

[English]

SHRI C.K. KUPPUSWAMY : Are the Union Government aware of the fact that the State Government are supporting the practice of afforestation in forest area? What steps are the Union Government going to take in this regard?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : He has already answered this question.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : We are making plans for it.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM (Kanker) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the States are advised by the Planning Commission to mobilize maximum possible resources. The States are left only with one option to cut forests and increase their revenue. I want to enquire from the hon. Minister as to what action is being taken to check this policy of the Central Government and to control the tendency of the State Government to increase their revenue by felling forests.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : The Union Government never says that they should cut forests in order to mobilise more resources. Someone must have informed the hon. Member wrongly about the figures. The Central Government has always made and will continue to make efforts to protect the forests and give more assistance to the States for this purpose. During the Seventh Five Year Plan Rs. 2000 crores will be spent on the forests so that our forest wealth could be increased to the maximum extent possible.

SHRIMATI USHA VERMA (Kheri) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh is rich in forest wealth but since the inception of the Forest Corporation, trees are being felled there constantly. Is the hon. Minister aware of it?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question related to Tamil Nadu but, if you permit, I would reply to it. So far as U.P. is concerned, it is true that forests are cut there but the Hon. Prime Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers that

felling of trees should be strictly controlled and our forests should be preserved.

[English]

Report of Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax

*30. **DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI† :**
SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax had submitted its report; and

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations made and the reaction of Government thereon with steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) The Study Group on Taxation of Expenditure submitted its interim report on 19.12.1986. The Study Group has not so far submitted its final report.

(b) The recommendations made by the Study Group in its interim report are being examined by the Government.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I did not expect that my hon. friend, Shri Poojary will give such a reply. The newspapers have already published the salient features of recommendations of the Dr. Raja Chelliah Committee on Expenditure Tax. Before I ask my question, may I request the hon. Minister to give us the salient features of the recommendations made?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : It is only the interim report and the recommendations of the interim report cannot be published. The recommendations are being examined and if at all any decisions are taken, those will be reflected in the coming Budget. I would request the hon. Member not to put any further questions in view of what I have stated.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Sir, I will embarrass my friend. I would just

like to know whether there is any proposal to amend Sections 80C and 80E of the Income Tax Act and whether the Government is proposing to have expenditure tax also.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : I have already requested my friend not to ask any more question. Anyway, the Budget will be presented on the 28th February.

High Powered Authority on Environmental Conservation

***32. SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK† :**
SHRI MANIK REDDY :

Will the Minister of **ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS** be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to constitute a high powered authority on environment to advise Government on a national conservation strategy in the country;

(b) if so, its composition and terms of reference; and

(c) the time by which it will start functioning ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) to (c). The details of an Environment Protection Authority, which, among other things, will advise the Government on National Conservation Strategy, are being worked out.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has not given a correct reply to my basic question. I had asked whether there was any proposal to constitute a high powered authority on environment to advise the Government on a national conservation strategy in the country, but the hon. Minister has given some different reply. So, I want to put a supplementary question to him. According to a study report of the World Health Organisation, Delhi is the third most polluted city in the world. If

the above study report is correct, then I want to know as to what steps the Government has taken to control pollution, especially in view of the fact that anti-pollution measures are undertaken here carelessly and attitude of neglect prevails in this connection and whether there is any proposal to constitute a high powered authority or a board for an effective monitoring of the work ?

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI : Sir, the hon. Member has said that I have not given a correct reply but if he looks into it he would find that my reply has been very clear. Under Section 3 (3) of the Environment Protection Act the Government is considering the proposal of constituting an authority which will also advise the Government on conservation strategy. Sir, the issue of pollution would also be under the above-mentioned authority. It is not true that the Government has not taken effective steps for controlling pollution. With your permission, I would like to submit before the House the details of the various steps taken, specially in regard to Delhi. Our difficulty is that the problem of environmental pollution cannot be solved very quickly. Wherever pollution is caused by smoke emitted from thermal power stations, we have, from time to time, taken up this case with the concerned authorities and have advised them to install their electrostatic precipitators properly and rectify their working. However, taking steps in this direction will consume some time. We got one thermal power station closed because of its excessive pollution. It would not be proper to get all of them closed because then questions would also be raised regarding the shortage of electricity. The second most important cause of pollution is the automobiles and vehicles. In this connection also we have taken appropriate steps at the manufacturing stage and in the matter of petrol supply. Effective steps have been taken to reduce sulphur and bad contents in the fuel. These are the steps we have taken and are taking to solve the pollution problem of Delhi.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : According to a recent survey conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board, the primary cause of pollution in the urban areas is the domestic rubbish thrown out and the open dirty drains. If this is