

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, November 16, 1977/Kartika 25,
1899 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Shri Genda Singh, who was a Member of the Fifth Lok Sabha during the years 1971-77, representing Padrauna constituency of Uttar Pradesh. Earlier, he had been a Member of the U.P. Legislative Assembly during the years 1952-71, and was the Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly from 1954 to 1957. He served as Minister of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in the UP Government from 1965 to 1967, and later as Minister for Public Works and Food in 1967 and Minister for Information in 1970.

A well-known freedom fighter, Shri Genda Singh suffered imprisonment several times during the freedom struggle. Throughout his life he championed the cause of sugar-cane growers and sought nationalisation of the sugar industry in Uttar Pradesh. He was a forceful speaker and, in spite of his physical incapacity due to a paralytic stroke, he used to take active part in the proceedings of the Lok Sabha and speak with zeal on issues pertaining to agriculture.

He passed away at Lucknow on November 15, 1977, at the age of 70.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and, I am sure, the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

The House then stood in silence for a short while.

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ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Setting up of a Super Thermal Plant at Farakka

*41. SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister, in his reply to Budget demand debate during the last Session, and in his broadcast at the All India Radio gave assurance that a Super Thermal Plant would be installed at Farakka and that it would be given 'top priority'; and

(b) if so, how the matter stands at present?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Statements had been made that Farakka was one of the five sites identified by the Government of India for establishment of Super Thermal Power Stations and that priority was being given to the completion of investigations of the Project so that it could be taken up after necessary clearances.

(b) Detailed investigations of the project have been taken up by the National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. and are in progress. The site for establishing the station has been selected after detailed techno-economic appraisal of the alternative sites and necessary information is being collected for land acquisition proceedings. Investigations are in progress to link coal for the project from Rajmahal collieries and its transportation. As soon as these investigations are completed and coal availability is established, the detailed feasibility report will be prepared and processed for an investment decision. The pre-appraisal information for the project is expected to be submitted to the World Bank early next year.

SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL: The statement appended to the answer of the hon. Minister is both encouraging and discouraging. I hope it has not been

drafted with any mental reservation. My hon. friend was good enough to write to me on the 18th July that he will write to me about the matter of priorities. Later on, again because of his abundant kindness, he followed up his own letter, without any intermediate letter from me, where he said that Farakka is being given high priority. My question is very specific whether in the matter of super-power thermal stations Farakka is being given top priority or it is only one of the five.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: As far as the Farakka thermal station is concerned, it is one of the five stations which we are contemplating and on which work will be proceeding simultaneously. As far as Farakka station is concerned as soon as the feasibility study, about the supply of coal and the linkage of coal is finished, we will be taking action for sanctioning of the scheme. Already we have got plans to see that this project is also taken to the World Bank for consideration.

SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL: Are you retreating from your commitment in the letter?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: No.

SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL: You know that at the time of the construction of the Farakka Barrage Complex, large quantities of land were acquired by Jessop & Co., the contractors, and those lands are lying vacant. They have not even paid the rent to the Government, but that is another matter. In the matter of the selection of the site, will Government consider the feasibility of making use of those abundant lands on the banks of the river, so that new virgin green lands may not have to be acquired?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: The selection of the site has already been made, and the work has to proceed with regard to the acquisition of the land and other things. If these lands are in the proximity, definitely we will make use of them, there is no difficulty about that.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: It appears from the reply of the hon. Minister that the whole project has to pass through a five-phased investigation, namely land acquisition proceedings, coal availability and its transport from Rajmahal collieries, detailed feasibility report, processing for investment decision and final clearance from the World Bank. May I know whether it would be possible to short-circuit these phases of the investigation, so that the whole process can be cleared at the earliest, because the proposed thermal plant is of key importance as it is contemplated that from this plant power will be supplied to the North Bengal districts as

also some districts of South Bengal which are suffering from power famine, because of which the State of West Bengal is not in a position to achieve a break through from economic stagnation?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: It is because of the difficult power position in the eastern region that we are taking up this project as early as possible. In fact, our programme is that it will be appraised by the World Bank in the beginning of next year and cleared. After all, it is only two or three months more. Already, the other preparations have been made. So, whatever priority has to be given is already being given to this project.

SHRI K. MALLANNA: The thermal plants in the country are not working satisfactorily, they are working inefficiently. May I know what steps are being taken to improve the conditions of efficiency, and if it is due to lack of technical know-how may I know whether he is seeking technical know-how from advanced countries?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: With regard to the efficient working of the stations that are available in the country, already our Ministry has discussed it with the various electricity boards. Also, a multi-disciplinary team has been sent to various stations to help them to operate better. In addition, a team of engineers has come from West Germany, and they are being deployed to various stations. Also, our engineers are being sent to West Germany for training. All these steps are being taken to see that the availability is increased in the existing stations.

SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI: It has been mentioned in the statement that investigations are in progress to link coal for the project from Rajmahal collieries and its transportation. I am afraid Rajmahal collieries are not that developed, though very near Farakka. Supposing this linkage is not sufficiently developed, will the arrangement be made to bring coal from Raniganj and other fields?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: The estimated reserves are sufficient to feed Farakka Project. Simultaneously, the coal production also will be developed in the Rajmahal coalfields. By the time the project in Farakka is completed, adequate quantities of coal will be available.

श्री यमुना प्रसाद शास्त्री : अभी आपने कहा है कि देश में पांच सुपर थर्मल पावर स्टेशन बनाए जा रहे हैं। मध्य प्रदेश में सिगरौली में दुनिया का सब से बड़ा कोल

डिजाजिट मिला है, कोयले का भंडार मिला है। लेकिन दुर्भाग्य से पिछली सरकार ने सिंगरौली का कोयला उत्तर प्रदेश में ले जाकर के ओबरा में सुपर थर्मल पावर स्टेशन बनाने की योजना शुरू कर दी गई। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ वहाँ पर कोयले के भंडार को देखते हुए वहीं पर सुपर थर्मल पावर स्टेशन बनाने की योजना आप के दिमाग में है और क्या आप इसे वहीं पर स्थापित करेंगे ?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: In Singrauli also, there is a super thermal power station. In fact, it has been sanctioned. The work is proceeding in that area.

श्री युवराज : राष्ट्रीय ताप विद्युत् निगम लिमिटेड द्वारा जो विस्तृत अन्वेषण इस परियोजना का हो रहा है क्या सरकार को पता है कि इस सम्बन्ध में जितनी प्रगति की अपेक्षा हमें थी उतनी प्रगति नहीं हुई है और इसीलिए फरक्का के सम्बन्ध में जो प्राथमिकता निर्धारित की गई थी उस में भारी विलम्ब हो रहा है ?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Absolutely, there is no delay. Originally, the five super thermal power stations were put in order of priority but as soon as this Government came to power, we have decided to establish all the super power stations simultaneously in various regions. The Farakka Project is being expedited.

श्री युवराज : मैं एक स्पष्टीकरण चाहता हूँ। इस परियोजना की एस्टीमेटेड कास्ट क्या है ? अन्वेषण कार्य जो हो रहा है उसी से जुड़ा हुआ यह सवाल है। वर्ल्ड बैंक से रुपया मांगने की बात जो हो रही है, सारी प्रक्रिया आप खत्म हो जाने के बाद वर्ल्ड बैंक से जो आप रुपया मांगेंगे कितना मांगेंगे, कितना रुपया इस परियोजना में लगेगा ?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: The estimated expenditure will be about Rs. 700 to 800 crores.

DR. SARADISH ROY: For how long a period this project has been pending for sanction of the Central Government and what progress has been made after taking over power by the Janata Government at the Centre ?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: After this Government took over, we have proceeded in that direction very far and that is why, by the end of December, the entire techno-economic feasibility survey will be done and it will be sent to the World Bank by January/February, 1978.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: I rise on a point of order, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order during the Question Hour.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: This is about the admissibility of the question. The subject matter referred to in this question, that is, "Production of Film" "Indus to Indira Gandhi" by a "Tamil Nadu firm" is before the Shah Commission for inquiry. The part (b) of the question says:

"whether the committee took this decision at the instance of former Information and Broadcasting Minister (Shri Shukla) and the Director General of Doordarshan took initiative in the matter."

The entire subject matter is pending before the Shah Commission. If this question is allowed to be answered here, it will prejudice the inquiry conducted by the Shah Commission. In view of the fact that the entire subject matter is under investigation by the Shah Commission and the fact that the Shah Commission has got a wide range of procedure laid down, I humbly submit that this question may be held over and postponed till the Shah Commission gives its finding in regard to this matter. This is a very relevant point.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

तमिलनाडु की एक फर्म द्वारा 'इंडस टू इंदिरा गांधी' नामक फिल्म का निर्माण

* 43. श्री नवाब सिंह चौहान : क्या सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री तमिलनाडु की एक फर्म द्वारा 'इंडस टू इंदिरा गांधी' नामक फिल्म का निर्माण करने के बारे में 27 जुलाई, 1977 के अतारकित