

17.31 hrs.

**HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION**

[*Translation*]

**Report of United Nations Environment Programmes on Water Shortages**

**SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali)** ·  
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with your permission I am raising the following Half-an-hour Discussion.

[*English*]

Water resources in India are one of the precious gifts of the nature.

There was a question on that. It was :

“(a) whether Government’s attention has been drawn to a United Nations Environment Programme report about the arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones which may face critical water shortages by the turn of the century:

(b) whether there is continuing loss of fresh water through the disruption of hydrological cycles because of deforestation and desertification as also through the pollution of rivers, lakes and underground water;

(c) whether about 70 percent of fresh water resources in India is said to be polluted by untreated domestic and industrial waste;

(d) If so, whether Government propose to formulate long-term soil and water conservation schemes in view of multiplying demands of water resources; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?”

[*Translation*]

It is matter of regret that the hon.

Minister has given the following reply to such an important question.

[*English*]

“(a) No such report has been received by the Government.

(b) to (e) No precise information is available. However, Government have undertaken various water and soil conservation schemes like storage reservoirs, big and small check dams, nallah bunding, gully plugging etc.”

[*Translation*]

The Members are not satisfied with the reply given by the hon. Minister on such an important question. The Hon. Speaker has, therefore, admitted this Half an hour discussion on this matter. At present the most important thing is that the country is turning into a vast desert. 14 percent of the land constitutes desert. I am submitting a report which says :

[*English*]

“United Nations’ Environment Programme : Desertification is not yet viewed as a serious ecological problem in development planning in India, although 14% of the World’s land threatened by desertification lies in India.”

[*Translation*]

Desert is expanding in India on a large scale, I would like to cite an example :

[*English*]

“that desertification arises from inappropriate land use which destabilizes the soil-water-vegetation system.”

[*Translation*]

Last year this was the position in Garhwal and Tehri. I am quoting the report :

[English]

"..... the spring sources were drying up. Out of 2,700 drinking water supply schemes in these hill regions, 2,300 projects had become defunct as a result of the drying up of sources of water.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask if the deserts go on advancing on such a large scale, what would be the situation in future? All the trees have been felled and the forest area which was 43 per cent earlier has been reduced to 9 per cent. The trees have been felled and soil washed away into the rivers due to the rains and all the rivers, lakes and ponds have been heavily silted causing depletion of water in them. The mountains have been denuded due to the felling of trees and the rivers, ponds and lakes have been silted with the result that the level of water has gone down considerably. I would tell you its reason :

[English]

"The hydrological impact of Eucalyptus on water resources has been systematically studied by the hydrological division of the CSIRO in Australia. A long term experiment established that during years with precipitation less than 1000 mms, deficits in soil moisture and ground-water were created by Eucalyptus. A permanent water deficit was avoided by significantly high rainfall of 1,477 mms in one of the five years of the study."

[Translation]

The Eucalyptus trees which have been planted absorb more underground water and in this report it has been stated :

[English]

"Throughout the country reports are available about the rapid destruction of water resources as a consequence of large-scale planting of Eucalyptus."

[Translation]

This report deals with the consequences of plantation of Eucalyptus trees in Bihar, Karnataka and other States. I want to tell the hon. Members from Maharashtra that the cultivation of sugarcane is resulting in more absorption of ground water. About it has been said in this report :

[English]

"This has led to over-exploitation of groundwater. The Groundwater Survey and Development Agency of Maharashtra has found that out of 1,481 water-sheds in the State, there is over-exploitation of 77 water-sheds spread over 14 Districts. The problem is extremely acute in the five districts of Ahmadnagar, Sangli, Jalgaon, Dhule and Nasik. Abuse of water for water-intensive cultivation has created a severe drinking water crisis and severe food crisis."

[Translation]

When this is happening in Maharashtra, why then hon. Members from that State were saying so. What I want to tell them is that in Rajasthan also the water level has gone down so much that in future there will be large scale depletion of ground water. And looking at the scarcity of water it seems that water will be a rationed item in near future. I want to tell what the hydro-scientists have stated. I want to draw your attention towards the condition of the country due to soil erosion. Where water is available it is being misused. Large quantities of water go waste in the rivers of Punjab. Thousands of bighas of land have become useless due to water seepage. Similarly, so much water in Chambal is allowed to flow that in Madhya Pradesh seepage and water logging are causing a similar situation.....(Interruptions)

I do not know whether the hon. Members who are interrupting, have the right to do so but I want to ask what steps Government propose to take to utilise the

[Shri Mool Chand Daga]

water resources available with us. I have seen that the water resources have not been utilised properly. You have spent Rs. 15,000 crores on irrigation projects but I am sorry to say that the figures are not encouraging. The Minister of Water Resources can himself see this. The figures are—

[English]

The ultimate potential for surface water is 73.5 million hectares and the utilisation till 1984-85 was 34.3 million hectares.

[Translation]

I want to intimate the position about the water :

[English]

“The country has spent Rs. 15,000 crores on irrigation since the beginning of the planning process in 1950 and claims to have created over 60 million hectares of irrigation potential.”

[Translation]

But the water is not being utilised. We have not learnt as to how to use the water resources? You yourself have said that a National Water Policy will be formulated; but when? For this, very good speeches were made. Few days ago the Hon. Prime Minister also said that a National Water Policy should be formulated for the country, in view of the fact that 70 per cent of our water is polluted. The effluents of the factories are discharged into the rivers, lakes and ponds of the country and 70 per cent water is getting polluted. This Department is playing with this country. In future, if there is no proper management of water resources, we shall have to face a lot of difficulties. What happened in Madras? Two years back I went to Madras. People there were crying for water. In Karnataka also water is in scarcity. Presently, there are many places on the banks of the Ganga where people are facing acute

shortage of water. In Delhi too there is acute scarcity of water. Entire soil of the land has been washed away, the banks have been denuded and the water of the rivers has become polluted. What is the Government doing? The Government says that we have formulated a water policy.

(Interruptions)

Is the Government aware as to what was the quantity of water available in 1950 in the rivers, lakes, springs in the hills and under ground water and how much has it been reduced today? Will you reveal the facts in this connection and tell us as to what measures your Department is taking? What steps are being taken by the Government to check constant depletion of water resources? Water is an invaluable bounty for man. What steps are being taken by the Government to exploit it properly. What measures have been taken by the Government to stop the land from getting barren and water from going waste due to water-logging? In spite of large scale irrigation facilities and despite spending Rs. 15,000 crores, the floods have ruined the country, water is going waste and it is flowing into the sea and the sources of drinking water are dwindling. What measures are being taken by the Government to check all this? Who is responsible for this? What steps have been taken by the Department in all these things? Will the Government tell as to what arrangements have been made to prevent large scale cultivation of sugarcane in those parts of Maharashtra where there is acute scarcity of water? What measures will be taken to see that Eucalyptus trees are not planted on large scale in Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where there is acute shortage of water. In Tehri Garhwal and other places the water resources have dwindled due to land erosion. What steps have been taken by the Government to check this? In Rajasthan the desert area is increasing due to heavy reduction in underground water. What is Government doing in this connection? Shri Shankaranand delivered a spirited speech in Vigyan Bhawan about the national water policy. When will he formulate the water policy and when will that be implemented and how much money will be spent

thereon ? Had you not rung the bell I would have given all the details. If we do not take immediate measures, coming generations would curse us and even a jug of water will be difficult to get. With these words I conclude.

[English]

**THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has traversed a very wide range of problems, not only that of water resources, but the problems of environment and other related matters. He has rightly related the question and we did try to answer Question No. 112 on 24.7.1986.

In one question, I can say that he has raised many issues—the issues regarding arid, semi-arid and sub-humid zones. The issue regarding the critical water shortage. The third is lack of fresh water due to the disruption of Hydrological cycle because of deforestation, pollution of rivers, lakes, ponds, etc. He has raised the question of pollution. He has raised the issue of water conservation. While initiating the discussion within a period of half an hour, he has raised many issues. The issues are regarding desertification, growth of Eucalyptus trees and thereby the defects in the planning of the country, over-exploitation of ground water, shortage of drinking water, soil erosion and very indirectly he referred to the issue of not so proper utilisation. I do not say misuse of water, but the utilisation of the water, potential. He referred to Punjab where according to him, over-utilisation of water is leading to water logging, salination of the land and degradation of land. Perhaps he thinks that water can be spared for Rajasthan, so as to check the desertification.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** So that all deserts in Rajasthan will go away.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND :** Sir, we had tried to answer the question and I do not think he has any grievance with the reply, but I should say in the beginning

he referred to the National Water Policy. I can assure the House through you and inform the hon. Members that the group of Ministers which was appointed by the National Water Resources Council under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister went into the entire gamut of water resources problem of this Country. The development potential to be created, to be utilised, the drinking water requirement both in human population, the cattle population, the wild life, the water that is required for the restoration of forest cover along with the conservation of water development and relating the gap between the potential created and its utilisation and various other matters.

I am happy to inform the House that the group of Ministers the other day after having five meetings have finalised the draft policy paper and ~~this policy paper~~ will be placed before the National Water Resources Council finally to be adopted after discussion and deliberations. The House will also have the benefit of discussing the water policy before it is adopted by the country. So, the hon. Member need not be worried about this. Very soon, this country will have a water policy on which every Member, people and the Parliament will lay hand on the specific aspects of the water policy.

Regarding drinking water, Sir, it is true that the country has faced many drought years and specially some States in the country have been facing drought continuously for 3 to 4 years. God willing this year, if the rains are there we hope to improve the conditions. May I tell you that the drinking water problem basically relates to the human population, cattle population, livestock and wild life. By March 1981, according to the 1981 Census, the population of this country had reached 685 million. Today it is estimated to be 760 million. The population estimated by the turn of the Century is 986 million. At the present rate of growth of 3.2% every year, the population is expected to stabilize by 2050 A.D., when it is estimated to reach 1200 million to 1300 million.

With this growth of population, the

[Shri B. Shankaranand]

demand for drinking water and water for domestic purposes will naturally increase. To sustain this population, naturally agricultural production has to be increased. Many of our industries are consumptive in nature, with regard to water. The demand for water is going to increase tremendously, with the development of the country, in this age of plastic and other things. There will gradually be a shift from agriculture to industry. So, the demand growth from various sectors is going to be there.

About drinking water, I can say that this was a part of the 20-Point Programme started by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. She laid stress on the supply of drinking water. At the beginning of the 6th Plan, there were 2.31 lakhs problem villages which remained to be covered for the provision of safe drinking water. As a result of intensive efforts and heavy investment, 1.92 lakhs of these problem villages and 0.45 lakh non-problem villages were covered during the 6th Plan. This achievement has been possible because of the investment on a scale larger than was originally envisaged, an investment amounting to Rs. 2457.63 crores, out of which Rs. 1538.98 crores is in the State sector, according to the Minimum Needs Programme, and Rs. 918.65 crores in the Central sector.

The idea during the 7th Plan has been to accelerate the provision of drinking water supply to people, especially in villages, laying more emphasis not only on problem villages but also on the target population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in the country. In this area, Government is not thinking of doing anything, alone. We are going to involve voluntary organizations in the execution and maintenance of water supply schemes in a big way. For this purpose an amount of Rs. 0.50 crores has been provided for 1985-86 and Rs. 4 crores for 1986-87.

I need not go into the details of these things. I would only assure this House and the hon. Members that Government is quite aware of the increasing nature of the problem with regard to drinking

water. I had regional meetings of irrigations Ministers of States and Union Territories, before the national level meeting was taken. I am happy to tell the House that this problem has been receiving the serious attention of the people of all the States, and the Government of India.

18 00 hrs.

It has been emphasised that before clearing any irrigation project the first priority is that a project should contain drinking water component where there is no other alternative source for drinking water. This has been accepted by all. This is how we are going to tackle this problem.

The hon. member has asked about desertification; desertification is not only the development of the desert by sand dunes coming and going and eating the land desertification takes place on account of various factors, degradation of land, deafforestation; it is the result of serious soil erosion degradation of land by water-logging and various other factors. There have been special schemes provided for checking soil erosion and special programmes have been taken up in that regard. I know that this serious soil erosion in the catchment area of a river valley leads to sedimentation. There have been special programmes to prevent this also; special funds have been provided; special programmes have been drawn up and we are taking care to check soil erosion and prevent sedimentation.

I agree with the hon. member when he says that there has been over-exploitation of ground water, and he has a grievance against the sugarcane growers of Sangli in Maharashtra perhaps. Rajasthan does not have any sugarcane growing areas; and he deserves to have that sugarcane growth in his State.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let us plant trees.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Let us hope so with the Indira Gandhi canal

coming up. All the members from Rajasthan will be happy to see that their desert areas will be full of lush green and pasture land, irrigation facilities with drinking water facilities provided to the people. Let us hope that this scheme is going to come and the Government is very serious about this scheme—Indira Gandhi Canal Scheme. Shortly, I am going to visit that area and see what problems are existing there. I do agree that there has been over exploitation of ground water leading to a very serious situation of shortage of drinking water for the people who are not depending of the sugarcane fields, the poor people, are very hard hit because of shortage of drinking water. Unless there is a strict control in the cropping pattern in the irrigated areas, perhaps we will not be able to solve it. But as I said that since we have accepted it, there has been an emphasis on drinking water component in the irrigation projects perhaps; this is going to reduce to a large extent the problem of drinking water supply.

He has posed a question about future. Let it not be so pessimistic about future. We are preparing ourselves to enter the 21st century with pride. I hope he will make this country vibrant and a powerful nation, and he will be able to solve this problem.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He has also asked about population.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Pollution is definitely a phenomenon with the growth of the population on the banks of the rivers. We have special programmes and this House has discussed about the pollution control programme; and if the House is again interested, a debate can be arranged on the pollution itself, and we are ready to answer it.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : (Barmer) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the largest desert area Thar is in my constituency. Just now the hon. Minister was replying that Indira Canal will prove quite beneficial for the desert areas. I want to know whether it will result in a permanent solution of the drinking water problem

and also, whether it will be helpful in the development of forests? The Government of Rajasthan has no capacity to construct it on its own. This project was started in 1968. A period of 18 years has elapsed but the canal has not so far been completed. We have made a provision of Rs. 250 crores in the Seventh Five Year Plan. In the Sixth Five Year Plan, the Government had given assistance of Rs. 40 crores. The Rajasthan Government has demanded an assistance of Rs. 200 crores. We hope that Indira Gandhi Canal will be completed by providing the assistance requested for so that advancement of the desert area is checked.

My next point is that only 13 per cent of area is covered by forests. Experts are of the opinion that it should be 33 per cent. What steps you are going to take to ensure that this percentage does not come down further, say upto 6 per cent?

My third question is what permanent solution you are going to find to tackle the problems of famine and floods? If you are able to find a permanent solution for them, all the problems will be solved once for all.

You have engaged the Territorial Army in the construction of Indira Gandhi Canal and on afforestation. My fourth question is whether you will extend this programme further?

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would concentrate on one or two points. All of you are aware what happened in Africa. Even after that India has not learnt a lesson. In Africa, the forests were indiscriminately denuded on large scale. In India the deforestation is going on even faster. I have much to say on this point but I would not go into details. The Government has started social forestry programme. But how many trees and plants are being planted under this scheme, this you must ask from us who are people's representatives? In your records crores of saplings are shown as planted in a particular constituency but the truth is that these are

(DR. G. S. Rajhans)

not planted even in thousands. Subsequently it is told that the animals have grazed those plants or they have been washed away in floods. Are the benefits of the social forestry reaching the people? M. P.s are not taken in the monitoring committees. May be in other States they are included in such Committees but in Bihar the M.P.s are not included. Crores of rupees are being spent and that money is going in the pockets of the bureaucrats. Will the Government look into this aspect also? The hon. Minister is sitting here. He should think over it patiently.

The situation of Bihar is very serious. Water coming from rivers of Nepal ravages North Bihar. You come with me and see the devastation caused there. The area remains inundated for 6 months in a year. The wretched condition of that area is beyond imagination. South Bihar has always to face acute scarcity of water. I know it is not possible to divert water from the north Bihar to the South Bihar. Besides, you shall find unhygienic water both in north and south Bihar. There is acute scarcity of drinking water in south Bihar. You have just said that when Rashtrapati ji visited Nepal, an agreement was concluded with that country that dams would be constructed on rivers originating from Nepal so as to check floods in north Bihar. May I know by what time this work would be completed? That region faces the problems of floods and silting every year, and all the ponds are filled with muddy water. The cattle as well as the people drink that water throughout the year and also bathe in it. As a result thereof dysentery, cholera, malaria and kala-azar break out. Has anyone taken care of them? May I know what solution is being found out to this type of problem which occurs every year. It is a good thing that you are going to formulate a water policy. You say with great pride that you are taking the country into the 21st Century. I would like you to visit Bihar and I shall show you that the people there are still living in the 5th century. The life in north Bihar is in no way better than that of Africa. The condition there is appalling and we have not been able to provide drinking water to them. Whenever we

visit our constituency, the people say that they have elected us but that we had not been able to provide drinking water to them even after forty years of independence.

As regards tubewells, they are on paper only. You will of course take the shelter of the plea that it is the responsibility of the State Government. But this will not do. You should monitor it and take the State Government to task. The State Governments dare not defy your instructions? The tubewells are there only on paper have not been actually installed. You cannot imagine the sufferings of the people of the villages they have to undergo in the absence of the tubewells.

May I know whether arrangement of drinking water will be made in the north Bihar and south Bihar in a year or two? Besides, waterlogging in north Bihar is a permanent feature as a result of which diseases break out and crops are destroyed. Will some permanent solution of this problem be found out?

Thirdly, I have raised this question a number of times in the House and wrote letters to the hon. Minister also in regard to the problem of irrigation. Work on the Western Kosi Canal is going on at snail's pace. It should be speeded up.

In the end, I would like to know whether dams and reservoirs would be constructed in Nepal so as to check the devastation caused by the rivers originating from Nepal and also generate so much electricity from it that Nepal as well as India are benefited. In this way we will also be saved from the devastation of floods?

The hon. Minister may please give reply to all these points.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH RATH : Air pollution, water pollution, deforestation, soil erosion and ground water strata is going down and drinking water are the burning problems of the country. Much importance and serious thought has been

given by our Prime Minister in the area of environment in the country.

We are having 'Van Mohotsav'. We are having afforestation, social forestry. In the Forest Department itself there is a section called afforestation. District Forest Officers are there. Crores of rupees are being spent by the Forest Department for tree plantation. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether any stock-taking has been made as to how many trees are being planted every year throughout the country, by different States and Union territories, how many trees survived and how many have gone waste, what is the cost of a tree growing I mean the tree actually standing on the ground, and not just planting it and leaving it for itself. This is a factor which needs serious consideration of the Government. My previous speaker has said that it is for the States to put in efforts. No, it is for the nation to put in efforts. Central Government is giving crores of rupees to different States for this purpose. So, the States have got an obligation to make the Central Government know what is happening to the money given to them for afforestation. The Central Government cannot be a silent spectator and only give crores of rupees to the States every year and not know whether there is any return for the amount that was given for the purpose.

Another point is that since there are two forest departments—Department of Afforestation and the regular Department—we should know how many cubic feet of trees are being cut every year and how many trees are being planted and survived; otherwise after a few years we will not have any forest at all. I think the future generation will have to go to a particular place to see what is a forest because deforestation is at a higher rate than afforestation. Trees are our basic needs. Not that we hold some functions where the Ministers will go, the VIPs will go and plant some trees and be satisfied with that, though it is necessary. What is needed is the awareness and the implementation. This should not be a matter only for the Government to look after, it must be a mass movement. People are to be involved in this. They are to be told that

these trees are being planted for them and they are to look after. They must be educated. Unless it becomes a mass movement, I think this programme will not succeed.

Previously during the British regime, if any tree was being cut in a particular compartment, not only the contractor who had taken lease near that compartment was taken to task, but also the villagers. But what is happening now? The villagers are being utilised by the persons having vested interest, to cut the trees. They are given a little higher wages and trees are being cut and removed in broad day light. In my State Orissa, if the statistics are taken, there are practically no forests. Trees are being cut. Timbers are being removed in trucks everyday and no action is being taken. So, I want to know from the hon. Minister what steps he is going to take.

Secondly, the hon. Minister has said about drinking water. He referred to problematic villages. Problematic villages means health hazard villages. But that will not be sufficient. Drinking water should be supplied not only to the problematic villages, but it should be supplied to all the water scarcity villages. It is not that the Government should ask the State Governments to provide drinking water only to the problematic villages. Water scarcity villages should be identified and they should also be given drinking water. I want to know from the hon. Minister what is the Government thinking in this regard.

As far as agriculture is concerned, in different countries soil conservation is given the most important place. The hon. Minister while replying spoke about soil conservation and storage of water. I would ask the Minister whether the Government is going to lay much stress on the construction of water sheds for soil conservation. It is otherwise called water harnessing structure. In three ways it helps us. It will stop soil erosion. It will also help in the irrigation of dry-land and it will raise the strata of sub-soil water. So I would request the Minister to inform the House about the steps which will be

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taken by the Government for the construction of water sheds throughout the country.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND :** Sir, in the very short available time, I will try to clarify the points which have been raised by hon. Members. Generally Members are asking about deforestation. Whether it is planting tree or growing forest, the question is about forest and they have expressed their anxiety about the growing reduction of the forest coverage. Another important point about which the Members are worried is regarding the supply of drinking water. I did try to deal with these points in my main reply but still I wish to say this with reference to the drinking water supply. With regard to the strategy of the Seventh Plan, I have already given the figures. The strategy in the Seventh Plan is to provide drinking water supply to the entire country, hundred per cent coverage to the rural people. That is the strategy. I have also given the figures with regard to the provision of fund for this purpose. The highest priority is given to the coverage of the spill over problem villages from the Sixth Plan to the Seventh Plan. One of the hon. Members asked not about the problem villages but about the water scarcity villages. Water scarcity villages should also be treated as problem villages and that population will be covered by the end of the Seventh Five-year Plan. Sir, the question is how to do that. On the one side there is constraint of resources. On the other side, the number of problem villages is increasing plan by plan, because of water level steadily going down over the years. This is what happens. So, we have to find out how best to provide for drinking water to the entire rural population; and the actual availability of resources during the Plan period being less, how to meet this demand. A low cost alternative to capital-intensive regional pipe water scheme according to the Government is inevitable for attaining our objective of providing potable drinking water to the entire population. For that, Sir, we have to find solutions which are economical and which are in keeping with the local needs and conditions. With this objective in view, a

technology mission on "Drinking Water in Villages and Related Water Management" has been launched with the approval of the Prime Minister.

The Technology Mission would aim at identification of the different problem areas, develop appropriate low cost technology to overcome these problems through application in the field. The broad thrust of the technology development would be low cost water treatment for fluoride, salinity and brackishness, iron and bacteriological contamination improving the ground water condition through proper recharging as well as retention of run off and developing traditional water retention and collection structures.

Another Member, if I remember, from Bihar asked about the monitoring of the drinking water supply scheme and involvement of the Members of Parliament in this. Sir, the schemes taken up for execution under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme were submitted by the State Governments to the Central Government for technical scrutiny and their approval. After their approval these schemes are technically scrutinised and a regular monitoring of the progress is done through monthly and quarterly progress report obtained from the State Government. The complaint of the hon. Member is about corruption.

**DR. G. S. RAJHANS :** The tubewells do not exist at all.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND :** You spoke broadly about corruption and all that.

**DR. G. S. RAJHANS :** Yes.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND :** I do not know, I will not dwell on the acts of corruption, but it has been the policy of the Government to see that the entire rural population is covered under this programme. And that is how I gave the figures also. Sir, about the fact that in spite of having provided the funds for providing potable water to the people they

do not get it, it is not only the responsibility of the Government, but it is the responsibility of all of us to see that the money is properly spent for the people.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : But please tell us what to do. Nobody listens to us.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : I can now say that it is now proposed to introduce concurrent evaluation of the drinking water supply programme by involving different technical organisations at the State level like regional engineering colleges, polytechnics and similar other technical institutions. And the Government will consider any other viable proposal that the hon. Members suggest to see that this vital programme of providing drinking water to rural people is implemented.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The only solution is, we have to link the rivers of north and south. Otherwise it is not possible. That is the only solution. There is flood here and there is drought there. Whenever water is in excess, we can store it. We cannot raise the ground water resources. Unless we store the water resources how can we get drinking water? Here it is flood, in the south there is drought. Of course, it is a costly affair. But it is the only solution to India. We have to preserve the water. Whatever rain water comes, some how it has to be preserved.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : Sir, the hon. Member asked about the provision of drinking water in the Rajasthan canal area. About 1200 cusecs of water are provided for drinking water supply and industrial use in the Rajasthan canal. This is out of the total utilisation capacity of the Canal. This is provided for drinking water. The capacity of Rajasthan Canal for drinking water and industrial use would be increased to 1800 cusecs after modernisation for water management, from 1200 cusecs.

Sir, the hon. Member suggested that if we can solve the problem of drought flood, perhaps the country's all the ills

will be taken care of. I agree with him. And we have to strive for that

Regarding the special assistance, there has not been any Central assistance provided in the 7th Plan for any irrigation project of any State. Generally, it is the States which have to fund and implement their projects. Of course, the hon. Member may hint at getting the World Bank assistance for such programmes. In this regard, I can say that the Centre will not lag behind in providing whatever necessary assistance, within the Plan provisions that are made for any project because, as I can say we do not provide funds project-wise. Central assistance, grants and all these things which are given, are not given project-wise.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : In the Sixth Plan, special assistance of Rs. 40 crores has been given for Indira Gandhi Nehar.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND : But there has not been any provision in the 7th Plan. This is what I have told you.

With reference to afforestation, I do agree that soil conservation is a must. If I can say, with regard to soil conservation in watershed management programmes, the programmes include treatment of all types of lands as per need. The construction of engineering structures, namely erosion control, storage and water harvesting also help in checking the soil erosion. The details of the soil conservation programmes implemented since inception up to the end of the 6th Plan and proposal for 7th Plan, both under the Centre/Centrally sponsored sector schemes are :

Physical achievement up to 1984-85 is 29.33 million hectares, with an expenditure of Rs. 1212.29 crores. Under the 7th Plan, the target is 6.75 million hectares and the outlay is Rs. 740.39 crores. For 1985-86, the target was Rs. 1.10 million hectares and the achievement was 1.08 million hectares, with an expenditure of Rs. 139.35 crores. And for the current year, the physical target is 0.74 million hectare and the outlay is Rs. 157.08 crores.

[Shri B. Shankaranand]

As I said, regarding afforestation, according to official record, the total area of forest in this country is 75 million hectares which is about 23% of the total geographical area. However, as the hon. Member has said, the National Remote Sensing Agency has revealed that the actual forest coverage is much lower. Drying of natural springs, siltation and soil erosion are attributed to deforestation although no specific study has been conducted.

For this, the measures taken are, a National Wasteland Development Board has been set up for raising plantation in 5 million hectares per year.

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is being strictly enforced to prevent diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes.

Programmes for afforestation and re-vegetation involving voluntary agencies and local community have been undertaken.

If the House is interested in knowing the pollution control measures, I can refer to them also.

**SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN :**  
They are interested.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND :** Under the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 a Central Board for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution has been set up. So far, 18 States have also set up Pollution Control Boards at the State level.

Under the provisions of this Act,

effluent standards have been prescribed for polluting industries and industries have been directed to comply with standards strictly.

Industries are also persuaded for installation of pollution control devices and legal action taken against the defaulting industries.

Fiscal incentives in terms of enhanced depreciation allowance of 30% on devices for pollution control are provided. The financing institutions also give loans at reduced rate of interest.

Zoning and classification of river stretches for their designated best uses have been done in respect of major rivers.

Basin-wise surveys in respect of rivers have been undertaken. Based on such comprehensive survey, the Ganga Action Plan has been launched.

Out of 4,054 polluting industries in large and medium sector, 2,076 units so far installed effluent treatment plants. These are various measures that Government is taking on the points raised in the House.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :**  
House stands adjourned to reassemble tomorrow at 11.00 AM.

18 38 hrs

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday August 7, 1986 (Shravana 16, 1908 Saka)*