

>

Title: Need to expedite the completion of Gosikhurd Project in Maharashtra and to give adequate compensation to the farmers whose lands have been acquired for the project.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): Madam, I want to raise a matter about a project of very ambitious nature viz, Gosikhurd Project (Indira Sagar Dam) for meeting the long awaited aspirations of the people of Vidarbha. The people on its completion see a new ray of hope which will have its strong impact on the overall development of the region. It will provide multifaceted benefits viz augmentation of water supply, raising the water level, irrigational facilities for about 10 lakh acres of land, and bring tremendous prosperity and green revolution, particularly in the districts of Nagpur, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara and Gondia and also to meet the drinking water needs of the people of this region.

However, the implementation of this project has been going on a snail's pace in spite of its importance. This project was conceived in 1988 and was scheduled to be completed by the year 2000. The Central Government on realizing the importance of this project declared it as a national project by providing Rs. 5000 crore, 10% of which is to be met by the State Government. As per the revised schedule, the project is now required to be completed by 2012 but the pace at which the work is going on, there is the remote possibility of this target to be achieved. There is already a huge cost escalation and as per the latest reports, another Rs. 8000 crore would be required now for its implementation. It appears that there is no proper monitoring on the execution of this project and the required funds are not released in time.

It is also a matter of great concern that the farmers whose land was acquired for this project, has not, so far, been properly rehabilitated and the reasonable amount of compensation paid. There are about 8000 people belonging to 300 villages who were displaced and are agitating for their genuine cause for a long time. According to the existing policy of the Government in this regard, the persons so evicted have to be suitably rehabilitated elsewhere and reasonable amount of compensation paid. But this matter is hanging for a long time and no worthwhile steps have been taken in this regard. The compensation contemplated to be paid, is much less in comparison to the farmers getting in the other adjoining districts of Nagpur. This has caused great resentment amongst the land owners who have now been agitating for their cause for a long time.

I would urge upon the Central Government to prevail upon the State Government to look into the genuine grievances of the persons whose land was acquired and to arrive at an amicable settlement with a view to ensure that the work on this project is not further delayed.