

ernment, therefore, is of the view that President's Rule in Tamil Nadu should be continued for another period of six months with effect from 10th September, 1976. Rajya Sabha has already approved the requisite Resolution on the 17th August, 1976.

With these words, I commend the Resolution for the approval of this august House.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Resolution moved:

"That this House approves the continuance in force of the Proclamation, dated the 31st January, 1976, in respect of Tamil Nadu, issued under article 356 of the Constitution by the President for a further period of six months with effect from the 10th September 1976."

We take up the Private Members Business now.

15'31 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SHRI DHAMANKAR (Bhiwandi):
I beg to move:

That this house do agree with the Sixty-sixth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 17th August, 1976."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is :

"That this House do agree with the Sixty-sixth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 17th August, 1976."

The motion was adopted.

15'31½ hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. NATIONAL FOREST POLICY—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We take up further consideration of the following Resolution moved by Mr. P. K. Deo:

"This House notes with concern the large scale denudation of forest in the country and urges upon the Government to have a more pragmatic national forest policy so that 33.3 per cent area of the country is covered by forest."

SHRI M. C. DAGA (Pali): I beg to move:

That in the resolution,—

after "in the country" insert—

“, indifference of the States and formulation of separate policy by them in this matter” (1)

*SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA (Vishnupur): MR Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the resolution of Shri P. K. Deo regarding national forest policy.

15'32 hrs.

[SHRI VASANT SATHE in the Chair]

The National Forest Policy of 1952 had suggested that steps should be taken to encourage and expand the area under forest in our country and they had also suggested various measures as a result of the implementation of which the country, could have forests extending over 33.3 per cent area of our country. Unfortunately the national forest policy remained a pious wish and we could not do much to increase our forest wealth. After 1952, the next concerted effort made the Government was in 1976 when the report of the National Commission on Agriculture was represented. This is no doubt a very comprehensive report which has made many

*The original speech was delivered in Bengali.

[Shri Ajit Kumar Saha]

recommendations in regard to the development and utilisation of forest wealth. During the last 26 years we have not been able to achieve any progress in regard to the development forests in our country. As per the figures contained in the 1976 report we find that in 1950 the area under man made forest was 29,210 hectares. In 1972 there was a marginal increase of 2-3 per cent of this area and this proves how badly we have been neglecting our natural resources. Not only this even the existing forests are not being utilised fully. A proper utilisation of the forest wealth will go a long way to improve the economic conditions of our country. It will not only help our defence efforts, communications and other industries but it can in a big way help to solve the problem of unemployment which is prevailing in our country in menacing proportions. The administration of the forests is in the hands of the State Governments. From the report referred to above we find that the total number of persons engaged by the Central Government for the maintenance and development of forests is 93502. The number of technical persons engaged by these agencies is however not mentioned in this report. These figures only indicate that we are not paying adequate attention to the forests that they deserve. Not only this the amount of money spent by each State Government for this purpose is also quite insufficient. Paucity of funds is no doubt one of the chief handicaps for the State Governments to develop forests in our country and I would therefore request the Central Government to give liberal assistance to the State Governments so that they can make best use of the forests. Needless to mention, Sir, that the forests are also good foreign exchange earners. During 1973-74 we had exported forest products to a tune of Rs. 95.42 crores. While we earn from forests we still continue to import forest products for our internal

needs. For the same period of 1973-74 we spent a sum of Rs. 46.96 crores for the import of newsprint, paper board and pulp etc. If we can fully develop the man made forests in our country much of the expenditure on import can be curtailed and to that extent our country's economy will be benefited. We get a lot of things from our forests. We get medicinal herbs and honey from the jungles of Sunderbans. I would urge upon the Government to have well chalked out plans for rearing of bees and extraction of honey from the jungles of Sunderbans. This will offer employment to the local people and will also boost our national economy.

I would like to make a special reference about the way the bidi jungles are being utilised at present. There are a number of bidi jungles in the district of Bankura of West Bengal and in the neighbouring State of Orissa. Most of these jungles are still being owned by the private traders. The workers engaged by these traders get a nominal amount of 50/60 Paise per day and thus the owners corner a huge profit out of the sale of the bidi leaves. The exploitation of these workers is indeed pitiable and I would request the Central Government to exert their influence on these two State Governments so that special legislation is passed, to safeguard the interests of the bidi leaf collectors. I would also request the Central Government to nationalise the forests that are still in private hands. With these measures, I am sure we would be able to make a better progress in the sphere of forest development in the country than before.

श्री मूल चन्द डागा (पाली) : सभापति जी, जिस प्रकार सदन की ज्यादा शोभा तब तक रह सकती है जब यहां पर अधिक सदस्य उपस्थित हों उसी प्रकार घरती की शोभा तब रह सकती है जब उस पर ज्यादा पेड़ हो। जिस प्रकार की हालत आज इस सदन की है वैसी ही हालत घरती की भी है।

शिन्दे साहब क्षमा करें, आपके खेती के विभाग ने सारे कामों में सफलता प्राप्त की, करोड़ों टन अनाज पैदा कर दिया लेकिन अगर किसी काम के लिए आपको सब से बड़ा दोषी ठहराने की हिम्मत करें तो वह यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान में जंगल कम हो गए। पया भी खर्च हुआ लेकिन कुछ हुआ भी नहीं।

इसका कारण आप दे नहीं सकते हैं, फीरन एक बात कहेंगे कि यह स्टेट मन्त्रिक है और स्टेट आपकी बात मानती नहीं है। मैं संकल्प रखने वाले सज्जन को जरूर धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ, वन नीति जरूर बननी चाहिये, एक राष्ट्रीय वन नीति जरूर बननी चाहिए। लेकिन इसका सरकार पर क्या असर पड़ेगा—मैं नहीं जानता। बहुत सी कमेटियाँ बनीं, उनकी रिपोर्ट आई, आप एस्टीमेट्स कमिटी की अभी हाल की एक रिपोर्ट को देखिये—यह 65वीं रिपोर्ट है, इसमें कमिटी जंगलों के बारे में कहती है—

“The Committee feel greatly concerned that no concrete steps have been taken so far and the very first step suggested in the First Five-Year plan document that an immediate reconnaissance survey of wasteland be made so as to know how much of wasteland would be available in every state and what proportion of wasteland would be suitable for raising plantations has now been included in the Fifth Five-Year Plan....”

पहली पंचवर्षीय योजना में यह बात तय हुई कि देखा जाय कि हिन्दुस्तान में वेस्ट लैंड कितनी हैं जहाँ पर पेड़ लगाए जा सकते हैं, लेकिन 18 साल के बाद यह काम हुआ। शिन्दे साहब इस बात को जरूर कुबूल कर लेंगे, क्योंकि वे एक सज्जन आदमी हैं, वे अपने मन की बात को स्पष्ट तौर से कह देते हैं। वे अभी भी यही कहेंगे कि तरकीब करेंगे। लेकिन मैं यह नहीं समझ पाता हूँ इसकी वजह क्या है, पांचवीं पंचवर्षीय

योजना आ गई, 18 साल के बाद यह सर्वे हुआ कि हिन्दुस्तान में कितनी वेस्ट लैंड है जहाँ पेड़ लगाये जा सकते हैं—

“The Committee had urged that effective steps should be taken by the Board to increase the forest area in the various states where possibilities therefor existed, as during a period of 15 years, i. e., after the adoption of the National Forest Policy Resolution in 1952 till 1966-67, about two million hectares, registering an increase of only 6 per cent in the forest area was added.”

18 साल के बाद यह सर्वे हो सका कि हिन्दुस्तान में इतनी वेस्ट लैंड है जिस पर पेड़ लगाये जा सकते हैं। अभी हमारे पाराशर जी हिल स्टेशन की प्लानिंग की बाबत कह रहे थे, दिक्कत यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार बहुत ढंग से और धीरे धीरे काम करती है। 18 साल बाद तो यह सर्वे हुआ अब जंगलों की क्या हालत है—मैं आप को बतलाऊँ—जंगलों के संबंध में हमारे जो कानून हैं वह 1927 में बना था। बार बार कमिटी ने सजेस्ट किया और यहाँ भी कहा गया कि इस कानून में संशोधन कीजिये, इस कानून को बदलिये, लेकिन भगवान जाने, क्या बात है, यहाँ पर कोई भी इस बात को नहीं चाहता है। स्टेट्स को इस के बारे में कहा गया उन्होंने इस काम को नहीं किया। राज्यों को मालूम ही नहीं था कि उन के राज्यों में कितनी जमीन विल्ड फारेस्ट्स के लिये उपलब्ध है, कितनी जमीन प्रोटेक्टिड फारेस्ट्स में है। नेशनल पार्क आप ने बनाये हैं, वह बात अलग है। जंगलों की हालत गाँवों में भी बिगड़ी हुई है। अभी का रेजोल्यूशन क्या था।

“The Ministry has been pleading with the States through the forum of CBF as well as through National

[श्री मूलबन्द डागा]

Development Council to increase the forest area and bring it upto the level recommended in the National Forest Policy (There is little doubt that every State and Union Territory must have a minimum of 33 per cent of its land area under forests). However, it is brought to the notice of the Estimates Committee that Centre is in no statutory position to enforce the recommendations of the Central Board of Forestry."

The centre is in no statutory position.

विकल साहब भी बैठे हुये हैं। वह भी कृषि मंत्री उत्तर प्रदेश में रह चुके हैं। मैं एग्रिकल्चर की बात कर रहा हूँ जो इस से जुड़ी हुई है। वह कहते हैं कि हमें कोई पावर ही नहीं है।

"In the absence of statutory authority in the Government of India, it would be hardly possible to enforce the recommendation of the National Development Council that no forest area be disforested for the purpose of extension of cultivation and that suitable wastelands be afforested to compensate for the areas already lost. Under the Constitution forests are included in the State list of VII Scheduled of the Constitution. As such, unless a suitable amendment is carried out in the Constitution the Centre would find it extremely difficult to enforce the recommendation of N. D. C."

मैं शिन्दे साहब से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि इस समरजेंसी में वह चूकें नहीं। आप कानून लायें और इस को लागू करें। यह एक सुनहरी मौका है। अब कानून पास भी बहुत जल्दी होता है। अब आप चूक गये तो यह मौका आप के हाथ नहीं आयेगा आप को अपनी नीति फारेस्ट्स

के बारे में स्पष्ट करनी होगी। इस से आपको फारेन एकसब्रेंज मिलती है। 78 करोड़ की आप को मिली भी है। जंगलों से आप को जलाने के लिये लकड़ी मिलती है। उद्योगों के लिये आप को रा मेटैरियल जंगलों में से मिलता है। आदिवासियों की तो आत्मा ही जंगलों से जुड़ी हुई है; उन की तो जीविका ही इस पर निर्भर करती है। लेकिन हुआ क्या है। वहाँ पर कुछ ठेकेदार आ गये हैं और उन्होंने इन जंगलों को लाभ उठाना शुरू कर दिया है। इन की आजीविका का साधन इनसे छूट गया है। सरकार ने फारेस्ट्स के मामले में अपनी नीति अभी तक भी माफ में नहीं बनाई है। कमेटी की रिपोर्ट में आपने खुद कहा है कि हम इन में कुछ नहीं कर सकते हैं। अब आप ही कहते हैं कि आप कुछ नहीं कर सकते हैं तो हम आपको क्या राय दें। कमेटी ने कहा है :

"The Committee are distressed to note that in spite of Committee's recommendation and Government's acceptance of the same at the action taken stage in early 1970 that a comprehensive review of the working of the Commission should be made...."

अब रिव्यू भी चार साल में नहो हुआ है। आपको एयर कंडीशंड मकानों का मोह त्यागना होगा और जंगलों को लगवाना होगा। मैं यह भी कहूँगा कि जो वृक्ष आप लगावाएँ वे छायादार होने चाहियें, घने होने चाहियें फलदार होने चाहियें। संजय जी ने एक नारा बहुत अच्छा और सुन्दर दिया है और वह पेड़ लगाने के बारे में दिया है। फलदार पेड़ लगाने के बजाय सफेदे के पेड़ लगाए जा रहे हैं लम्बे लम्बे। 50-60 लाख जो लगने हैं वे घने होने चाहियें। आपने राज्यों को कहा कि वे इतने लगाएँ और उन्होंने गिनती पूरी करने के लिए सफेदे के लगा दिए जो जल्दी जमीन को पकड़ते हैं। इन पेड़ों को लगाने का खर्चा तो कम आता है लेकिन

इनके इन्हीं गिर्द जो जंगल लगाई जाते हैं उस पर ज्यादा खर्च आ जाता है। साढ़े तीन सौ के करीब उस पर खर्च आ जाता है।

बड़ा कमाल है भाई छोटी छोटी म्युनिसिपैलिटीज में मैं ने देखा कि जितने पेड़ लगाये जा रहे हैं, पी० डब्ल्यू० डी०, इरीगेशन डिपार्टमेंट और युवक कांग्रेस द्वारा, यह हमारे लिये ला भद्र है। लेकिन आप फल वाले पेड़ लगवाइये। यह कानून 1927 का है, प्लानिंग कमिशन ने सिफारिश की जो मैं आगे बताऊंगा, उस में लिखा है कि रात के अंधेरे में चोरी होती है जंगलों में, या उन के पिलर्स हटा देते हैं या जंगलों को जला देते हैं। हमारे यहाँ एक पानरवा जंगल था मेरे क्षेत्र में जिस में आदमी दिन में भी बिना टाँच लिये नहीं जा सकता था। इतना घना जंगल था। लेकिन अपने लाभ के लिये उस का सत्यानाश कर दिया। उदयपुर के हिस्से में आदिवासी लोग उससे अना गुजारा करते थे। आज वह भिखमंगे हो गये। इतना उत्पादन उस जंगल से होता था।

कोई अगर जंगल को जला दें तो सजा क्या है ?

He shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 6 months or with fine.

और फाइन अगर ही जाय तो उस का कोई अमर नहीं होता क्योंकि उस से अधिक का लाभ आदमी कर लेते हैं। एक पेड़ ले आये और उस का सोफा बनवा लिया। तो 1927 के ऐक्ट के बाद काफी खिलवाड़ हुई है। इस ऐक्ट में आपको रद्दोबदल करनी पड़ेगी। लेकिन इस के बारे में मीटिंग ही नहीं होती, कोई कार्यवाही ही नहीं हो पाती।

नैशनल फ्रीरेस्ट पोलिसी रिजोल्यूशन पर कितनी बार कमेटी बैठती है। 1952 से आज कितने साल हो गये। मैं धन्यवाद देता हूँ उस आदमी को जिस ने इतने बड़े प्रश्न की ओर ध्यान दिलाया।

The National Forest policy envisages that two thousand crores of trees would be necessary to restore hydrological balance.

वह जो फाँस ले, सोचने में आता है कि पेड़ का सवाल ही नहीं रहा। कई जगहों पर पेड़ ही नहीं रहे। ठेकेदारों ने उन को काट कर पैसे कमा लिये और लोगों ने खेती के लिये जमीन दे दी जहाँ चाहा। और कोई कानून नहीं इस को चेक करने के लिये। इसलिये इस बारे में यूनिफार्म ला बनना बहुत जरूरी है। जब तक एक यूनिफार्म कानून नहीं बनाया जायगा, तब तक जंगलों को नही बचाया जा सकेगा। नैशनल कमिशन आन एग्रीकल्चर ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है :

“There may be genuine apprehension in the States that an all India Act would introduce an element of rigidity, which may not meet the special problems concerning forestry in a State. Under Article 252 (2) of the Constitution, ‘any Act so passed by parliament (on any of the matters included in the State List) may be amended or repealed by an Act of Parliament passed or adopted in like manner but shall not, as respects any State to which it applies be amended or repealed by an Act of the Legislature of that State.’ It is likely that some of the States would be unwilling to give up their power of amending Forest Acts, whenever considered expedient. It should, however, be possible to frame an all-India Act in such a manner that the States are free to make subsidiary rules and regulations under the Act to meet any special situations.”

नैशनल कमिशन आन एग्रीकल्चर की सिफारिश है कि इस संबंध में एक कानून बनाया जाये। इस लिये सरकार को इस दिशा में कदम उठाना चाहिये।

गांवों के बेरोजगार लोगों को काम देने के लिये फ़ारेस्ट वेल्थ इंडस्ट्रीज स्थापित करने पर गौर करना चाहिए।

[श्री मूलचन्द डागा]

कमीशन ने जो रेजोल्यूशन पास किया है, वह मैं आप की सेवा में रखना चाहता हूँ :

"In view of what has been stated above, the revised national policy of India be based on the following important needs of the country:—

- (i) Managing the forest resources of the country so as to provide maximum goods and services for the well-being of the people and economic progress of the country;
- (ii) Checking denudation and erosion in mountainous regions and catchments of rivers on which depend perennial stream flows, fertility of the land in the catchment and the useful life of dams and reservoirs;
- * * * * *
- (iii) Providing recreational and tourist opportunities in the forests without impairment of forest....."

मैं बचपन से देख रहा हूँ कि राजस्थान के हिल स्टेशन, माउंट भाबू, पर बड़े बड़े रिटायर्ड अफसरों ने बंगने बना लिए हैं। वे लोग रिटायर होने से पहले ही जंगल के एरिया में अपने लिए जमीन खरीद लेते हैं। इस लिए अब माउंट भाबू का कोई सौन्दर्य नहीं रहा है। सब जगह बंगले ही बंगले बन गये हैं। चाहे मैयूरन जाइए चाहे महाभुलेश्वर जाइए। अब शिन्दे साहब का बन रहा हो तो मुझे पता नहीं मुझे गये बहुत दिन हो गये। तो यह हिल स्टेशनों पर बंगले बनाने की एक हवा चल पड़ी है। सभी हिल स्टेशनों पर बंगले बन गए। शिमला का क्या सौन्दर्य रहा? यह पाराशर साहब जानते होंगे, सब जंगल खा गए। माल रोड जरूर बन गई है, उस माल रोड पर घूम लीजिये, लेकिन जंगल का जो सौन्दर्य था वह अब नहीं रहा। फारेस्ट एरिया के अंदर जो रिक्रिएशन होना चाहिये वह सब अब नहीं रहा। बस लोगों ने अपने बंगले वहाँ बना लिए हैं। लोग देखते हैं कि जमीन सस्ती मिल गई, पहाड़

का पत्थर लेकर मकान बना लिया। यह बिल्कुल मना होना चाहिए। जंगल के अंदर यह चीज नहीं होनी चाहिये।

फारेस्ट एरिया के अंदर टूरिस्ट सेंटर्स बनने चाहिए। जिस प्रकार जो घने जंगल उन को नेशनल पार्क बना देते हैं ऐसे ही हमारे देश के अंदर भी इतकी जरूरत है। लेकिन उस के अंदर भी कोई तरक्की नहीं हो रही है। उस को भी गिरावट आ गई है। आज फारेस्ट की जमीन कम हो गई। 33 परसेंट कहते थे कि जंगल होना चाहिए। लेकिन वह नहीं है। हर पंचायत को उस के लिये एक जमीन देनी चाहिए। पहले जमाने में हमारे राजस्थान में ऐसा था, उस को प्रॉटेक्टेड फारेस्ट कहते थे, हम उस को ग्रोरान कहते हैं उस में कोई आदमी कभी भी लकड़ी नहीं काटता कोई उस में हाथ नहीं लगाता वह जंगल का जंगल रहता है। जो लकड़ी अपने आप गिर जाती है उसी को लेते हैं। इनने घने जंगल अब बहुत थोड़े रह गए हैं। अब तो हर आदमी उस को उजाड़ने की कोशिश करता है। और इन फारेस्ट्स का जितना नुकसान हम लोगों ने नहीं किया उस से ज्यादा नुकसान फारेस्ट डिपार्टमेंट के लोगों ने किया है। ये जितने फारेस्ट के आफिसर मालदार हुए हैं ये सब जंगल की सम्पत्ति को लूट कर मालदार हुए हैं। इन्होंने बिल्कुल धरती को नंगा कर दिया। यही सब से ज्यादा फारेस्ट का नुकसान करते हैं। आप कौन हैं—रेंजर साहब आप कौन हैं—डिप्टी रेंजर साहब, आप कौन हैं—चीफ कंजर्वेटर आफ फारेस्ट्स भगवान जाने कितने आफिसर हैं। ये जंगल की सब लकड़ी बेच कर खा गये। मुझे तो जब कोई पेड़ काटता है उस पर कुल्हाड़ी चलाता है तो ऐसा मालूम होता है कि जैसे किसी आदमी को मार रहा हो। हरे हरे पेड़ काट डाले जाते हैं। ये सारे रेंजर्स इतनी गड़बड़ करते हैं

जितनी कोई नहीं करता। और ये रिसर्च करने वाले रिसर्च क्या करते हैं? देहरादून में क्या है? इन की कमेटी की रिपोर्ट आप देखें। मैं अगर ज्यादा पढ़ूंगा तो आप कहेंगे कि डागा पढ़ पढ़ कर बातें करता है। तो आप खुद देख लीजिए। मैं ने तो यही देखा और मैं यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि पेड़ और लगाइए और जो है उन को रहने दीजिए, उन को काटिए मत। जंगल के बारे में शिन्दे साहब से मैं प्रार्थना करूंगा कि इस एमर्जेंसी में कोई ऐसा कानून आप ले आएँ। मैं माननीय सदस्य को धन्यवाद देता हूँ जो प्रस्ताव ले आए, उस में मैं ने जो अमेंडमेंट दिया है वह इस लिये कि सारी स्टेट्स के अंदर एक यूनिफार्मिटी ला के मामले में हो सके और जंगलों की तरफ वे विशेष रूप से ध्यान दें।

16-00 hrs.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswar) : Mr. Chairman it is perhaps a coincidence of history and our civilisation that the greatest feature of our land is that it is the land of Lord Budha who was born under a tree. He has said something about forests. I want to quote it.

Lord Budha said :

"The forest is a peculiar organism of unlimited kindness and benevolence that makes no demands for its sustenance, extends generously its life activity, affords protection to all beings, offering shade even to the axeman who destroys it".

Whatever latest information is available about our forests, it is disquieting; it shows that in recent years our country has lost five million acres of rich forest land. Today only 22 per cent of the total land area in our country is under forests, whereas the limit stipulated in the national forest policy resolution says that at least 33.3 per cent, that is, one third of the

total area should be under forests. Even the 22 per cent I mentioned is the average; there are states in India where the total area under forests is only 5-6 per cent of the total land area of the state. I think with proper scientific management of our forest wealth, we could add to our national wealth every year about Rs. 1000 crores in terms of land fertility, manure to our fields, fuel wood, etc. It is itself a modest figure. Today we get products worth about Rs. 30 crores while we spend nearly Rs. 22 crores for the upkeep and maintenance of the forest resources and wealth. You can see how unutilised this wealth is. Added to this, during the last two decades, deforestation has been going on at three times the rate of afforestation. India had 15 per cent of the world's population but only two per cent of the world's forest area. As a result of deforestation, fully half of India's land surface has been rendered unusable due to erosion, floods and water logging. Millions of acres of top soil has been washed away every year and the total loss of fertilisers in that soil so washed away is even greater than India's annual production of chemical fertilisers, including imported fertilisers. Some scientists have calculated that so erosion had already ruined millions of hectares of cultivated land reducing them to submarginal levels. Because forest area is shrinking fuel wood is not available to the teeming millions in our countryside. In December 1927 Gandhi was on his foot march and when he was walking all over Orissa, he was at one place called Bolgan in my area and he had written that he saw a man belonging to the weaker sections of our society, a Scheduled Castes man bringing fuel wood to sell in the market.

Today that continues and one has to work for the whole day to get some fuel wood to sell in the market, which will bring him Rs. 1.50 or 2 a day. Because the forests are shrinking, the whole family has to go miles and miles to collect this wood. According to an estimate, nearly 400 million tonnes of wet dung is used for

[Shri Chaitramani Panigrahi]

domestic fuel in India annually, which amounts to burning up fertiliser equivalent to the production of more than eight Sindh fertiliser plants. Nearly four million hectares of utilisable land had been permanently lost to productive agriculture through the formation of ravines.

Mr. Daga has already quoted from the Estimates Committee's report. In 1974-75, the Estimates Committee has stated in its report that the National Forest Policy Resolution envisaged that 2000 crores of trees would be necessary to restore the hydrological nutritional balance of the country and under the Land Transformation Programme of the Central Government, planting of 30 crores of trees during ten years was planned, but government had not undertaken any specific scheme under this programme

About the development of forest roads, the committee states

"The committee are concerned to note that against the target of 11,050 KM of roads to be constructed during the fourth five year plan, the likely achievement by the end of the plan would be 7,100 KM only, a shortfall of about 36% "

I have seen that in the Simlipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district in my State, called 'Project Tiger' by the Government of India, the tigress Khairi and other animals are attracting thousands of tourists. It is one of the most beautiful spots in the world you can sit till 8 or 9 o'clock in the night and watch the deer, buffaloes, tigers and other animals. But there is not a single mile of good road in that 4000 sq mile area. I do not think much money has been spent out of the money allotted for Project Tiger in developing this national park. I have my own personal experience also. Near Mahanadi there is an area called Badaalinga where 30,000 tribals reside. There is not one

KM of road there, not to speak of primary health centres, etc. As you know, Kendu leaves are used to prepare birla and in my State the forests provide employment to 2 lakhs of people. In the whole country, the forests provide employment to about 30 lakh of people. Under the 20 point programme, our aim is to provide employment to millions of people. I think a scientific management of forests can provide employment to 10 million people every year.

Some of the East African countries are earning as much as Rs. 100 crores in foreign exchange from their wild life sanctuaries. We can double this income if we can properly develop wild life sanctuaries in this country. Some experts have suggested that if you invest Rs 1,125 crores in a phased manner, India can be made green. I do not know how much money the government will be able to spend and what the planners have thought about it. But Shri Sanjay Gandhi's call to the vast masses of youth to make India green by their involvement is a very timely programme and it has enthused the youth. I have gone to UP, Bokaro and other places and I have seen how the youths can be involved in planting trees.

Though the Government of India have made some efforts during the last 27 years to make India green, they have not met with much success. But if this call is implemented, if the youth are determined to make India green, the way they are replanting I can say that the coming 25 years would be the greening of India, and it is the youth of India which will involve itself in this task.

Here I want to say that one of the biggest sources of blackmoney which has not been plugged so far is the forest contractors. The way they are plundering the forest wealth of this country, it is really surprising why the Government have not taken any strong measures against them.

We are saying that we are going to amend the Constitution to include education in the Concurrent List. It is our suggestion that forest wealth should also be included in the Concurrent List, so that the Centre can get involved in the implementation of this programme of making India green in the coming few Years. In fact a proposal in this regard has been brought before the Prime Minister and it may come before the Cabinet very soon. I hope that Shri Shinde, who is determined to do something when the Government intended to do something, will pay some attention to this problem.¶

SHRI B. V. NAIK (Kanara) : Mr Chairman, like our learned friend Shri Panigrahi, I also come from a forest area. There is not much that it can add to what has been said on this subject by the Mover of the Resolution, Shri Deo, with all his concern for the forests, and Shri Daga and Shri Panigrahi.

The main thrust of the Resolution seems to be to have 33 per cent of the Indian sub-continent as forest areas. I am sure that Shri Deo has in mind is not a uniform 33 per cent for all States, because there could be states which will have forests more than the prescribed limit of 33 per cent, while there may be other States which have very little scope for having forests. For instance, take the Ingo-Gangetic plain, where we cannot think of having 33 per cent of forests. At the same time, in the sub-Himalayan range, from where Shri Mahajan comes, or the Western Ghat area, the forest area will be more than 33 per cent. I hope what the mover meant is an average of 33 per cent, whereas the present average is only round about 20 to 22 per cent.

I come from a district (I am not referring to my constituency, which is much bigger) which has 4,500 sq. miles of forests. At one time, 85 per cent of the area of that district was under forests; now it has come down to 65 per cent. I am referring to the district of North Canara, with which Shri

Shinde is familiar, which is on the West Coast, which has the densest forests in the whole state of Karnataka. We give the State exchequer Rs. 18 to Rs. 20 crores of forest revenue every year. The injustice that is being done to the forest areas, which I am afraid has not yet been highlighted, at the political level, is entirely being done by the nonforest areas of this country. The forest areas are being treated today as very convenient sources of revenue where you invest nothing. For an industry you have to invest in capital, for agriculture you have to invest in inputs, you have to provide credit and infrastructure but when it comes to the cutting down of forests, you do it indiscriminately. I will not say what the baser officials in the bureaucratic machinery do when it comes to a question of linking with the forest contractors who are sources of revenue for other purposes, but taking the right royal path by which money goes into and comes out of the Consolidated Fund of India, you take Rs. 20 crores and you are not paying back or ploughing back into the forests even Rs. 1 crore. How can we think in terms of the lofty resolution of Mr. P. K. Deo that the whole country should become green and that there should be forests growing galore in the whole country? It is plainly impossible until and unless the Government of India comes down with a firm hand and says that at least 50 per cent should be put back into the forest out of what is taken out as forest revenue, with an exceedingly good price for timber. Then, you will be able to keep the forests neat and intact, in a wonderful condition. You have not been doing it.

When our Home Minister, Shri Brahmananda Reddy, was the Chairman of the Sixth Finance Commission, I brought this to his kind notice, but unfortunately it fell on sympathetic but deaf ears. There is in certain areas, in regard to finance, what we call indigenous colonialism. It is not imported. Multi-national and other people are involved in it, it is plan, indigenous, made-in-India colonialism when the

[Shri B. V. Naik]

backward areas of this country, more particularly the hilly and forest areas, are made to serve the interests of the more advanced parts of the country and that is where exploitation takes place right under our own nose when we want to remove regional imbalances. I am afraid the Research and other wings of the Government of India have not been able to pay their attention to it. Therefore, the request for the inclusion of forests in the Concurrent List has not come a day too soon. It is most perfectly timed.

You have constituted the Indian Forest Service as one of the All India Services, but who are the persons who have been taken into this service? The same old bureaucrats who had made their names as corrupt officials and Rangers in the State service. Could you not find better people? It contains the same people who colluded with the lumber and forest contractors for fighting out their cases in the Supreme Court regarding their seniority etc. The same people are back again in the Indian Forest Service. What guarantee is there and what assurance that it will deliver the goods?

My friend Shri Daga may not know that there are a dozen ways in which the forests can be denuded. The marking is done by the Forest Guard. All of us from the forest areas know that an area of about 200 or 300 acres is earmarked and then there is a clearance around it, but the forest contractor simply goes into the adjacent area and nobody prevents him, he cuts down the trees, stacks them and sells them and makes up his quota. There is a lot of smuggling of sandalwood. I am afraid that with the forest policy as at present and the Indian Forest Service constituted as at present of officers who are in the hands of the lumber contractors and the forest contractors who carry on the duties of the forest policy, as at present, your entire for-

ests in this country, particularly at least as far as my district is known, on my personal experience, are not going to reach 33 per cent. your forests are heading towards extinction and in the process, quite a few people will become fabulously rich. But your whole country and its ecological balance will be distorted and destroyed beyond recognition.

I would, therefore, welcome the Resolution. But will the hon. Minister on such a vital subject which concerns our ecological balance, the rainfall, the monsoons, the timeliness of monsoons and more important the resources which can be multiplied, do something concrete? I think, the per acre yield of forest in this country stands at about Rs. 25 to Rs 30 as compared to about Rs. 350 to 400 in a country like Germany with reserved forests. 1:10 is the ratio. It is possible to make our own forests more productive, give encouragement to those areas in order to protect and preserve their forests by starting forest-based industries. Thank God, we had a very good example of forest-based industries started. But now they are going for want of funds. I hope, the hon. Minister will think in terms of a Forest Development Corporation being ably assisted by Central assistance in order to see that what is taken out is fed back there. If that is done, we can reach 33 per cent and we can have a green India.

DR. V. K. R. VARADARAJA RAO (Bellary): Mr Chairman, Sir I thought it was my duty to take part in this discussion I had read about this item.

We have been talking a great deal about the forest policy, afforestation and so on and, I think, it was nearly 20 or 2 years ago that *Vanamohatsava* was started if I am not mistaken, by the then Minister of Agriculture, late Mr. K. M. Munshi. Since then, every year there is a ritual when all VIPs. go and plant trees. Some

times they are photographed; sometimes they are not photographed. But nobody hears afterwards about those trees. One day, Mr. Shinde will be in that same position, having to talk about previous history of planting trees. Life is always at a tangent. I was not the Minister in-charge of forests at any time. Mr Shinde happens to be the Minister of Agriculture for the Last 12 years. At least, he should be in a position to say something about what has happened to trees which we have been planting for the last 12 years. He should be able to say at least about some of the trees planted about 10 or 9 years ago.

We have the *Vanamahatsava*. But we have never heard about follow-up, whether after three months or 20 or 15 days, the VIP who planted the tree even enquires as to what has happened to the tree that he had planted. I do not know whether anything like follow-up of the tree plantation programme is there. For a long time I have been feeling that one of the most neglected aspects of Indian agricultural economy is the forests. We have been doing very well as far as foodgrains crops are concerned and also some of the cash crops even though many of the cash crops are wanting in inventive and innovative research. But not enough has been done as far as the forests are concerned.

We have got a very good organisation, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. We have got various research institutes dealing with various crops, various climates, local-based research region-based research and so on. But I do not know whether the kind of research attention which is given to agricultural crops is given to forest crops also. We give a lot of attention to agricultural crops. We are now giving some attention to dairy, not indeed as much as it ought to be. When we come down to forests, we seem to think that it grows by itself. Forests grow by themselves they die by themselves and they regrow by themselves. I know I am caricaturing. But I am doing it deliberately because

it seems to me that one of the most important sources of nation-building, national development in this country is the increase of our forest wealth. It is not merely a question of exploitation of the existing one, but it is a question of adding to our forest wealth, making use of the land which is unfit for anything except as forests. The other day I was talking to a very distinguished scientist. He said that the problem of Rajasthan could be solved when a heavy rainfall was there; they had so many programmes ready, and as soon as there was a heavy rainfall, they would immediately plant millions of trees, and once that was done, later on they would be able to fend for themselves because they only needed so much heavy rains initially. I do not know whether that programme has been fulfilled in Rajasthan or not. I think, this year there has been a lot of rainfall. This was told to me a couple of years ago.

It seems to me that there has got to be a very systematic attempt at afforesting areas which are not afforested now and also at seeing that the forests which exist do not disappear. It is not merely a question of wild animals, tigers and so on. I know, tigers are important. But more than that, the most important raw material base today in the world is forest. There was a time when gas was not a base at all, gas was being burnt away after the oil was found. But now gas has become a most important raw material. As important as mines, even more important than minerals, are forests. And what is the amount of money that we are spending to see that our forest wealth is sustained, maintained, expanded and increased. It seems to me that some kind of an evaluation on the subject, either in this discussion or elsewhere, will be a useful thing to do, because, the country's attention must be focussed on our forest problems and forest policy. It should not be viewed merely from the point of view of spectacular public demonstration effect.

[Dr. V. K. R. Varadaraja Rao]

But taking advantage of the public demonstration effect, we should see to it that we have some time-bound programme of forest development, region-wise, which can be progressed, monitored and evaluated.

I would like to mention something on which I have been very much distressed. A long time back—this again goes back to my previous history, because I was not only a Minister like my friend, Mr. Shinde, but I also happened to be in the Planning Commission before that, I hope, Mr. Shinde will, one day, find himself in that place and then he will know what happens to Plan—in the Planning Commission we had a concrete programme of village forests. Everybody says that villages have no fuel, that the villagers are using as fuel all the manure and so on. The Prime Minister mentioned the other day about the use of bio-gas and so on. This has helped some people, but the poorest people are not only between the Devil and the deep sea but they are getting into the deep sea. It is an economic necessity which drives the village people to use as fuel what, they know, is much more useful as a fertiliser. But what are we doing for their fuel requirements? A long time back we had a programme, in the Ministry of Agriculture, of village forests: we were supposed to take in each village a certain amount of wasteland and there was to be a programme of growing quick-growing fuel-usable woods which would supply the village with its fuel requirements. This programme must be more than 13 or 14 years old. I want the Minister to tell the House what has happened to this programme, how many villages have got the village fuel forests, whether that programme has been successful, whether there have been any difficulties, whether the panchayats have been able to do it or not, what exactly is the position regarding village fuel requirements.

In my state it was during the period of one of the previous Chief Ministers—there was a big programme for planting the State with eucalyptus. There is such a thing as industrial forests. So many things are required for industrial purposes. Have you any Programme for industrial forests? Have you marked out the areas where industrial forests can be planted? Sometimes we get factories on the basis of the existing forests, and after ten years, the factories find that the supply is exhausted and there is no way of replanting. The Minister knows the case I am referring to. Is there a policy regarding industrial forests not merely in words, but in actual details, in terms of plants, regions, commodities, investment, machinery for operation and so on?

I am very glad that my friend, Mr. Daga, referred to bungalows in hill stations. I am not saying that people should not go and live in hill station, but at least when these people go to hill stations, they need not carry the magnificence of Malabar Hill. Why do they want to carry all their urban magnificence to those places?

You can certainly lay down a law. You can say, 'Nobody can build a house in hill area bigger than such and such size and you can tell them that only in these places you can build your house'. Therefore I welcome the suggestion which has been made by my friend that we must have some kind of a good, real and restrictive policy regarding house construction in hill areas, not only to preserve the beauty but also to see that the forests in those hill areas are protected.

I would just like to say one or two words before I finish. Both my friends said

'put forests on the Concurrent List'. Sir, I would like to go on record in this House that putting a thing with which you are not satisfied, in the Concurrent List does not mean that the problem is going to be solved. — I have the greatest respect for the Government of India, having functioned in its midst, but I do not think that the Government of India, located in Delhi, is capable of doing all the things that are prescribed as governmental functions. India is a vast country. It is a big country and this is a very simple answer, 'If anything goes wrong, put it in the Concurrent List'. But have you thought whether the Centre has got all the machinery to implement and all the resources for handling all the problems? I can tell you my experience, both as a Member of the Planning Commission and as a Central Minister. I find the State officials are far more committed because they are much more in touch with the people. The central officials are removed by two or three removes from the people at large whereas your District Officials and the State Officials, the State Agricultural Officer and others are very much more concerned with it. Therefore, I would like to say that this solution of putting every thing in the Concurrent List is no solution at all. I would like to strongly go on record as opposing this suggestion that in order to have a better forest policy you should put it in the Concurrent List. I do not mind having preservation of wild life in the Concurrent List. Certainly put all the lions, tigers, bisons — not buffaloes — and all that kind of wild animals in the Concurrent List and I am sure the Central Government will be able to tackle them, but do not put all the forests in the Concurrent List.

Finally, I just wanted to say how strongly I felt about a very important problem. That is about the catchment areas. Do you know in many of the catchment

areas one of the reasons why we are having this trouble about monsoon — as a matter of fact in the olden days we never had power cuts and reservoirs and rivers not filling up and it is only a matter of the last 15-20 years is that the catchment areas are not being looked after properly.

The Minister knows it very well. We also know that in the case of irrigation the most important thing is the protection of the catchment areas. But all the water comes there but does not go through and flow down properly. If there is no proper forest policy regarding catchment areas, not only you do not get the water there but when you get the water you also get a lot of erosion. The silt is carried, good soil is lost and a great deal of land also gets lost. Therefore, I think a catchment areas forest policy, industrial forest policy and village/wood forest policy and a hill area forest policy — all these are required.

I would like to suggest to the hon Minister. I know there is a book — a fat 13 or 20 Volumes book brought out by the National Commission on Agriculture. But unfortunately, we, the Members of Parliament are all very busy and we have got to do so many things and it is very difficult for us to read the 20 volumes even if one wants to do it. I would suggest: let Mr. Shinde who is a lover of agriculture and a very committed Minister, get a white paper prepared by his Ministry to let us know what the facts are about our forests. I was asking Mr. Deo who was just sitting behind me as to what is the percentage of forests. He says it is only 22.5%. I do not believe it because what is called even a shrub is included in forests. Now Parthenium grows wildly in Delhi and after some time,

[Dr. V.K.R. Varadaraja Rao]

the Parthenium forests also will form part of the 22.5% forests. As we know, in the olden days, we used to have so much cultivable waste and everybody thought that India has 100 million acres of land and this can be brought under extensive cultivation. But when we went into great detail, we found it was not 100 million acres but it was only 14-15 million acres. Therefore, let us have some proper classification, let us know what our forests are, let us know what is our forest policy, what is the present position, what is the Budget and I think it is possible for us to do. After all, the State Governments are depending on the Central Government for assistance, for technical assistance as well as financial assistance. It seems to me a white paper on these lines can be made. This is the time when the youth of the country are taking to afforestation and to tree-planting in a big way. The country's attention is being focussed on the subject of tree plantation and afforestation. So let us know and I have no doubt that we have all the material in the Ministry. Let a White Paper be brought about quickly about the forest wealth of India, its current status, its utilisation and the policy needed to make the forests a very important, productive and accelerating factor in Indian economic development, rural development as well as employment.

SHRI D. K. PANDA (Bhanjanagar):

I need not go much into the theoretical proposition already placed before the House. In the report, which has been brought out by the Commission on Agricultural Development, there is one volume which is specially devoted to forest development.

It is recognised that it is a renewable natural resource. How this can be developed? This is our main objective. While these recommendations are there, we can repeat them several times, there is no harm; truth can be repeated several

times. But so far as the hon. Minister is concerned, he knows very well what those recommendations are. Members have repeated the same thing. While I do not wish to repeat the same thing, I would like to bring one aspect to his attention.

There are short-term planning and long-term planning. There are many things to be looked into on how to increase forest wealth. Forest industry can be best developed for our industrial development. Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao made certain valuable suggestions from his own experience.

Here what I want to say is this. We are implementing the 20-point programme. Every attention should be bestowed on the needs of the rural sector and the backward sector.

Take Orissa for instance. One-third of the population are adivasis and tribal people and they live exclusively on forest areas. As Mr. Patilrao has pointed out, there are many jungles there and as far as forest wealth is concerned that is the greatest wealth in Orissa. As Mr. Shinde is fully aware of these aspects, I need not go into them in detail.

One of our aims is to remove poverty and from that point of view, the question now is, what systematic work you are doing in order to remove this poverty existing among the weaker sections of the society. I am sure more than 75% of these weaker sections live in forest areas. They should be released from their slavery under the contract system. There have been cases of pilferage of valuable timber, teakwood and so on. There has been a suggestion made by the Commission saying that labour from neighbouring villages can be directly employed to give them a sense of belonging for avoiding pilferage. It can serve two purposes. In Orissa, after the Kendu leaves nationalisation, we are increasing our revenue. Of course there are many

potentialities and very valuable timber, teakwood and other varieties which can be developed. If there is proper planning, then, definitely, we shall be able to increase our revenue. The main thrust of our economic programme is how we can render real benefits to the adivasis and the tribal people who were exploited day in and day out. They are the people who do not know what to claim.

I had been to an area in Phulbani. In certain areas they merely want drinking water—leave aside the question of road, railway line etc., nothing is there absolutely—and as Shri Panigrahi pointed out since 1945, under the colonial regime, the British regime, there was a plan for the development of a railway line from Gopalpur upto Bolangir via Aska Berampur and Binjanagar—a forest area. This can be developed better if this had been done. I am very sorry that no railway line is taken to that area.

That had been the planning since 1945. We do not know why that had been shelved or why that had not been taken up. For example, there is no proper planning or coordination or anything of that kind by the Centre for Orissa. We have some Forest Corporation there and now it has become a public sector body. In spite of that, there is no allocation of funds from the Centre and it is also not giving proper attention and aid as a result of which we are not able to develop it.

My first point will be this. There must be some systematic planning. Not only that. A wellknit work must also be taken up so as to develop industries there based on forest materials. If this had been done we could have developed the forest wealth.

As far as contract labour is concerned, everybody wants that the contract labour should be abolished. In Orissa, for example, the labour is not being released from the slavery. Some legislation has got to be enacted for the purpose and there should

be some guidelines by the Centre so as to abolish the contract labour system there. There is already a factory coming up. The people there are all technical in the sense that they pluck the sal seeds from the tree as well as pick the same from the ground. In Kalahandi, Phulbani and Bholongir, myloborum is in plenty. This industry has a great potentiality which can provide employment to these people. We are not lacking in policies but we lack only in the proper implementation of them which we lay down. The plan should be such that we are able to reach the target fixed for the purpose. There should be a balance struck as between the requirements and the availability of produce as far as wood industry is concerned.

My suggestion is this. As far as industrial materials are concerned, they should be properly utilised. Guidelines should also be issued by the Centre to the States and central fund should be allocated for the purpose what will contribute to our national economy.

SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO (Koraput): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise two or three points. I want to know from the hon. Minister what is the forest policy in the tribal areas.

It was discussed in different committees, in the Planning Commission and also in the Ministry of Home Affairs. The tribals had been deprived of the forest land by the Forest Act, 1956. Maharajas got compensation but no compensation was given to the tribals for having been deprived from the forest land.

You will find that still deforestation is going on in the tribal areas. Shifting and *podu* cultivation are also still going on in Orissa and other States. They have not completely stopped it. The tribals have to be brought from the hill tops to the bottom, to the plains, not to the place

[Shri Giridhar Gomarg]

in between. In the plains, they must be given cultivable land. As it is, the tribals are born in the forest, they live in the forest and they die in the forest. When we are adopting a new policy, giving a new dimension to the economy and planning, why not give more emphasis to stopping deforestation? I belong to the tribes. In the forest, there is large-scale cutting down of trees. Government is giving money and land to the tribals to settle on that land.

Priority should be given to those who are doing Podu cultivation. They should be brought to the plains and settled on land in the plains. They should be taught the techniques of modern cultivation. You will be surprised to know that tribals grow five or six crops in a year in the forest, whereas if they are given land in the plains, they can grow only one or two crops. That is why they prefer to be in the forest land. So Government should give them cultivable lands in the plains and then provide them with all technical facilities for cultivation.

There is a lot of forest wealth in the Koraput district. There there is the Dandakaranya project. A large part of the forest was cut down. Because there are two or three electrical lines there, an irrigation project and so on, large-scale deforestation was taking place. There are 300 kilometres of area in the Koraput district where there was a proposal by the Government of Orissa, to which the Government of India had also agreed, to undertake afforestation. It was proposed to provide some money for the afforestation of this area. But the report has not yet reached the Government of India. I would request the Minister that this district should be taken as a priority basis and large-scale plantation should be undertaken. Podu cultivation should also be stopped. The Planning Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture should make the necessary provision for this project.

I conclude by saying that though forest is the land of the tribals now, they should not be left in the forest, but should be brought to the plains and should be taught to live on the land in the plains.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNA-SAHEB P. SHINDE). I am thankful to Shri P. K. Deo for moving this Resolution in this august House, for because of this Resolution interest has been evinced in this matter, which is one of the very important aspects of our national life.

Many Members have participated in this debate; I am particularly happy that one of our very senior members, Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, has found time to come here and also participate in the debate and make very valuable suggestions for our consideration.

It is known to all, and it is a matter of concern to all, that all is not well with the forests in our country. The specific importance of forests from the points of view of ecology, soil conservation, protection of the catchment areas and of fodder, fuel and timber resources, all this is known.

But unfortunately what has been happening Perhaps this is not confined to India. Quite often we may draw an inference or gain an impression that only we in India are doing something very wrong; that is not so. I am not justifying what is happening. If we look to the history of civilisation, we find the more the so called civilisation developed, the more the forests were destroyed. One of the very renowned areas of forests, Mesopotamia, was at one time so dense a forest area that it produced the best timber in the world which was so much in demand for ship building industry. What has happened to that now? Middle East is a desert area now. Major warfares also involving largescale destruction of forests led to such a situation.

Therefore, while we claim that we are advancing we are bringing about imbalances in our habitat and in the ecology established on this globe, and thus reduce or destroy some of the favourable aspects which make life in this globe happier and fuller. This is happening in many other countries also but fortunately in some countries at least there has of late been an awareness and they have started developing forests. This realisation came to us a little late; we were a colonial country and as soon as we attained independence, the late K.M. Munshi who was the Agricultural Minister at that time, as Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao mentioned, put forward a forest policy resolution which led to an awareness that something positive has to be done to protect forests. The enlightened public of our country supported that policy resolution but even after that between 1951 and 1973 almost 3.4 million hectares of forests were denuded or destroyed. If statistics are worth anything, that is what we have; technically this much land has been taken out of the forest area. There may be other areas which may be categorised technically as forest area but trees will not be there and if we included that area also, the total area would come much larger. We see this when we move around the country. The Himalayas in certain regions were so dense forests; denudation had taken place there. So much so we find that the Bhakra system which we have constructed at such an enormous cost is getting silted at a fast rate. In the plains again soil erosion is taking place at a very fast rate. We are a monsoon country and one of the characteristics of a monsoon country is that we have torrential rains and a lot of the top soil is carried to reservoirs that we have built thus reducing the life of those reservoirs. During the 1972 elections, I was on an election tour for the assembly elections and I went to one of the forts called Torna in Maharashtra; it was the first fort conquered by Shivaji and the election meeting which I was to address was organised at the base

of that fort. I found not a single tree on that fort. I asked them, what is the rainfall here? They said 120". But not a single tree was there. Mr. P.K. Deo has laid stress on what is happening in Orissa. This is not confined to any one State, it is really a national problem. Therefore, it is right that many hon. members have expressed serious concern about this phenomenon.

17.00 hrs.

The issues are known. The main thing is, what to do about it. What Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao mentioned is the crux of the matter. There is nothing wrong about *vana mahotsava*. There are some weaknesses in it which have to be removed. Trees were planted but responsibility for looking after the trees was never fixed. I am very clear in my mind that unless a tree planting programme is tied up with individual responsibility being fixed for looking after the trees, no improvement is possible. It is no use fixing responsibility on a whole village for looking after the trees. Responsibility should be fixed on individuals and not merely on paper. It should be done in a realistic way with a sense of responsibility. Fortunately, during the last one year, there has been a debate on afforestation and planting of trees; it is a healthy sign. Previously this matter was being discussed amongst intellectuals without any practical programme. Now a practical programme is coming up. Apart from fixing individual responsibility, the stage has now come when some social conventions have to be developed in this country. If a child is born, why not plant a tree? If somebody dies, why not plant a tree? Instead of merely religious rituals—I am not against them if somebody wants them—we can develop such new conventions which are of vital interest to society.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can say that at every inauguration ceremony or foundation stone laying ceremony, a tree should be planted.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE :
Yes, that would be helpful. Now when a VIP comes, we see a race by people coming with costly garlands to make their presence felt. Instead of that, they can take the responsibility for one tree. Then our social life will be healthier.

Although there is some merit in the argument for bringing forests under the concurrent list, it is not so much a question of law. I appreciate the vital point made by Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao. Mr. Daga said that our Forest Act is very old. I agree. We asked the National Commission on Agriculture to examine it. We have come to the conclusion that this Act has to be brought up-to-date. We have also consulted a few States. Since it is a State subject, unless the requisite number of States support us, we shall not be in a position to move the necessary Bill in this House.

DR. V. K. R. VARADARAJA RAO :
Why not call a meeting of the Forest Ministers in Delhi? No such meeting has been called so far.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE :
We have got the Central Board of Forestry and also the Standing Committee on Forestry. As far as the Central Board of Forestry is concerned, all the Forest Ministers are members. It meets very regularly. Only recently, about 8 or 9 months earlier, it met at Hyderabad and I presided over the meeting. So far the Standing Committee on Forestry is concerned, I presided over that meeting also at Simla only last June. If it is felt that further meetings are necessary, we will hold them. I am not objecting to it; I am on a slightly different issue. It is not so much the technicality or the organisational set up. I am not saying that the forest department is without fault, or there is no need for improvement. What I am saying is that the social life gets reflected in every walk of life. We, as practical politicians and seasoned citi-

zens of this country, should try to understand the basic milieu of this and not make superficial statements. I am saying this, with due respect to the hon. Member. I hope he will not misunderstand it. It is not so much the legal framework or the penalty, whether it is less or more, or the organisational set up.

No country will succeed in protecting its forest unless there is all-round awareness. Unfortunately, in this country, with due respect to everybody including the poorer sections of the society, that awareness is wanting. If somebody watches closely every cow boy who goes to the forest with his cow herd or the man who goes with a flock of sheep or goat he carries in his hand some tool to fell trees. The other day when I made a statement that everyday at least 25 lakh people are engaged only in cutting trees, the Chief Minister of very important State contradicted me and said that I am making an under-statement, because the number is much larger! In this country unless there is social awareness in all sections of the society, I do not think the forest wealth can be preserved. Here comes the role of the voluntary organisations like Youth Congress. Since it is a non-political issue everybody is welcome to help in this constructive effort for the future of this country, for the ecology of this country, even in the interests of the economy of this country, because forest is so much intertwined with our total wealth and economy. I do not think we can separate the forests from the other sectors of our economy. Therefore, it is all the more necessary to channelise the voluntary effort in whatever way we can to protect and preserve our forests.

As far as the tribals are concerned, we have all sympathy for them. The Constitution provides that the interests of the tribals have to be protected. We cannot pass any law which will go against the interests of the tribals. The forest policy has to be evolved in such a way that the interests of the tribals are protected. At

the same time, we cannot be completely oblivious to the protection of the fore wealth. Take the north-eastern part of India, where there is shifting cultivation. Every year they cut new forests so that they can do agriculture. I do not think we can justify it. We have all our sympathies for them and we have to find a solution to their problem. This uncertain agriculture does not provide them sufficient yield either. I have seen in some areas they grow both paddy and maize together, while the water requirements for both are different. This problem can be solved only if we educate the tribals on scientific farming.

There is talk of decentralisation. In the north-eastern part of the country there are beautiful forests in Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. There you will find the denudation of forests taking place at a rapid pace. The forests there are not under the State Government, but under the District councils, and the District Councils are not in a position at all to provide any leadership. Do we wait till all forests are destroyed in that area? I think something will have to be done. I am not saying that this is the final answer.

Dr. V. K. R. Varadaraja Rao :
You have Central Universities in the States.
You can have national forests.

Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde : There fore, there are certain anomalies in the present situation and they have to be rectified. How it should be done is a matter which can be discussed.

There is another important aspect. This country has to have an appropriate grazing policy. Recently I was in Srinagar, discussing with Sheikh Abdullah how to protect the Jammu and Kashmir forests. He brought to my notice an important point. Whether the figures he gave are correct or not is a different thing, but the basic point remains. He says that Jammu and

Kashmir can sustain with the present pastures and forests the grazing of only 8 to 9 lakhs of cattle, but the cattle population there is 35 lakhs. Grass is not allowed even to sprout. Before it sprouts, the cattle go and trample upon it. Whatever vegetation is there is also destroyed by them. Cattle, when they starve, like human beings, eat even bitter leaves and survive.

There are two very important issues involved. Shri Panda has left. I am not raising the issue of cow protection, but what is the number of cattle which can possibly and economically be sustained, which will not go against the protection of forests? Basically, all this has to be gone into. This is not a sentimental, religious issue. It has to be decided purely on pragmatic and realistic considerations, and we should have a clear-cut policy.

Recently I was in Chakrata, near Dehra Dun, which has a very good forest. I found cattle grazing in the reserved forest. I asked the U.P. officials who those persons were. They said they were Gujaras from Jammu and Kashmir. Though the cattle did not cause any damage or destruction to the grown up trees, naturally some harvesting is also taking place there and the cattle destroy whatever is newly planted. The U.P. officials told me, and from my Ministry I find that there is some truth in what they said, that Jammu and Kashmir brought pressure on the U.P. Government to allow the Gujaras as they are a very backward community. When the U.P. Government prevented them, there was a protest from Jammu and Kashmir, and they said that these people should be looked upon with sympathy and should be allowed to graze in the forest. What is the result? The result is that ultimately some substantial damage to the forest area is taking place, because we are not following an appropriate grazing policy. I think that politicians in this country, whatever party

[Shri Annasaheb P. Shirde] they may belong to, must arrive at some consensus as to what should be the grazing policy, because it is in the interests of the cattle themselves. Unless grass is allowed to sprout, the total quantity of fodder really gets reduced.

SHRI SHYAM SUNDER MOHAPATRA (Balasore) : Cows and buffaloes can live even without grass.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : In many places I find that trees are planted without understanding which particular type of tree should be planted.

I think, one should be very clear about it. In this regard, I am prepared to take the blame on myself. Our Forest Department itself has not made formal studies. Recently, I raised the issue at Simla as to whether they have any priority list of trees from the point of view of economic, which trees are suitable in particular agro-climatic conditions, which trees give more income, which trees have more economic value, more timber value and all that. I asked whether relative studies have been made. Unfortunately, there are no such studies available. We need not wait for those studies. From commonsense, we can take a decision.

In Tamil Nadu, for instance—I am sure, Mr. Chandrappan must be knowing it—there is the *tamarind* tree. A full-grown *tamarind* tree annually gives an income of about Rs. 200. Even a medium sized tree gives an income of about Rs. 100. Then, for instance, there is the *honey locust* tree. It is a species known throughout the world. It can grow in the Himalayan region. I am told and I have read the literature that the *honey locust* tree, in 1 acre, can give 20 tonnes of feed grains from pods for cattle. That means we can have more cattle feeds. As Dr. Rao said, we should really direct our research effort more towards the development of forests. I agree with him. There should be more forest

research activity. There are no two opinions on that. As I said, the *honey locust* tree, in 1 acre, can give 20 tonnes of foodgrains from pods. It is some thing fantastic. I think the humanity has got such a valuable asset at its disposal. But we have not fully exploited it. It is the experience all over the world that some of the species which are found in other parts of the world, under similar climatic conditions can be adapted. Like human beings, the trees also have a lot of adaptability. Many of the trees can be adapted to our conditions.

DR. HENRY AUSTIN (Ernakulam) : I read in a report that due to forest fires, more often than not, artificially created fires, much vegetation, including huge trees, is destroyed in our forests. Has the Ministry thought about it and taken any steps in this regard ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : This problem in there. There are some mischief-mongers and anti-social elements. Apart from accidents and other things, forest fires do take place and there are even deliberate mischiefs committed in order to exploit the local situation. What we have done is that we have alerted the State Governments and we have told the forest Department that village communities should be involved in the programme of preservation and controlling of forests. Unless there is a greater public awareness and the entire community as such stands behind the programme of protecting and preserving the forests, I do not think that this problem can be solved. It is the community involvement and the community awareness which can tackle this problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do you have any figures as to how much forest wood goes in as fuel, how much goes in as timber and how much goes in for industrial purposes ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE

I can possibly find out the figures. At the moment, they are not with me. Rough estimates are possible and available.

The point that I was making was that forest programmes are being discussed in the country and there is so much public awareness and public interest about these programmes. The Forest Department, the State Governments, the Agricultural Universities and the Research Institutes should really have a list of species of trees which can be profitably planted in a particular area from the point of fuel value, from the point of view of timber value, from the point of view of industrial uses and all that. If this is done, I think, in the forest programmes, we can have some content and they will be purposeful ones.

We should not blindly plant any tree. Ultimately, we have to take care of it by nursing it, by giving water to it and by putting in some of our resources. I was referring to the *honey locust* tree which, in 1 acre, can give 20 tonnes of foodgrains from pods. It is recorded history that it is not only useful for cattle but in times of drought and famine, even the human beings have tried to survive on pods of *honey locust* tree. The trees of economic value have to be planted, I mean, trees of timber value, fuel value, fodder value and even food value. If this is done, I am quite sure that our programme of afforestation will be much more meaningful and it will be a really very constructive one.

SHRI SYED AHMED AGA (Baramulla) : You have mentioned that tree planting should not be done blindly. Do the Forest Department have a list of priorities as to which trees should be planted ? In the State of Jammu and Kashmir where you have paid a visit and talked to those people, you may have found that the people have taken to fast-growing trees, the trees which give them quick income.

17.20 hrs.

[SHRI.P. PARTHASARATHY in the Chair]

For example, apple trees and other fruit trees which give fruits quickly and which give income quickly. What has been the result of that ? The result of that has been that nobody plants walnut trees which give fruit after 15 or 20 years. Walnut, which the country exports and which gets us valuable foreign exchange, is grown only in Kashmir. What I want to bring to your notice and what I want to ask is this. There are large areas with the Government which are lying fallow. Why can the Government not take to Walnut plantation in those areas instead of asking the individuals to do it ? Individuals will not do it.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : I have understood your question. As far as nursery programmes concerned, we do not want the individuals to take it up; we want the State Governments, agricultural universities and other institutions who know something about it, and the Forest Department to prepare nurseries from the point of view of the economic value and taking into account the agro-climatic conditions in particular areas....

AN HON. MEMBER : What about lumber contractors and forest contractors ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : I have already replied to that.

Shri D. K. Panda has said that the contract system should be abolished. We have issued specific instructions to the State Governments that the contract system and the middle-men should be totally abolished. Our policy is to have only one 'contractor', that is the Forest Corporation, a public sector organization, which will operate in the forests, with some adjustments in the interest of tribals;

[Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde] except that, we have not compromised on that. Unless the middle-men are eliminated from forest operations, we will not succeed in limiting or reducing the destructions which take place.

Another point which was raised by Mr. Naik was about the budget provision—whatever income is received by the State Government is not put in. He is very right on that. We have repeatedly drawn the attention of the State Governments to this. Forest is too valuable a source, forest is too important a sector of our economy which cannot be neglected like this, and, therefore, I have no other opinion but to broadly agree with him.

With these observations, may I express the hope that Mr. P. K. Deo will not insist on his Resolution? As far as sentiments behind it are concerned, he has raised a very important and valuable debate on this, particularly in the present climate when forests are receiving more and more attention from the public. I am thankful to him for that on behalf of the Government and on behalf of myself. But, all the same, because Government is seized of the matter, I would request him to withdraw his Resolution. I am thankful to all the hon. Members who had participated in the discussion and also those who had not participated but who had shown very keen interest.

SHRI P. K. DEO : (Kajshandi) : I am extremely grateful to all those who have participated in the debate. I have had unanimous support from all the speakers, from the press and also from the reading public—letters to the Editor have appeared in several papers. Therefore, in a subject like this, which is of concern to every person, no persuasion on my part would be necessary for the Government to accept my Resolution. But, as desired by my friend, Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde, I will have to give a second thought to it.

In addition to giving shelter from rain and sun, giving fuel and timber and bringing timely rain, the forests have got very important role, namely to purify the atmosphere by and large and the obnoxious gas by a process which is called photosynthesis by which they absorb the carbon-di-oxide and release oxygen which is so vital for the life; and for the ecological balance it is very necessary that we should try to preserve what little has been left so far as forests are concerned.

Forests are really the lungs of the nation and man is a unique creature of God which has been corroborated after scanning the space and after going to the moon and after landing in the Mars now that there is probably no life or no species like man. So, in this earth humanity has to be preserved at any cost and for the preservation of humanity, forest is very essential. As I pointed out earlier, the rapid space at which the Thar desert has been proceeding—experts say at the rate of about half a mile every year—has to be stopped.

Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao has rightly pointed out regarding the span of life of various multi-purpose reservoirs that have been built at a colossal cost. Their life has also to be preserved for which in the catchment areas we should see that there should be no further denudation of forests, rather afforestation should be taken up in a very vigorous way.

In spite of our pious wish in 1952 that we should have a forest-covered area of 33.3%, our target has reached only 22.7% and that too, is a very big claim, according to me. My friend, Mr. Shinde would agree with me that many of the so-called 'reserve forests' are mere *Namkevas* forests, forests for namesake and hardly there is any tree there. I passed on some photographs to Mr. Shinde so far as the avenue trees in my State are concerned. Even the avenue trees which

have been planted about 100 or 150 years back have been mercilessly cut and nobody has been paying any attention to preserve these avenue trees even though many of the VIPs pass by that road.

Our population has been growing at an annual rate of 2.5% and taking this factor into consideration, it is a good thing that a new awareness has come and especially, I congratulate Mr. Sanjay Gandhi who has given a call for plantation of trees and there has been a circular issued to all the State Governments and even to the district level and the Panchayat level so far as social forestry is concerned. I think some steps will be taken in this regard and all co-operation should be taken from the authorities concerned.

I want just two assurances from the Minister. (1) He should be firm regarding the preservation of the avenue trees and he has been very categorical that the contract system should be stopped. But I know for certain that for the sake of revenue these forest coupes are being auctioned every year and given to the highest bidder.

Various contractors go and steal from the adjoining areas. That is how contractors are primarily responsible for destruction of our forests. Even though the Minister said that there will not be a contract system, I doubt this very much. For the sake of their revenue, State Governments will continue to indulge in such a practice of leasing out forests on yearly basis to various contractors. Now there is emergency and in view of this, I hope that very strict measures will be taken by the Government to implement their afforestation programmes. Unless the forests survive humanity cannot survive. I conclude with a quotation from Mr. Arnold Toynbee, who said :

'The Himalayas have a message to give to man in an age when he is being menaced by the backfire of his latest technological achievements. The message is one of hope. It is still possible for man to regain his original concord with Nature and this will bring him salvation from his present Man-made plight.'

With these words, I think, my purpose has been served, public attention has been drawn, Government has become aware of the fact. So, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is an amendment by Mr. Daga. Although he is not here, it has to be put to the vote of the House. We cannot dispose of the original motion unless the amendment is disposed of. So, I will put Mr. Daga's amendment to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 1 was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Is it the pleasure of the House to allow Shri P. K. Deo to withdraw his Resolution moved on the 14th May, 1976?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

17.34 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR WEAKER SECTIONS OF MUSLIMS

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN (Telli-chery) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful for this opportunity to move my Resolution. I beg to move the following Resolution :—

"This House resolves that in order to further strengthen national integration and promote secularism and ensure that socio-economic and