

[श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री]

हमारे बजट में से देना उचित भी है या नहीं।
मेरे यही दो प्रश्न हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मैं श्री गांधी को भाषण देने की इजाजत तो नहीं दे सकता लेकिन अगर वे कुछ प्रश्न पूछना चाहें तो पूछ सकते हैं।

Shri V. B. Gandhi (Bombay Central South): I would like to make a speech.

Mr. Speaker: He can put a question or two. He cannot make any speech now. Would he like to put a question or two?

Shri V. B. Gandhi: I shall have to frame my questions.

Mr. Speaker: There is no time for that now.

Now, the debate is closed, and the hon. Minister would reply some time next week.

17.06 hrs.

DEVELOPMENT OF HILL AREAS

Shri Hem Raj (Kangra): On the 1st December, 1964, I had tabled an unstarred question, namely Unstarred Question No. 745 which was replied to by the hon. Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture. The question was:

"Whether the working group of the Central Hill Development Committee has since submitted its report and if so, the broad features thereof?"

The answer given was that the submission of the report by the Working Group will take some time.

This reply of the hon. Deputy Minister was most indefinite, vague and unsatisfactory, judged from the point of view of the urgency of the problem.

17.07 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

In order to give a background of these hills, I may be permitted to give a brief description of these areas. The main chains in the hill areas in India are as follows; one is the Himalayan area which extends right from NEFA up to Ladakh border; then comes the Vindhya hills and then come the Nilgiris. No doubt, some of these hill regions were developed during the British time by the Britishers for their summer resorts etc. but nothing tangible was done for their amelioration or for the proper development of those regions.

After independence, some effort was made by Government, but it was not commensurate with the size of the problem that these hill areas posed. It was only after the Chinese aggression that this problem came to the fore and it was last year that the Central Government woke up and thought that there must be some integrated approach for the development of these areas in a coordinated way. Consequently, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research held a seminar in April at Simla. It was inaugurated by the then Minister of Food and Agriculture, Shri S. K. Patil, and was presided over by the then Minister of Agriculture, the dynamic Dr. Ram Subhag Singh. At that time, there was a message from the late Prime Minister. I may be permitted to quote it in extense as that will give you the magnitude of this problem:

"I am glad to learn that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research have organised a seminar on Hill Development. It is very important for us to pay particular attention to the development of these areas. That importance has grown since

*Half-An-Hour Discussion.

Chinese aggression across our borders.

"In British times, these hill areas were neglected except for some hill stations and the like...

"It is desirable, however, that the question of the development of these areas should be thought of in an integrated way. Communications to open up these areas must have the first priority. Much has been done in this respect. Then comes the development of agriculture and the growth of small scale industries, including processing industries. These areas produce very fine fruits as well as vegetables such as are found in temperate climates. These would find a ready market in other parts of India. Then there is the great forest wealth which has to be protected and added to. Such planting of trees is necessary also to conserve the soil.

"The people living in our hill areas are stout and hard working and, given the opportunity, they will progress rapidly. That opportunity has to be given them now".

This was the urgency of the problem which prompted our late Prime Minister to send such an inspiring message to that seminar. After that seminar, a Central Hill Development Committee was formed here. It was inaugurated by the then Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh..

Shri D. C. Sharma: (Gurdaspur): Dynamic.

Shri Hem Raj: You are a professor. If there is any mistake in what I say, you can correct it.

Shri D. C. Sharma: You used the word 'Dynamic'. I am using it again.

Shri Hem Raj: I was telling the House that the meeting was held in

May, 1964. There certain decisions were taken. It was attended by different States, Assam, UP, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madras and some others. The first decision was that a working group should be formed which was to prepare a blueprint based on technical considerations for hill development during the next ten years. In that meeting, Shri Sreeman Narayan, Member, Agriculture, Planning Commission, was also present. While this recommendation was being made, he said that if the working group could prepare that blueprint before the end of December 1964, it could be considered by the Planning Commission for giving better financial allocation for the hill development plan.

Secondly, another decision was taken that that blueprint must be considered before it was presented to the Planning Commission, by the Central Hill Development Advisory Committee, and that was to be done by the end of October.

Thirdly, it was decided that, in order to strengthen the organisation at the Centre, a special cell was to be created at the Centre of technical and secretarial staff, which was to see that there was proper implementation, that the blueprint was prepared. And for this purpose, an Additional Agricultural Commissioner was to be appointed by the Ministry itself at the Centre. He was to act as the convener of the working group which was to be set up here.

Then, it was also decided that, because the allocation for the development of the hill areas would require special financial outlay, this must be submitted to the Planning Commission, so that it might keep in mind the question of better financial outlays for the development of these areas while preparing the draft of the Fourth Plan.

Thereafter, in October I wrote a letter to the Minister of Food and Agriculture in the third week from Kulu, that the second meeting of this

[Shri Hem Raj]

Advisory Committee be called. I received a reply not immediately, but after 1½ months from the Minister, and the reply was that it was not possible because there was unusual delay in the submission of the report of the working group.

Now, seven months have elapsed. According to the programme framed by the Planning Commission, certain date lines had been fixed for the different Ministries by which they must submit their proposals—and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture knew them—so that they might be considered at the planning stage, and the Finance Ministry might be consulted for giving more financial aid for the purpose. But the Agriculture Minister has been sleeping over this matter, and nothing has been done so far. Neither the Additional Agricultural Commissioner has been appointed, nor the working group set up, nor any study made. The Chairman of this committee at the first meeting remarked:

“As a prerequisite, the States were requested to furnish factual information on the problems of their hill areas. The data received are being consolidated and categorised for reference purposes.”

But, nothing of the sort was done. No special cell has been created so far.

My first question will then be: what have they done for the appointment of that special officer for the purpose of keeping to all these date lines which they had themselves fixed in that committee? Has the blueprint been prepared now? When the plan is finalised, how will he be in a position to assure the hill advisory committee that any financial allocations which are very much required for the development of these areas will be given by the Central Government or the Planning Com-

mission? About these border areas, people are very much apprehensive of the defence of these areas, and it is good that people care for these areas because they know that on the border 16 Chinese divisions are poised against us; my friend Mr. Kamath is very much apprehensive. But if the economic condition of the people in that area is bad, the military alone cannot deliver the goods; no Army can succeed there unless the economic condition of these areas is also raised. Therefore, I will request the hon. Minister to enlighten this House on all these points, how he will be able to get all this financial aid which this hilly area requires for its development.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf (Jammu and Kashmir): Sir, I want to make one submission. I am a signatory to the original question.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: No submission at this stage; you should have notified earlier. Your name is not here to allow you to put questions now. Mr. Kamath.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): I am sorry to say that, in all, thirteen Members including the Minister and you, Sir, are present when this interesting subject is being discussed. Anyhow,....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Are you raising the question of quorum?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I did not raise it in a formal way.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Unwittingly you made that remark and I have to ring the Bell.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I shall withdraw it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: But it has gone on record. We cannot continue unless we have quorum. Let the Bell be rung.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The hon. Minister's reply will not be there. Will it continue in the next session?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: No, it is finished. This Bell is being rung.—The

bell has been rung. We have waited for five minutes. There is no quorum. The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

17,26 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, December, 18, 1964/Agrahayana 27, 1886 (Saka).