received it...
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Mr. Minister, you make your statement.

*(Interruptions) **

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I would like to inform the hon. Leader, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, that if a delegation submits something, it is not an official communication of the desire of a State. I would like to inform that if the Government of West Bengal desires to bring it back to AIBP, we shall respond to it at the earliest... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded.

*(Interruptions) **

* Not Recorded.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I would like to conclude by saying that the Prime Minister has declared Bharat Nirman... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sunilji, please do not disturb the proceedings.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Under Bharat Nirman, we have to irrigate one million hectare and the AIBP is being given the highest emphasis in that programme which would also take care of Subarnarekha Project... *(Interruptions)*

...*(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदय :आप बैठे-बैठे कैसे बोल रहे हैं?

...*(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदय :आप मेहरबानी करके बैठ जाइए।

...*(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपने वेस्ट बंगाल के बारे में नोटिस देने का कट भी नहीं किया।

श्री सुनिल कुमार महतो : मैंने नोटिस दिया है।...(ब्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपने नोटिस साढ़े दस बजे दिया है। I am sorry. Now Shri Narendra to make a Statement.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please do not answer.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Calling Attention is over. I have called Shri A. Narendra. He wants to make a statement. I will allow you later but after his statement, according to the rules.

अध्यक्ष महोदय : हमारा दुर्भाग्य है कि हमने आपको बुलाया है और आपका सौभाग्य है कि हमने आपको बुलाया है।

...(ब्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : हम आपको फिर मौका देंगे, अभी आप बैठ जाएं।

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Tripathy, you were not entitled to be allowed. I had gone out of my way to allow you. But it seems until you are satisfied, you will go on speaking. What can I do?

... *(Interruptions)*