

MR. SPEAKER : Come to me and if you convince me that it is not correct, then we will look into it.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore) : For the last three weeks I have been giving Calling Attention notice regarding National Test Range but unfortunately my name has not come in the ballot. This project...

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I cannot help you Mr. Jena. This is not in my power. I would not try a thing which is not in my power. I know your sentiments. But I cannot do anything. There is no precedent. I cannot create a new one to open the flood gates. So simple it is.

SHRI CHINTAMANI-JENA : I may be permitted to put one or two questions for the sake of clarification after all the Members in the ballot have spoken.

MR. SPEAKER : I cannot. It is beyond my power. As Mr. Amar Roy has said, I am not a dictator, I am not going to be one !

12.19 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC
IMPORTANCE

[English]

Situation arising out of setting up of a
National Test Range in Baliapal and
Bhograi area of Orissa

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE
(Rajapur) : I call the attention of the
Minister of Defence to the following matter
of urgent public importance and I request
that he may make a statement thereon :

Situation arising out of setting up
of a National Test Range in Baliapal
and Bhograi area of Orissa and the
steps taken by the Government in regard
thereto.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN SINGH) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, an instrumented flight test range is an essential requirement for testing rockets, missiles and similar systems as well as for launching satellites. In Nov. 1978, Government had constituted a Committee to examine the setting up of an instrumented test range as a National Facility.

2. An expert body had assessed the diversified test needs of various users and had examined/surveyed a large number of sites in desert areas, offshore islands and coastal areas both on the East and West coasts taking into consideration the technical, operational and safety requirements; and also the ecology and population aspects. The sites examined include *inter-alia* Sunderbans in West Bengal, Kanyakumari area, Satbhaya in district Cuttack (Orissa), Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Balasore coastal area in Orissa. The main aspects of these sites are given below :

3.1. Sunderbans Area :

- (i) This site is not suitable for locating opto-electronic tracking instruments along the coast.
- (ii) Interference-free firing of short and medium range vehicles is not possible.
- (iii) The area has oil/natural gas potential.
- (iv) Adequate communication links by rail/road are not available.

3.2. Kanyakumari Area :

- (i) The site offers very little useful coastline for locating opto-electronic tracking instruments.
- (ii) No down range instrumentation site is available.
- (iii) The recovery of flight vehicles is difficult.

3.3. Satbhaya, Orissa :

- (i) An adequate firing zone, with the required range safety, is not available.
- (ii) The site is not suitable for locating opto-electronic tracking instruments along the coast.

- (iii) A firing would endanger Paradeep port installations and ships.
- (iv) Firings would interfere with sea routes.
- (v) The recovery of flight vehicles is very difficult.
- (vi) The ecological balance would be disturbed significantly.

12.21 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

3.4. Andaman and Nicobar Islands :

- (i) No sites are available for down range instrumentation.
- (ii) The Islands have a large number of rainy/cloudy days (292 in a year) rendering opto-electronic tracking instrumentation non-operational and thus limiting the usefulness of the range to less than 75 days in a year.
- (iii) The recovery of flight vehicles is very difficult.
- (iv) Heavy logistic problems and very high costs of construction and operation.
- (v) The defence of such vital installations would create more problems.
- (vi) The ecological balance would be disturbed significantly.

3.5. Balasore Coast :

- (i) A coast line of more than 100 kilometers in a crescent shape facilitates the deployment of opto-electronic tracking instruments.
- (ii) The crescent shape offers protection to air/sea routes for day to day short and medium range firings.
- (iii) A hill feature (Nilagiri hills) offers great advantages in locating tracking and surveillance radars.
- (iv) The site offers a clear firing zone to a large distance in the southern

direction with the required range safety parameters and is suitable for launching satellites in polar orbits.

- (v) Very good down range instrumentation site is available.

4. In 1979, the then SA to RM had held discussions with the then Governor and the then Chief Minister, Orissa State for locating the range on Balasore coast. The then C.M. had agreed in principle.

5. Based on the recommendations of the Committee it has been decided to set up an instrumented test range, as a National Facility for testing missiles, rockets and other similar systems by the Defence and for launching of satellites by Deptt. of Space. This range will also be used for other civil applications like earth-resources studies, rocket launching for scientific studies etc. The original requirement of land area at the range head and safety zone (in 1979) was about 39600 acres involving displacement of about 11600 families (about 70100 persons).

6. In early 1986, a critical re-examination of the lay-out of range facilities was carried out with the objective of reducing the displacement of population to the minimum without compromising safety requirements. It was decided to shift certain facilities elsewhere; to set-up only the basic essential testing facilities at the Baliapal site and a revised lay out was evolved accordingly. As a result of this exercise the original requirement of land has now been reduced by almost a third. It is now proposed to acquire about 16,800 acres of area in Baliapal region for setting up the main range head facilities and about 9200 acres of land in Bhogral region as the Safety Zone. Certain pockets of land at a number of sites, with a total area of about 690 acres, will be required for setting up range support facilities and for locating instrumentation. There is no change in the requirement of certain areas of land naturally reclaimed from the sea over the past decades. Such areas include 2700 acres of swampy land near the Safety Zone and a strip of land of width varying from half to one km. along the coast in the range head area. Out of the total land to be acquired

[Sbri Arun Singh]

for the range, about 48 per cent is Government land.

7. Orissa State Government has conducted a survey during first half of 1985 of the affected villages. As per this survey, about 5,600 families (about 35,000 persons) living in 41 villages of Baliapal region and about 900 families (about 6,000 persons) living in 13 villages of Bhogral region would have to be displaced and suitably rehabilitated.

8. The families displaced from the Safety Zone (Bhogral) will be allowed to cultivate the land, even after its acquisition, on lease basis, subject to certain regulatory measures. Fishing in Subarnrekha river mouth and in the sea, will also be allowed subject to similar regulatory measures.

9. Adequate compensation will be paid for the land acquired and for all assets standing thereon. In the case of encroached Government land, compensation will be paid for all the temporary assets such as huts, betel vine, tank and orchard standing on the encroached land. At the time of taking possession of land, compensation will be paid for the standing crop, if any.

10. All displaced families would be resettled in model villages to be set up for this purpose. Each displaced family would be provided with about 10 decimals of homestead land and a built up house; both free of cost. With this scheme, all families including those who do not have homestead land, would become owners.

11. All Model villages will be provided with civic amenities like roads, drainage, adequate water supply, street lighting etc. Other social and community infrastructure like schools, dispensaries, veterinary centres, community centres, youth centres, hospital, training institutes, post offices, banks, panchayat buildings, village tanks would also be created for these Model villages. The cost of all the above amenities and infrastructure will be met by the Central Government.

12. A number of industrial and other projects are being set up as part of the rehabilitation plan, with the objective of providing job opportunities to about one

person from each displaced family. Some schemes have already been identified including a textile complex, oil mill, vanaspati plant, leather complex and an agricultural implement factory. Families like fishermen and landless labourers, would be provided special assistance and rehabilitated in self-employment schemes like prawn culture, fishing, dairy and rural transportation. In addition, a few hundred jobs would be available to the displaced people in the National Range project.

13. In addition to making payment for compensation for land and assets, the Government of India will provide seed money to the State Government for setting up rehabilitation schemes to provide jobs to displaced families and also meet the cost of setting up model villages with associated infrastructure. An initial payment of Rs. 13,925 crores has already been made to Government of Orissa for these schemes. Though these schemes will be implemented by the State Government, their progress will be continuously monitored by the Central Government. A high level task force comprising of officials from State and Central Governments has already been constituted for this purpose.

14. Expeditious steps are being taken by the Orissa Government to start work on rehabilitation and resettlement schemes. The sites for rehabilitation projects have been identified and the work on these projects is in hand. The Central Government has already released funds for construction of the first model village for about 800 fishermen families, a 50-bed hospital, an industrial training institute, improvement of roads and financial grants to existing colleges in the area for improvement of facilities.

15. An apex level Rehabilitation Committee with members from State and Central Governments has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary Orissa, to plan and monitor implementation of the resettlement and rehabilitation schemes. A full time Rehabilitation Commissioner with support staff has already taken over charge of the task. A 3-tier structure, having representatives of Central Government at each level, has been evolved for planning, supervising and executing the schemes.

16. The Central and Orissa State Governments are taking all necessary steps to implement the schemes and to see that the displaced families are looked after well and rehabilitated properly.

17. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate before the House the basic logic for setting up the National Range. This is a project not just of the State and Central Governments but of the entire nation. This range, will help India to achieve self-reliance and self-sufficiency in missiles, rockets and space vehicles that can launch satellites in polar orbits. These are not easy technologies to master without sufficient testing and proving, nor can we hope for a reliable and adequate supply of these systems from abroad. Today, we do not have some of these essential rockets and missiles in our inventory and indigenous development will not be possible without a range facility. The National Range thus represents a move towards self-reliance in a vital sector.

18. Any such project involves some disruption but the Nation's requirement must take precedence over other considerations. What we are attempting is to minimise the difficulties caused by the project to those affected, and to provide significant opportunities for their rehabilitation. The appropriate and optimal location of the National Range should be viewed not as a narrow political issue, not even as an issue effecting a particular location, but as a national mission that shall make our country truly self-reliant in critical technologies and systems. I shall therefore be grateful to the Honourable Members for all the support they can provide for the speedy execution of this project.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Prof. Madhu Dandavate. Please be brief—10 minutes.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I will take time proportionate to the statement of the Minister.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : He was racing against the time while reading.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Sir, it is a voluminous statement—not luminous,

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It is a sensitive problem on which, a lot of agitation is going on. You look at the statement. It is unduly big statement. I am very happy about it. But looking at the length of the statement, clarifications to be sought should be commensurate with the statement. I must do full justice to the statement.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : In order to give all the information, he has given a big statement. He has provided all the information. Therefore, if there are any questions, you put them.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Normally, I do not come in call-attention. I do not give call-attention. But this subject is very important.

At the outset, let me make it clear through you to the hon. Minister that all of us in the Opposition side have put forward one point of view regarding the site. We want to make it clear that anything that helps the defence of the country, any innovation and any project which helps the defence, we are not only not opposed to it but we totally support any project that will strengthen our defence and any innovation that strengthens our defence.

The question is, and the clarification to be sought is only regarding the choice of an appropriate site. I would like to know whether is it not a fact that this particular site which is chosen at Baliapal and Bhogral regions in the Balasore district of Orissa State is the greenest belt in the backward Orissa region. For instance, I would like to know from the hon. Minister is it not a fact that this particular belt in Orissa is like an oasis in a desert. In this particular spot, we are growing coconut, betel leaves, cashew, jute, oilseeds, rice, paddy, mat straws etc. and lot of foreign exchange is also secured. Lot of commodities from this area go throughout the country. Is it, therefore, not a fact that people are very much agitated against the choice of this particular site and they are suggesting, you have this project but not in the greenest belt of Orissa? Already Orissa is a backward State and in that backward State, if the greenest belt that they have got is disturbed, is it not a fact that thousands of people will be displaced? The hon. Minister has fortunately admitted in his statement,

SHRI ARUN SINGH : There is no question of admission. It is known all along from 1977.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : That is all right. You can have a little more time to think over the problem.

Is it not a fact that it will displace thousands of persons and even the economy of that particular region will be very adversely affected ?

I would like to know from the hon. Minister of State : Is it not a fact that on 20th March, 1986 some of the ex-MPs and the present MPs and many leaders from Orissa met the Prime Minister ?

Fortunately in our House we have persons like Shri H.M. Patel who has been Defence Secretary for a long time. We can take advantage of his expert advice. We can also take advantage of many other experts on Defence matters and then we can propose certain sites.

Then, is it not a fact that Prime Minister in that meeting had categorically told us— I will reproduce the words—like this. I quote : "All right. You discuss among yourselves. You consult experts, discuss the matter with the Minister of State, Shri Arun Singh and, after that, I will go through the problem."

The Prime Minister in no uncertain terms assured us that "If necessary, I will myself visit the site." That is what the Prime Minister said.

After that, is it not a fact that on 16th April, 1986 the hon. Minister of State had convened a meeting of a number of persons ? Shri Biju Patnaik and others were there and, there they discussed the problems, mainly of rehabilitation and they sidetracked the problem of alternative sites that were suggested. Our representatives who attended suggested a number of alternative sites.

Shri Nilamani Routray's letter and note sent to the Prime Minister give us full information about the similar experiments tried in different parts of the world.

I would like the hon. Minister specifically to tell me whether he has carefully

noticed and scrutinised that note and what is his specific reaction.

Is it not a fact that in five countries like USA, Great Britain, France, USSR and China, similar centres were actually set up, the national test range, projects for missiles and rockets were set up ?

Is it not a fact that they also came across a similar dilemma; how to reconcile the interests of the people with the interests of the nation, how to prevent large-scale displacement of the people and, at the same time, try to satisfy the defence needs of the country ?

For instance, will the hon. Minister tell us, in USA Cape Kennedy in the State of Florida on Atlantic Coast was selected because not a single person was to be displaced as a result of that Centre ?

I would like to know further from the hon. Minister, is it not a fact that initially when Great Britain undertook a similar location of the Centre, the testing centre was in South Australia in the vicinity of Victoria desert so that there will be no displacement of the persons and no disturbance to the economy.

Is it not a fact that in the case of France also, deliberate selection of testing centres at places far away from human habitation, sandy deserts, lonely uninhabited islands and marshy regions were deliberately selected ?

Is it not a fact that even the French Government did this after a large-scale agitation that was undertaken there by the people ? They bowed down before the people and said : "it is true that the defence needs are of supreme importance but at the same time the interests of human-beings must not be subordinated". There they even selected deserts and marshy lands. In the case of USSR, is it not a fact that Siberia which is a desert place was deliberately selected so that hardly any person stays, for instance, it has been brought to my notice that hardly one person stays in one sq. mile. That is the position of Siberia. Is it not a fact that as a result of that, that became acceptable to all and finally in China, Central China in the mountain-belt, they set up the centre which was not fit for human habitation,

Gobi desert in Central China was selected because no displacement would have taken place. In the light of all these five instances from five countries that are suggested to the hon. Minister, will he revise his earlier decision and try to shift the site to a suitable place. Is it not a fact that—though what he has stated earlier—Shri J.B. Patnaik who is the Chief Minister of Orissa is insistent on that particular site will be there and is it not a fact that he has assured the Prime Minister that he himself will go round and persuade the people? Three times he announced that he will visit the site. He was not able to visit the site. There were very large demonstrations. The peasants and fishermen came there. Even barricades were actually built up for the huge meeting. He could not go there and as a result of that, this situation developed. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the fact that an Opposition Party delegation visited the site; they went round the areas; they met the people; they met the representatives of the agriculturists; they met the fishermen; they met a number of officials and they also had recommended that alternate site should be there.

SHRI BASUDED ACHARIA (Bankura):
There was a big rally...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :
There was a big rally which was attended by 60000 to 70000 people and even those people who are ruling party, were hostile to the decision. They have published photographs of the fishermen with their kids coming to their meeting. 60000 to 70000 people were walking all along 10 miles; 12 miles attending that rally and registering their strong protest against the decision. Earlier, on some other occasions, I had raised the question. It is not included in the reply today. One of the reasons that he had pointed out was, we have suggested a number of alternate sites—Andaman and Nicobar, Sagar Island, Dwarka, Lakshadweep and some others which has already been mentioned. Is it not a fact that he has said that if Andaman and Nicobar is selected, there are no stones, no bricks and the expenditure will be very high and climatic conditions are not proper? But, Sir, if he tries to select the present site in the Balasore district of Orissa, is it not a fact that a very heavy compensation will have to

be paid? A lot of rehabilitation has to be done and in comparison to the compensation that will be required to be paid to all those from the Balasore district, if he chooses Andaman and Nicobarsite, only on the ground that there are not adequate bricks and stones, even that expenditure that has to be incurred will be far less than what we have to spend by way of rehabilitation. Sagar Island is another site; Dwarka is another site; Lakshadweep is another site. Every time he says, last time he said that this is marshy, this cannot be selected at all. Last time he said that these are the marshy places; they are not suitable. I would like to know from him is it not a fact that in the five countries which are mentioned, some places are deserts?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Half of Baliapal is marshy.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Last time, it was said in the debate. In the debate you can go through it. Therefore, let me try to point out that on this flimsy ground we should not reject the sites which were suggested. We should once again go through them. We are prepared to discuss the matter. If we discuss the matter, some *via media* can be found out. In the recent Indo-Soviet Agreement, those ten points have been mentioned—they are summarised—and one of the points is that both the countries will respect the supremacy of man. We are happy that there is a reference to the dignity and supremacy of man. I would make a suggestion here. Leave aside the Opposition Parties; you can pick up Members of the ruling Party and we are prepared to accompany them once again. Let us go to that area and let us try to find out whether we have tried to whip an artificial opposition to change of site or genuinely the people who are living in that area are feeling, the fisherman and agriculturists and large sections of women—in those 60,000 or 70,000 people who had assembled for demonstration and protest meeting, half of them happened to be women, Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee had addressed them and she would have communicated to you the feelings of those women. Therefore, I would positively and concretely suggest to the hon. Minister to accept our proposal. Let there be an all Party Delegation

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

consisting of Members of all Parties, including the ruling Party, and if an all Party Delegation goes there and meets people, examines the problems and also examines the various sites which we have already suggested, in that eventuality will be prepared to change the site as it has been done in five countries. Let him choose a site where the least human habitation is there, and if that is done, we can reconcile the claims of human needs in this country with the requirements of Defence. Let me make it clear, while seeking all these clarifications, that we are completely one with the Government as far as the project is concerned. But you have it at any suitable site. We are not opposed to the project, but at the same time we are insisting that an alternative site should be selected. Let him clarify the points I have raised and let him accept the proposal for an all Party Delegation to go there.

SHRI R.P. DAS (Krishnagar) : Sir, much has been said about the National Test Range, but I would like to point out at the very outset that the very basic reason for setting up a National Test Range is self-defeating for achieving self-sufficiency and self-reliance in regard to testing of missiles, rockets, space vehicles, etc. The need is there—there is no doubt about it—for such a National Test Range in the country. But we do not know whether such a Range can be set-up at the site now suggested, Baliapal and Bhogral. For this I would draw the hon. Minister's attention to page 4 of his statement in which he has scaled down the requirement from 39,600 acres to 16,800 acres of area in Baliapal region and 9,200 acres of land in Bhogral region...

SHRI ARUN SINGH : The total now comes to 27,700 acres.

SHRI R.P. DAS : I am sorry, the area has been scaled down to one-third of the total that, he originally said, would be required. It is really self-defeating; so to say we have seen so many reports in the press and statements that this Range requires a very wide area for its own testing and for the safety region, for which

a large number of people have to be shifted from that area and it is feared that the socio-economic structure may be broken down in 400 sq. kilometre area constituting over 100 villages. The very plan of rehabilitation shows that a large number of people—over a lakh—will be affected for the setting up of this Range at Baliapal. At the same time the other aspect of the rehabilitation plan is such that it causes resentment of the people. This plan of rehabilitation is such that it also has raised some suspicion by its being so large about the implementation of the entire plan by the State Government and also by the Central Government. There is a grave suspicion about the intention, about the capacity, about the ability of the State Government and also the Central Government.

You take the case of Dandakaranya, Hirakud and also Talcher Coal Fields, etc., there also the displaced people could not be rehabilitated in the areas as was intended by the State Government. In this case of rehabilitation also, you find that there is a very big plan. It is not so easy to rehabilitate all these people in different places of different professions. The people of Baliapal constitute rich and well-to-do farmers down to the landless labour and people of other professions. They have raised a doubt that they would not be rehabilitated in the manner that has been planned. On the other hand, the entire area is such, as Prof. Madhu Dandavate has already explained, that it is a greenery of Orissa. It is a place where people with ten decimal of land could very well maintain a family of five. It is such a beautiful place that the paddy and other crops could be grown there without any fertilizer. There is very good climate and the weather is such that people can easily afford their family with a small piece of land. If they are shifted to other places which are also not available at the same time to rehabilitate all these people, it would be impossible for them to maintain a family of five with ten decimal of land elsewhere.

The rehabilitation plan indicates that some people will be accommodated in the factories or in other institutions that it will

set up. The plan also indicates that one man from one family would be provided a job. A family, particularly from the middle class who are having good land and good income would not like to accept this plan. All these people just denied such an offer and they do not like to have their sons put in factories in lieu of their present occupation. It is because all these people are living in such a manner that they do not feel that they would require a job in factories like leather factory etc.

On the other side Sir, those who are in the lower strata, those who are landless, could also not be rehabilitated at all. They are neither provided with a job nor with a piece of land. This plan says that they will have their self-employment. They may have some sort of village transportation or shoe making business and fishery, like that. It is just impracticable to provide jobs to all of them. These people cannot be rehabilitated in that manner. Farmers can be rehabilitated only in the farming and cultivable land. If there is a scheme for land for land as has been suggested by the ex-Chief Minister Shri Hare Krishna Mehtab, it is good. Of course, our ex-Chief Minister has something in his mind. He wants to oust other people who want to settle there coming from West Bengal and Bangladesh. He wants that those people should be ousted from there and the people of Baliapal could be rehabilitated. That was the plan concerning land for land but I would suggest that land ceiling could be lowered in the Orissa State and land could be acquired from the zamindars and on this cultivable land farmers could be settled.

In conclusion I would say we need one testing range in our country but it should be at a place where less or no people are dislodged from that area. Therefore, I would suggest that alternate site should be found out and Government should reconsider about this testing range.

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI (Nabadwip) : At the outset I also want to point out clearly that my party is not at all against the testing range. If we need a testing range, well, we need it and we are all for it. My plea is regarding the selection of this particular site which

will bring disaster to nearly one lakh people who are directly and indirectly dependent for them living in Baliapal and Bhograi area. My plea is to avoid this incalculable human suffering and misery and shift the site even though it entails ten-fold or fifteen-fold expenditure.

I visited the Baliapal area. I was saddened and reminded of my own personal experience 39 years back of a similar incalculable human misery when my family had to leave its hearth and home situated in a similar lush green area of coconut and betel-nut groves and betel wines and paddy fields where even an inch of land is not barren. That was in East Bengal where we were never to return again.

I personally know that thousands of East Bengal refugees are still practically on the streets. Thousands of women—mothers, wives and daughters—had to become commodities in the flesh market to feed their children, their family and their parents. The trauma of displacement lingers still and at Baliapal looking at the eager worried faces of thousands of my sisters crowding around I must confess I was very much disturbed emotionally.

I was told by very small peasants and landless labour that Government will give home-steads 10 decimals of land. They also told me that at Baliapal if they grow betel leaves on ten decimals of land and if the whole family just labours on it they can feed themselves very well and it will fetch a gross amount of Rs. 40,000 a year. They are afraid and their fear is justified because they think once they leave their lands they will never be rehabilitated again.

It pains me that somewhere there has been total dis-regard and contempt for human suffering. The local Congress (I) MLA came to me at Jaleswar Dak Bunglow where I was staying and he told me that he is against this testing project in Baliapal and Bhograi and he is with the people. That is what he told me. Even the followers of the ruling party in Baliapal area are there in the Kheponastra Ghati Virodh Committee. In fact, I was told by one very old Congress man that he feels that this has become a prestige issue for the Chief Minister of Orissa. That is

[Shrimati Bibha Ghosh Goswami]

what I was told. His belief is that the Prime Minister is not being informed properly by the people who are incharge. Their demand and appeal is that the Prime Minister should visit the area, as he had earlier said, he would, and only after that there should be a final decision.

I do not want to go into much details. I would only like to have some clarifications. On page 4 of the statement, it has been said that now the total area of the range has been reduced and some facilities have been taken elsewhere.

I saw the map in the room of the Headmaster of a high school which was established just after Independence and their apprehension was that even though the total area has been curtailed, that the coast canal is the natural boundary and they will get back the whole of the area today or tomorrow and the whole area would have to be dehabitated.

I would like to know the number of the families who are settled there on the Government land which is 48 per cent of the total area. They will also have to be displaced.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : That is also included.

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : Further, in view of all that has been said, is the Government going to take a fresh look even at this stage and try with a will to find out a humane solution of this problem.

Secondly, will the Prime Minister visit the area in response to the appeal made by the people to him, before a final decision is taken ?

Further, as Prof. Madhu Dandavate said, will the Minister agree to an all-party Parliamentary delegation going to the area, visiting the people, the fishermen and the other people there ? There are twenty thousand fishermen whose families are outside the test range area, but whose livelihood is within the area. Their lives would also be in jeopardy. They are not included in these families. I have talked

to some of their women. Most of them are illiterate people. I shudder to think where their women and children are going to live.

13.00 hrs.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS (Tripura West) : Sir, the main issue involved is the plight of the people living in that area. The Minister has stated in his statement that the project is needed to strengthen our defence requirements. We have no difference of opinion about strengthening up of our defences. We share the same view. But the problems lies elsewhere. And the Minister in his statement has tried to put a lid on the misery of the people of that area.

Prof. Madhu Dandavate has already said that this area is the granary of Orissa and the main crops are paddy, betel-nut and so on. You have mentioned that only 41,000 people will be evicted from that area. But actually, directly or indirectly, about one lakh people will be evicted. Members of Parliament who have visited that area and discussed various issues with the people of that area, are of this view.

13.01 hrs.

[SHRI ZAINUL BASHER *in the Chair*]

10,000 fishermen will be evicted from that area. You have chalked out a plan to rehabilitate them. But I find that your programme or plan for rehabilitation is only a hoax. 10,000 fishermen will be evicted and they will be taken to the model village. But what about their earnings ? How will they maintain their families ? You have not spelt out anything.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Please refer to page 4, para 8.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : You have referred to opening of a training institute and all those things. That is all.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : They will continue to fish in the Subarna Rekha river mouth and the sea.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : 10,000 fishermen ?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Yes. 10,000 fishermen.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Are they prepared to go there ?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : They are there at the moment.

(Interruptions)

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : We ourselves are interested in this type of projects and these projects should have been implemented earlier. But my question is only this. India is a very vast country. Why are you interested in selecting that particular area ? Why are you making it such a prestige issue ?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Oh ! Come on now !

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : Yes. You are making it a prestige issue. All the Opposition MPs met the Prime Minister. Several discussions were held and the Prime Minister categorically assured that if any other area would be selected in consultation with the experts, he would have no objection. But in spite of that, you are sticking to that particular area only. Till now, the Chief Minister of Orissa is not able to visit that area.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He will not go in his lifetime. He dare not go.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : There is a great resistance from the people of that area because it is a very important area and the land is very fertile. So, people will not like to leave it and go to some other area.

We the opposition members would like to support you and help you. But unfortunately, we cannot convince the people of that area. So, my suggestion is the same as that of Prof. Madhu Dandavate. I would suggest that a parliamentary committee may be constituted comprising members from all political parties. Let that Committee visit the area and if the Committee still for suggests that that area is suitable, then you accept that site. Otherwise, alternative areas which have been proposed by some Members of Parliament may be explored and you may select one of those sites. Please do not go against the will of the people and do not act against the interest of the people of this country.

You may please select an alternate site instead of this area.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN SINGH) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it does not behove me, nor the dignity of this House to even suggest that patriotism of Members from the Opposition benches can be questioned.

Similarly, I do believe and I put it to you, through you, to the Members that does not behove them to question my humanity.

Sir, this is an extraordinary project, started in 1978, when Babu Jagjivan Ram was the Defence Minister. The Committee recommending its finding to the Ministry of Defence, recommended them to Mr. C. Subramaniam, who was the Defence Minister and the go ahead for the project was finally given by the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi, when she was the Prime Minister. If any project can be said to be an all party project, I put it to this House that this happens to be one. All the hon. Members have said, and as I said, I take it at its face value, that they are in full support of any project that helps the defence of the country. The problem about something like a test range concept is that this is limited by possibly at any point of time, there broad parameters.

First is the scientific and technological parameter that must apply.

Second is the economic parameter, that must apply. And the third is the humanitarian parameter that must apply. I would accept any blame or indeed any suggestion, if I were to put forward a thesis that we are proposing to off-set the humanitarian parameter with the economic parameter. I would be prepared to say that the Government which stood up and said that we cannot do acts because it will cost too much money in the face of causing human misery would not be doing its job.

Prof. Dandavate in his dissertation made a reference to various meetings that had been held in his usual inimitable style; he destroyed some of the basic efforts that we had made. He referred to the meeting

[Shri Arun Singh]

of 16th April, where various leaders came to the Ministry of Defence and discussed this problem. He dismissed it by saying that the possibility of alternate sites was side tracked. I categorically state here that this is not true...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : My second interruption. Originally when you sent the letter actually you indicated this meeting was to consider the rehabilitation.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Do not interrupt me. When I finish, you can say whatever you want to say.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You did interrupt me. I replied to you also.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Only to help you.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : We wanted to help you. Originally you wanted rehabilitation to be discussed. I talked to you over the telephone, you said 'yes', even that problem of alternate sites can be raised. Thanks that you allowed it to be raised.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : It was raised, and it was discussed. It was not side-tracked.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I myself said it was discussed and rejected.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : With the concept that Prof. Dandavate referred to—the problem—and in fact the problem was raised by all Members—we are in full agreement. The problem has nothing to do with this concept of a National Test Range; the problem has to do with the humanitarian aspects, the people who will be displaced as a result of the National Test Range. Prof. Madhu Dandavate said that the Soviet Union has a site in Siberia; France has a site in French Guyana, there was Cape Kennedy in Florida, and that Loch Nor was the Chinese site. If Mr. Dandavate is in a position to give us a site in Siberia, we are perfectly prepared to accept it; if he is prepared to give us a site in the Gobi desert...*(Interruptions)* May I be permitted to continue, Sir?

I knew what the tenor of this discussion would be. I have in fact, in my statement, listed a number of sites on the east coast and the island territories. I have attempted to list why they were discussed, what were the problems in relation to those sites—and why Balasore?

Prof. Dandavate mentioned Dwaraka. Without going into any unnecessary details, may I say that for all strategic and tactical reasons, Dwaraka is not a site. There is, in fact, no suitable site on the west coast. In the discussion that we have been having with senior leaders of Orissa, they always come back to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, on the basis that they are island territories; and after all, you can happily destroy a few island territories, because the number of people affected would be small. We accept the logic, insofar as the numbers are concerned. We accept that there are less people in Andaman and Nicobar Islands who will be displaced.

The problem is very simple : we cannot, today or in any foreseeable future, in any form of fashion, control the weather over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. We cannot set up a national facility which will operate for between 70 and 85 days a year. We do not have that kind of a resource; it is not a viable concept at all, under any circumstances. I state that categorically.

Members have stated that we are pursuing this project at this particular location, as a prestige issue. As I started saying...

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : You are querying...
(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SINGH : I am not querying. *(Interruption)* May I be permitted to continue, Sir? *(Interruption)* Wrong advice to the Prime Minister—that is what you said. *(Interruption)* No; please refer to the record. You said, "wrong advice to the Prime Minister."

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : I said...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Not by fiat—separately. I am sorry; the record will bear me out. *(Interruption)* I am not in a position here to discuss; I am not in a

position to discuss the Chief Minister, or what he does, or what he does not do. What I am in a position to state is that as far as we are concerned, it is no prestige issue. There is only one prestige issue : India must have a National Test Range. The problem is that no matter what Prof. Dandavate may say, I put it to you that Prof. Dandavate knows that there is no alternative. This is an accident of geography. You can write it off as an accident of Fate. You can put it down and say that it is most unfortunate, which indeed it is. *(Interruption)* I am sorry the factual position is that there is no alternative, possible site.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It means that if there had been no Balasore, there would have been no Defence project at all. Is that the conclusion ?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : That is very close to the conclusion.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : If there is no Balasore in India, well, there would not have been defence preparedness.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : I am not saying that at all. I am talking about a National Test Range; I am not talking about defence preparedness.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Thank God, Balasore is in India. Otherwise, we would not have got any range project at all.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Precisely. It is a very strange comment that I am making but, nonetheless, there is no place in India which is on the north south axis and you cannot pull a launch without north-south launch. Bad luck.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You mean to say that if Balasore had not been there, this project would not have been taken up in India at all.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : There are two points from which this thing is possible; both bulges of India—one on the east Balasore bulge and one on the west Dwarka bulge; both fire north-south. Unfortunately, due to strategic sound and

technical reasons, I will not go into it in this House; but it dictates that Dwarka is not a site because of the simple reason of potential interference in all parameters of operation. Therefore, regrettably and unfortunately, the only possibility is on the other side.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : What about Srihari Kota ?

SHRI ARUN SINGH : This is the whole point which we are trying to make; this is the point which was made in 1978, which was repeated in 1979, which was repeated in 1981; and I am talking about not by 'A' government, not by 'A' party in power; it was started off when Mr. Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister; it went through the period when Mr. Charan Singh was the Prime Minister; it went through the period when Mrs. Gandhi was the Prime Minister. This is a fact that Shark unfortunately is not suitable for north-south launch. You will fire into Madras. But true; and this site unfortunately happens to be a site where ISRO will launch a polar satellite from there. *(Interruptions)* We discussed it earlier and I am saying that I am not querying them; we all agreed. In fact, every single member said, yes, we understand the requirement of the National Test Range.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : For the sake of one Gandhi, you have totally rejected the old Gandhi. That is the tragedy. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN SINGH : In fact, I am able to quote even you. You said something to the effect that any project that helps defence, we in the opposition, will totally support. I am saying the same thing as you said.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Don't separate it; don't misquote. I am not opposed to the project, but it is the site I have quoted 5 countries where they deliberately chose the desert land because human being was supreme there. Strange in the land of Gandhi, human being is not supreme.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : I suggested to you that you may like to indicate me a desert near Balasore and I would be very happy to do so,

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Marshy land, we had discussed here.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Half of this site is marshy land.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Instead of desert land, we suggested marshy land.

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : Satbhai is marshy land.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SINGH : I have given a full write up on Submaha. There are certain technological parameters which I cannot change; I cannot change the geography of India.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : In the name of technology, you cannot do away with all these things.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : In this country, technology has to be planned and adjusted among the human beings. *(Interruptions)* In the whole thing, you have forgotten the old Gandhi. That is the tragedy.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : You please ride with my assumption and give me the benefit of doubt for a moment. If I say to you that in fact there is no other site, will members kindly tell me should we have a National Test Range or not ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : First, we challenge your premise.

SHRI ARUN SINGH : You please go with my premise for a moment. I am not asking you to grant me anything. You just go with my Premise for a moment and then give me an answer on that.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You may ask me a Premise. If there is no zone, will you allow the people to die ?

(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SINGH : The factual position therefore is that the dilemma which Prof. Dandavate faces in giving me

a direct answer to my direct question is in fact exactly the dilemma that we face in government. The factual position is that there is no other site.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : It is on the part of government to decide.

SHRI R.P. DAS (Krishnagiri) : It is on the part of the Government to decide whether there are...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : No commentary please. You have said what you have to say.

(Interruptions)

SHRI R P. DAS : Government surely has this kind of information, not the individual Member. Individual Members cannot have all the data, all the expert opinion and everything like the Minister.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ARUN SINGH : Sir, the problem, therefore, is very simple and it is a problem which, by inference, is the one mentioned by Prof. Dandavate. The difference is between being in Government and being in Opposition. And may I say to the credit of Prof. Dandavate, although I am in no position to give him that credit for his opinions, that were I in his shoes I may have done the same thing? But there is a difference in being in Government and in being in the Opposition, Sir, Unfortunately, in the Government we have to take the decision and unfortunately, parameters being what they are, both geographical and climatical, the fact being that there is no other site; we are forced, therefore, to locate this site.

The problem that we need to resolve and in the resolution of which we have, as Government, repeatedly asked for advice or suggestions. The problem that we have to resolve is the problem of re-settlement and rehabilitation and for that problem we must be able to find a solution because money does not matter, and that problem is the problem that I was hoping we would address ourselves today because we could be told that 'your idea of this kind of a village with this kind of

a facility for water or sewerage etc. is no good. You must have a village like this or your idea that fishermen should get boats of this size and this shape is not a good idea that boats should be like this, or the nets should not be this big or that big. Yes, these are the problems where we need help and therefore, I am sorry that the entire Calling Attention on this subject has boiled down to... (Interruptions) The entire discussion on the national Test Range, Sir, has boiled down to what I may describe as a very superficial statement of problems with no suggestions for solution.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, when he has taken such a rigid stand, all that we can do is, we can only record our protest in the most parliamentary form by only staging a protest walk out. Nothing more can be done.

13.22 hrs.

(At this stage, Prof. Madhu Dandavate and some other hon. Members left the House)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Matters under Rule 377.

13.23 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

- (i) Need to protect the interests of HDPE units in the country in case Jute packing is made mandatory

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD (Baroda) : A Committee for working out mandatory use of jute bags has been appointed to protect 52 working Jute Mills, situated in West Bengal manufacturing 15 lakh tonnes of packing material and controlled by monopoly houses. In case Jute packing becomes mandatory, Government should take action to protect the interests of :

- (b) 500 HDPE Units scattered all over the country and controlled mainly by small entrepreneurs, manufacturing hardly 60,000 tonnes of HDPE woven bags for

packing mainly fertilizers and small quantity of cement.

- (b) Millions of cultivators who use and store fertilizers without repacking and consumers of cement who get more quantity of cement which otherwise is lost in transit.

[Translation]

- (ii) Need to undertake comprehensive survey of water resources in Kanpur

SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI (Bilhar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir under Rule 377, I want to raise the following important matter in the House.

Kanpur, the industrial city of Uttar Pradesh is going to face an unprecedented drinking water crisis. The District Administration has submitted a scheme to solve this problem by pumping the Ganges water at Bithur. But the river Ganges is changing its course and is moving away from Kanpur every year. Besides, the Ganga Dam Project is also not being implemented.

Every day, 70 million litres of drinking water is supplied to the city through 41 tubewells in the city. Most of the tubewells in the city have been drilled upto a depth of 400 metres and in the absence of survey by the geo-hydrologists, 10 tubewells have failed within a short period and the quantum of water from other tubewells has also gone down and there is a fear of their becoming inoperative in the next few years.

According to several geologists, underground water in the form of deep wells is available in ample quantity at a depth of 2000 to 5000 metres in Ganges basin, but the experts of U.P. Jal Nigam and Water Institute of Uttar Pradesh have expressed the view that the underground water sources in Kanpur city are either drying or they are going to dry up in the near future. But in modern age of computers and science this sounds incredible. Therefore, it is necessary in the public interest that the Centre, in cooperation with the ground water council of the State, gets a survey conducted through the Geo-physical and Remote sensing systems.