

Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to Copyright made in the motion adopted by Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 16th February, 1956, and communicated to this House on the 21st February, 1956, and resolves that the following Members of Lok Sabha be nominated to serve on the said Joint Committee, namely, Shri B. S. Murthy, Shri N. C. Laskar, Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha, Shri Fulsinhji B. Dabhi, Shri Joachim Alva, Shri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, Shri S. V. Ramaswamy, Shri Birakisore Ray, Shri D. C. Sharma, Shri S. C. Samanta, Shri Gurmukh Singh Musafir, Shri M. Hifzur Rahman, Dr. Suresh Chandra, Shri C. P. Mathew, Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha, Seth Govind Das, Shri Rohanlal Chaturvedi, Shri C. R. Basappa, Dr. Lanka Sundaram, Shri U. M. Trivedi, Shri V. G. Deshpande, Shri N. B. Chowdhury, Shri Sadhan Chandra Gupta, Shri Bahadur Singh, Shri Frank Anthony, Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani, Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy, Shri V. Veeraswamy, Dr. Mono Mohon Das, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad."

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** (Visakhapatnam): May I enquire whether any date has been set for the submission of the report?

**Dr. M. M. Das**: It is 25th May.

**Mr. Chairman**: But that is not mentioned here.

**Dr. M. M. Das**: The original motion was moved in the other House.

**Mr. Chairman**: All right. Discussion on this motion will proceed on the next day.

## REPORT OF JAUNDICE ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

**Shri Kamath** (Hoshangabad): Before we proceed to the discussion, may I make a request that in view of the seriousness of the matter, more than one hour should have been allotted. Under rule 213 under which it has been admitted, the time can be up to 2½ hours. I would, therefore, request that the discussion may not be closed today and it may be carried over to tomorrow or

any other day convenient to all concerned. I am sure the House will agree with me in this suggestion.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** (Visakhapatnam): I whole-heartedly endorse the suggestion made by my hon. friend Shri Kamath. It is a very serious matter, and I am sure the hon. Minister will certainly take half of the time for reply. I find that a large number of hon. Members have already sent in their names who want to speak. If so we will have very little time.

**Mr. Chairman**: There are 6 hon. Members including Dr. Rama Rao.

**Shri Gidwani** (Thana): This is a very important question.

**Mr. Chairman**: Can the hon. Minister say how much time she may require?

**The Minister of Health (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur)**: Sir, it all depends on what points are raised by the hon. Members. I imagine I ought to be able to reply within 20 minutes.

**Mr. Chairman**: Let us go on with the discussion and in the mean time.....

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram**: With great respect to the Chair, I would make a submission. We will have to ration time right from now if we do not take decision. As I said earlier, nearly half the time will be taken by the hon. Minister, and you will probably give 5 minutes to each of the speakers and you cannot exhaust the names already sent in and that would not be sufficient.

**Shri V. P. Nayar** (Chirayinkil): What are we to discuss in 5 minutes?

**Shri Gidwani**: I would like to know how many names have been sent to you.

**Mr. Chairman**: Can we sit up to 6 o'clock?

**Several Hon. Members**: No, no.

**Shri V. P. Nayar**: We can continue tomorrow also.

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

**Shri Kamath**: May I request you, Sir, under rule 213—which gives you discretion to allot time up to 2½ hours for such an important matter—considering the seriousness of the matter, which has killed so many people in Delhi—hundreds of people in Delhi—to allot more time for the discussion of this matter? I request that this may be

[Shri Kamath]

discussed for one hour today and may be carried over to tomorrow or the day after or to some other day which is suitable to all concerned for at least one hour, if not an hour and a half.

**Dr. S. N. Sinha** (Saran East) : There are many speakers on our side also.

**Shri Gidwani** : It is the general view of the House ; there is no question of party.

**Shri Shree Narayan Das** (Darbhanga Central) : Let the debate begin and let us see....

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur** : I have no objection to more time being allotted to the hon. Members but it is a question of how much the Business Advisory Committee has allotted, or can give.

**Mr. Speaker** : The rule says that those hon. Members who want to participate in the discussion must give previous notice to the Speaker. I have got only 4 names besides the sponsors. If they have not given their names already I am not going to allow them to speak. They must abide by the rules. I have got only 4 other names and I am going to allow them only to speak. Why should not others think of the rule? Therefore, I will allow time to them and let me see if the time is not enough.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** : With great respect I would submit that it is within your competence and discretion to extent the time in view of the unanimous request of the House for more time.

**Mr. Speaker** : But the other hon. Members who wanted to participate are only 4.

**Shri Nambiar** (Mayuram) : We did give our names because there was only one hour and there was no use giving all names. If there is more time we will immediately give the names.

**Shri Gidwani** : I have given my name.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** : At any time it is competent for you to judge the opinion of the House and to allot more time.

**Mr. Speaker** : Let the discussion go on and let me see if any more time is necessary. As it is, besides the sponsors of the motion, only 4 more hon. Members have given notice of their intention to participate.

**Shri D. C. Sharma** (Hoshiarpur) : Who are those hon. Members?

**Mr. Speaker** : I will tell the hon. Member in due course.

**Dr. Rama Rao** (Kakinada) : As is shown by the interest here and the agitation caused in the country, we are discussing a very important subject. The Report itself is very interesting, though from my point of view, there is one recommendation at least which I am going to criticise which is an unfortunate recommendation. Somebody in the Health Ministry seems to have got a sense of colour perception and they have given it a yellow cover. If only my valuable opinion had been taken (*Dr. Lanka Sundaram* : Jaundiced book!) I would have suggested that it should have had a black border because it is a black report. The whole report is not only *post mortem*,—and I do not want to interest myself going into *post mortem* things—but it should open our eyes to the naked facts which are reported.

First and foremost, Delhi is a historic city. It is making history today and our friends here must know that Delhi will have hereafter a place in the history of bacteriology, in the history of human medicine. Because of this unfortunate and unimaginable situation, for some days, all persons, including almost all the VIPs were given 50 per cent sewage and 50 per cent water.

**Shri Gidwani** : Why VIPs?

**Dr. Rama Rao** : I say "including VIPs".

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** : No discrimination.

**Dr. Rama Rao** : This leads me to the other question that all these days the officers, particularly the officers of....

**Mr. Speaker** : The House is more interested to know how this occurred and so on. Interruptions are no good; they would be taking away the time of the House.

**Dr. Rama Rao** : I am not going into all the details but I would go into a few what I consider to be important details. But this is certainly a point. The Central Government in Delhi has been neglecting Delhi. There has been a sort of stonewall and for once, owing to this fantastic situation, we find a sort of equality. Delhi citizens as well as New Delhi citizens, including our hon.

friend the Minister of Agriculture, have been treated for once equally and this terrible thing has opened our eyes....

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram :** Do you mean Dr. Deshmukh ?

**Dr. Rama Rao :** Yes; Dr. Deshmukh, the Minister of Agriculture.

This is a very serious responsibility. People may say the responsibility is divided. But, I consider it is the responsibility of the Central Government. The Water and Sewage Board has been constituted by the Central Government. That Board, I believe, is responsible, if at all to any body, to this Central Government. Further I will give my recommendations as it were as to what we should do with the Central Board. But, meanwhile, the entire responsibility is that of the Centre and there is no shirking of it. Of course, everybody tries to shove the responsibility on others as we see in this report. The Director is trying to throw the responsibility on the State Government and others are throwing it on the municipal authorities and there are too many authorities.

Let us remember that Delhi gets its water purified and supplied in a very primitive stage. The whole equipment, the whole arrangement is primitive. I do not want to say much about the Delhi State Public Health Laboratory. I will just read a line from the report here. It says :

"Chemical analysis showed contamination as early as on the 11th."

There is no doubt about that; even on the 11th there was contamination. But our wonderful Delhi Public Health Laboratory did not find any contamination till today. Even when there was the height of contamination—that is of course bacteriological—they showed no evidence of contamination even on the 14th. That Report says :

"This shows that either the process of purification and sterilisation adopted by the Engineers had been highly satisfactory or the technique of bacteriological examination demands a rigorous scrutiny."

Of course, the latter is more probable and possible and there is something that is not well with the Delhi Public Health Laboratory. Let us see how we are drinking water. Let me quote only two sentences from this report. First it is

not contested—I will not go into details—that some of these nallas are today discharging sewage into the rivers because of inadequate capacity of the sewers for the pumping units. The South Delhi Municipal area derives its water supply from the river downstream, that is after 6-7 sewage channels from the city drain themselves into the river. Therefore, the water that we drink is normally contaminated with sewage. All these days whatever treatment they have been giving is only for bacteria and not for virus. It is no wonder that the report says that there is a normal calculated occurrence of 400 cases every month, apart from this acute infection. Delhi has plenty of this infection every day.

Regarding red tape, it is an awful story. The report makes a very sad reading in that even after detection as early as the 11th November that the water was contaminated, still nothing happened and no action was taken till Dr. Chadha himself saw the whole contamination with his own eyes. It has also been mentioned in the report that carcasses were there, filth was there, and so on and so forth and it was all just being removed by hand. Being a medical man and a health officer, we have accepted his responsibility and then taken further steps. I will not go into detail but things were done very leisurely and very late. The whole thing is very bad and it is because there is red tape, there is no co-ordination. The whole thing is wrong, from the Central Government, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defence, then the State Government, various municipalities, various other bodies and lastly this wonderful Board. On the whole it has been a very sad story. I do not want to take much of your time, but I will just give you some points which I think important.

Apart from other things, the report has done one good thing, namely that it has done one good thing, namely that it Parliament but of the whole country. There have been already 12 deaths reported in Delhi. Though we know something about virus, we did not know about its very serious effects. Though something is known about virus it has opened our eyes to the dangers and also to the importance of giving good water for people to drink. In this connection I have a fundamental objection to the whole system and although I raised this matter by my supplementary

[Dr. Rama Rao]

questions, I wish to emphasise this point. Apart from the mistakes or responsibility of this man or that, this system of contaminating or polluting drinking water of rivers is, to put it very mildly, criminal. I am afraid people, millions of us, men, women and children, downstream drink these waters which are being polluted here. The Central Government, knowing full well, are giving all these viruses to the millions of people and even now it is continuing and it is proposed to continue it. This is a most serious affair and a most inexcusable thing. It is not as if the Government has known it only recently. Even in this Parliament there were questions about this matter a year of two ago—it was about the pollution of the river Jumna. Therefore, the Central Government has no excuse for saying that the infection has come off suddenly or that it was an unforeseen thing or that it was an act of God or anybody else. My point in drawing the attention of the Government is this. There is no use of saying "Do not drink this water, do not bathe in this water because it contains 50 per cent sewage and 50 per cent water". If you want to stop bathing in the rivers, put up sign boards a million of them, from the North down to Calcutta stating "Please do not bathe in this water because the Government of India is putting sewage into this river—sewage from the V.I.P.s. and others". I once saw a very interesting sign board in Burma which stated at the end "Thirty accidents took place, forty people died, another sixty injured; please drive slowly". So also, the Health Ministry may put up sign boards stating that the water contains so much percentage of sewage from Delhi, so much from Agra and so on, including the various cities like Mathura etc. Therefore, I am only drawing the attention of the Government and other authorities to the fact that it is a most inexcusable, fantastic and criminal act to contaminate the rivers. I consider the rivers as holy because of their beauty, charm and above all their utility. What is there equal to a river? My reasons for considering a river as holy may be different from those of my friend, Shri Nand Lal Sharma. A dip in the river, from my point of view, may not take me to heaven unless I go into deep waters.

**Shri V. G. Deshpande (Guna) :** Now it will take him to heaven !

**Shri Nand Lal Sharma (Sikar) :** My friend is not bound for heaven!

**Dr. Rama Rao :** That is only a minor matter. I am not bound unless I go to deep waters. The rivers are very important for our very life. It will not suffice if you simply publish a hand-bill or a pamphlet or issue a report asking people not to drink the water of the rivers. When we know that millions of people drink this water, we must try and prevent the pollution of the rivers. It is a most inexcusable and criminal act on the part of these responsible authorities knowingly and consciously putting in millions of germs and viruses and making unsuspecting population drink the water downstream and suffer thereby. I am sure the Government of India would take serious action in this matter. There is no use saying that the action will be taken by 1961. It must be done immediately. Stop all other work and put this work on a war footing. You cannot allow river water to be polluted.

I suggest that these various municipal authorities must be taken over and a body, something like the Corporation in Greater Bombay, must be formed on a democratic set-up and there must be unified authority, not divided responsibility. All these measures must be taken by the Corporation with immediate effect and under the direct assistance and guidance of the Central Government.

It has been established now beyond doubt that this large-scale infection of jaundice has occurred. At least it could have been prevented much earlier. People have been poisoned as it were directly. Therefore, the least that the Government can do is this. In the case of Government servants who were victims of this and who are patients, their families must be given some compensation; at least those Government servants who had no leave to their credit and who were asked to go on leave on loss of pay must be given leave with full pay.

I request the Government to take strong and speedy measures to stop this monstrosity of polluting the river. In this connection I would not like to say any harsh words against this very learned Committee. But I find even the Committee says "Continue the pollution only a little downstream". That, I consider, is a very unfortunate thing in this valuable report. Therefore I hope the Government will take immediate steps

to stop this pollution and give good water to the people, and not half sewage and half water. I also hope that other Governments and authorities in other places will take note of this and see that no river in India is polluted and that people get good water and not water mixed with sewage.

**Shri Kamath :** Mr. Speaker, Delhi, the modern capital of this ancient land, has the unique privilege of so many Ministers and so many Ministries and a number of, a myriad authorities of all kinds, sorts and conditions. Had an epidemic of this proportion, on this scale broken out in other democratic countries and had taken as heavy a toll of human life, I have no doubt in my mind that there would have been an indignant outcry for the resignation of the Minister and the heads of those responsible on a charger.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram :** There was indeed. Only it does not make any impression upon the Government

**Shri Kamath :** But here, the pathetic patience of the people is also a contributory factor to this lack of action on the Government's part. Misuse of public money does not move them; inefficiency does not irritate them and loss of human life does not lash them into activity. More than a few hundreds of people have died and the epidemic has spread as far as Madras and a few days ago, about ten people died in Madras of infective hepatitis. Whether it was exported from here or not that is a different matter. But the papers reported it, and the Minister may answer this later on.

The Joint Water and Sewage Board of which the Minister is the presiding deity lived up to its name for a few days in November completely, fully and perfectly. It supplied joint water and sewage to the citizens of Delhi. If at all there was a period in the history of its existence when it fully justified its name and lived up to it, it was during those few days in November. I do not remember the exact dates, but then it justified the name bestowed on it by the Minister and Parliament.

One sad fact emerges from this yellow-bound—very properly bound, as my hon. friend said—report. It shows complete lack of co-ordination between all kinds of authorities in this capital—not merely between various Ministries. It almost appears that the

Central Ministry is allergic to the State Ministry and the Central Minister, perhaps to the State Minister or *vice versa* or perhaps both ways.

In a recent answer to a question in Parliament, the hon. Minister replied. I do not remember the exact words used by her but they were to the effect that the anti-fly campaign on the Chinese pattern was dropped because the Delhi State authorities were not willing to take up the scheme suggested by the Central Ministry. If that is the position, why have these two Ministries been fighting against each other and killing the people in Delhi? Both must go from Delhi; they have no business to be here. If there were one unified authority in Delhi, as my friend said, looking after water and food, this crime might not have been committed; the matter is worsening day by day in the capital. The Health Ministers—both in the Centre and in Delhi State—have no moral justification for their continued existence in the capital if they cannot supply wholesome, clean and good food and water to the citizens of the capital.

Let us now turn to a few excerpts from this yellow report. The Committee in its report on page 19 is constrained to point out lack of co-ordination and says that there seems to be no co-ordination whatever with regard to the daily analysis of water. That is so within the Board itself. What follows? In this particular case, contamination appears to have been detected for the first time only by the naked eye although the chemical analysis revealed such contamination a few days earlier: that is what the report says. Atrocious! It was left to the naked eye to discover things although the chemical analysis a few days ago had earlier proved the water to be contaminated! Yet no action was taken. The Engineer-Secretary followed his own course which, according to him, was not successful. But that also reveals the pathetic lack of co-ordination and co-operation between the various departments of the Government in the Centre—the Central Ministry of Health, the CPWD and the Ministry of Defence.

Shri Tyagi is here and I would draw the attention of the House to a serious fact relating to his Ministry. The very first bull-dozer that was brought on the scene for necessary operations got struck in the mud in the Jamuna.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram :** Mud has stuck to it.

**Shri Kamath :** I am really apprehensive about the future of our country and the defence of our country so that it might not repeat the history of Egypt before King Farouk was deposed. According to Press reports, Egypt had to suffer heavily in its war with Israel because of the tragic failure of the equipment which the Egyptian army had. There was a very big scandal about the arms purchases by King Farouk—more or less like the jeep scandal here. But that is a story apart. But here, the first bull-dozer that came got stuck up and it took another day to find another bull-dozer to go into action again and clear the mess in the river at that spot. Are we to depend upon such equipment? That is a subsidiary point that I am making.

**Mr. Speaker :** We are going away from the main point.

**Shri Kamath :** This also is in the report. I am not dilating upon that but incidentally I suggested that the Defence Ministry should always get sound, good and proper equipment which is in order.

Coming to the casualties, I am inclined to believe that the figures supplied by my colleague, and MLA in the Delhi State Assembly—Mir Mushtaq Ahmed—are correct and the figures supplied by the Ministry are absolutely wrong. The latter minimises the gravity of the toll. It does not include figures outside Delhi hospitals, and the Minister has of course admitted that the patients of *hakims*, *vaid*s, etc., were not included in this.

May I point out one more instance? A friend of mine who was attacked by jaundice told me that he went to Irwin Hospital on a particular day at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Irwin hospital may be said to be Delhi State's responsibility. Again, there is this shifting of responsibility. The doctor in attendance examined him and said that he was all right, though he had seen his eye-balls yellow in the mirror. He went home and at 5 o'clock he started vomiting—that is, one hour later. He did not want to go back to Irwin Hospital and be treated harshly by the authorities. He sought remedy from some others and by the grace of God he was cured.

Answering a question here, the hon. Minister said the other day that jaundice was only a symptom.

**An Hon. Member :** Of what?

**Shri Kamath :** Of mal-administration. Or, we do not know what. She said that it is only a symptom.

5 P.M.

This is not the way to deal with it in view of the heavy toll of life. I do not know in rural areas how many people have succumbed to this disease. No facts and figures are given and the Minister also admits those figures are not available to the Ministry. Are we to deal with such a big epidemic in this cavalier fashion? The Minister would not take any responsibility on herself or on her Ministry as regards this very serious matter. An examination of the contents of the Report here shows that the Health Ministry did not leave the matter entirely to the Delhi State health authorities, because it is said here that the Joint Water and Sewage Board who are directly in charge of it did not notify this disease and the executive pretext given is that according to the standing manual of instructions only cholera, smallpox and plague are notifiable diseases. Even when people started dying in the capital right before their eyes it was not notified. That is the love the Government has for the life and health of the common man, the poor man in the capital. If it is so in the capital, I shudder to think what the state may be in the country outside Delhi.

You will agree with me when I point out one or two more extracts from the Report that are very damaging, and an indictment of the entire administration of water supply in the capital. As regards the warning which it is the duty of the health officials to give so that at least those who have regard for technical opinion may have profited by it, it was not done.

Now, coming to lack of co-ordination to which I referred it is said :

"If, however, all the parties concerned, including the Chief Commissioner, the Ministry of Health and the Army authorities...."

Shri Tyagi was blinking at that time. It is mentioned here.

"...had been told of the great danger of contamination, perhaps the difficulties mentioned by the Defence Secretary would have been overcome and help would have been given by taking even more vigorous steps than were taken."

Now, they may say: "We were not informed in time by the Engineer-Secretary". It is clear from the Report that even when he informed the Joint Secretary of Health Ministry, Shri Venkatasubban, Mr. Mehta, Engineer-Secretary, it appears did not tell them what the matter was. He only said: "On some urgent matter, an emergency, I want your help". He did not tell that contamination had taken place and what steps were to be taken. He did not tell any of the authorities in the Ministry what exactly the matter was. So, *prima facie* it appears he did not take the action that was necessary and absolutely essential in the circumstances of the case.

The Report further indicates administration, and says that the officers in charge of the filtration plant failed to take note of the results of the chemical analysis indicating sewage pollution on the morning of the 11th November.

This catastrophe took place in Delhi and there was a heavy toll of human life. It is now nearly three months since it took place. So many people died in the capital because of negligence, carelessness and may I say, callousness of the authorities right from the Ministers down to the authorities in the capital. Even though three months have elapsed now neither the Minister nor any officer has resigned. Nobody has been brought to book or punished. This is the state of affairs. These are the public standards that we are promoting in our country.

I may seriously suggest one thing if it is not impossible to do it. We should not be satisfied with this 'Yellow Report'. Look at the composition of this Committee. There are three officers and, of course, one retired High Court Judge. They have given a fairly good Report. But, we should not be satisfied with this. When such a tragedy has taken place in the capital I would suggest that a Parliamentary Commission should go into this whole matter again on the basis of this Report and bring to book whoever it may be,

Minister or no Minister, officer or any other authority or local authority that is concerned.

I would in the end hope that the Minister may not, being wise in her own conceit, turn a deaf ear to all that has been said here as she and her officers have turned perhaps a blind eye to all that has taken place outside....

**An Hon. Member:** Jaundiced eye.

**Shri Kamath:** Not 'jaundiced eye'; a 'blind eye'. They have taken rather casually the heavy loss of life in the capital. No real action, no stringent action, no drastic action has been taken in the matter.

I would, therefore, once again earnestly suggest that firstly, there must be a unified authority in the capital for supply of water, and also food—when it comes to that because food also can kill, though food may not be relevant today in this context. But, supply of water is the important issue. There are so many authorities—Ministers, Ministries and other local officers—who are dealing with this one subject. They may be eliminated. If at all there are several authorities there should be complete co-ordination, and co-operation between all of them. Secondly, I would suggest that a Parliamentary Commission should examine this matter again on the basis of this Report and it should not spare even the highest in the land. They should bring the highest authority, even a Minister to book.

**Mr. Speaker:** I find that a number of hon. Members want to speak. I have got as many as 19 chits. I do not want to interrupt the normal course of work because we have very little time. If the House is willing to sit some time after 5.30 tomorrow, for half an hour at least, I shall request the hon. Minister to reply tomorrow.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram:** I am afraid it won't be sufficient, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** That will mean half an hour more for this item. If the House is willing to sit for an hour more....

**Dr. S. N. Sinha:** One hour more.

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, I should not be made to ring the bell for quorum. As it is, it is a very important matter. If you so desire, we will sit for an hour after 5.30 tomorrow for

this discussion and at the end of it I will give 20 minutes to the hon. Minister. I will call not only those people who have given notice already or representatives of groups but I will also allow any hon. Member to state his concrete suggestions. Of course, by going into various extraneous matters, it may take more time. For want of time all those things may be cut.

**Dr. Suresh Chandra (Aurangabad):** Sir, those who have given their names before should have priority over others.

**Mr. Speaker:** In which case those who have given names are all from the Communist Party.

**Dr. Suresh Chandra:** No Sir, I had given my name earlier.

**Mr. Speaker:** When?

**Dr. Suresh Chandra:** In the morning.

**Mr. Speaker:** It is enough if the name has been given before now.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** I have also given my name.

**Mr. Speaker:** Has the hon. Member also given his name before?

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram:** Yes, Sir.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** I also sent my name in the morning, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, let there be this arrangement. I have got the names of all hon. Members. I will take it that they have all been given before the discussion started. I will try to distribute time over the various sections of the House. We will sit tomorrow for an hour more from 5.30 to 6.30 and I will call the hon. Minister to speak for 20 minutes tomorrow evening. In the meanwhile in view of the large number of Members who want to take part in this discussion I will allow not more than five minutes for each Member.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram:** I speak in the name of thousands and thousands of families of Delhi who have gone through anguish and sorrow as a result of this epidemic, because my own child was afflicted by it. I can tell you about the panic which swept over this city during those fateful days in December and January. To get adequate medical treatment and to save certain disaster for lack of treatment was also a problem to some of us. I am also speaking from a knowledge of 21 years of this city

and its problems, a city which has today a population of one and three-quarter millions people, and yet, which has also an administration which is not only rickety but which is completely out-of-date and inefficient. I also speak with some knowledge of the problems of the Najafgarh nalla. I am here to say that I had the privilege of examining this particular question on the spot in the company of no less a person than Padma Shri Dr. S. N. Kaul, Superintendent of the Ganga Ram Hospital. Both of us have taken adequate precautions to get such technical assistance as was necessary for any one to understand this report. I would say only one word in addition to those which fell from my hon. friends Dr. Rama Rao and Shri Kamath. The report is very extraordinary document. There are contradictions galore, and to give one bright example—I am sorry my friend Shri Tyagi is not here at the moment—here is something worthy of note. I refer to one sentence in the report from paragraph 73:

“The Committee is satisfied that no blame can be attached to the Army authorities”.

If the House turns to paragraph 56, it will see the letter from the Defence Secretary to the Ministry of Health.

I am quoting:

“On the 9th of November the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence wrote to the Secretary to the Ministry of Health that the supply and use of Army equipment would not be a practical proposition mainly for three reasons: (1) The personnel capable of operating the Army equipment were away from Delhi at that time and it would have taken a few days to recall them to Delhi; (2) The use of the Army equipment would have been expensive; (3) It was understood that similar equipment was available with the C.P.W.D. which could, therefore, be utilised”.

I regret to say that that was a ‘bright’ example, and the manner in which the Ministries have functioned is certainly tantamount to a censure of their efficiency, and more so, of the lack of it. That is as far as the Ministries are concerned. I would not labour this point beyond endurance, but I would say straightaway that the report is a jumble of contradictions, even though I



have the greatest regard for some of the people who have served on that Committee. I regret to say without any compunction at all that the army authorities have failed the city of Delhi, this great city of Delhi, this capital city of Delhi, in the discharge of the duties which are expected of them normally.

There are other passages in the report and every hon. colleague of mine must have gone through them, because they throw a lurid light on the manner in which the Field Commander or whoever it was in charge of the Delhi Area functioned, as far as the army is concerned. They are guilty of dereliction of duty. I trust that my hon. friend Shri Tyagi, would look into this matter from this angle, because this problem is not a matter of yesterday. There were occasions, as the report says, when the army came to the rescue of the civil authorities. The army is always there to come to the rescue of the civil authorities.

Now, I would come straightway to the recommendation No. 11 as listed in the report, because the inquest may take long and I am not much worried about the punishment, where punishment is to be meted out to the officers who are guilty of the dereliction of duty. I am bothered about the future of this great city, with a million and three-quarter people. Recommendation No. 11 reads thus :

"Immediate steps should be taken to divert the Najafgarh Nalla downstream of its present point of confluence with the Jamuna River. If this is likely to take a long time, temporary arrangements should be made to divert the dry weather flow of the Nalla further downstream. This should be done before the end of the summer of this year (1956)".

I am here to say with some knowledge of the sentiments and the opinions of the people of Delhi—and I repeat that I have more than 20 years of continuous contact with the people here—that this recommendation will be stoutly resisted and to the last by the people of this city. The reason is this. What is this nalla? There is a description of this nalla in this book. From my personal knowledge, ranging over a number of years, I can tell you this. All the waste material which flows out of the factories—there are dozens of them on

the banks of the nalla or nearabout the nalla—consisting of chemicals, sullage, etc., is drained into this nalla. Night-soil is washed into this nalla. I have seen it with my own bare eyes a number of times. All the sludge goes into the nalla and all this goes into river. In one place, the report says that from the headworks of the pumping station, the distance of the Najafgarh nalla is 750 feet. You can calculate the yards. How near it is, one can see. I am here to say that the pumping station must be shifted upstream. There is no other alternative. I know the advice of certain engineers and people in the know of things, and have known it in the company of Padma Shri S. N. Kaul of the Ganga Ram Hospital, and we are advised that the capital cost of shifting would not be even Rs. 5 lakhs. We are also advised—I am subject to correction here by competent authorities—that for such an adjustment or shifting, the running charges or the recurring expenditure of this process would not come to much. The question cannot be escaped by this House, because we have responsibility for the administration of Delhi, even though the Delhi legislature is there and the Delhi Ministry is there. So, as I have said earlier, recommendation No. 11 cannot be accepted by the people of Delhi, as far as my knowledge of the opinions of the people are concerned.

Secondly, I come to another alternate proposal. We are technically advised to filter this water temporarily, so as to separate the nightsoil content. On examination, it was found that urine content was also found in the water. I suggest this to my hon. friend, the Minister, straightway. Already, three months of delay has been gone through. Filtering arrangements should be made, and here we are advised that the cost would not be Rs. 50,000 even. It is a simple process. I am not competent enough to talk of electrolysis or any technical process. But there are good process for eliminating the sludge from the main current of water. That should be carried out forthwith. I request the hon. Minister to investigate into this matter leaving aside the implementation of the report to a later stage.

I come to the final point, and it is this. I do not find in this report any reference to the possibility of pollution from the subsoil water. I am advised by competent medical authorities—I have got it here and I should like to

[Dr. Lanka Sundaram]

pass it on to the Minister later—that the question of the possibility of subsoil water has not been properly examined. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to this question immediately. I repeat again that a man of public spirit like Padma Shri S. N. Kaul, the Superintendent of the Ganga Ram Hospital, has gone over this question individually and in my company and also in the company of some others. We should take competent advice on this matter. These are some of the very important questions which have escaped the notice of the Enquiry Committee. I suggest that these matters should be looked into.

There is one more point.

**Mr. Speaker:** There are other Members to speak.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram:** I shall finish in a minute. The other point is about the ghats and bathing facilities and so on to which Dr. Rama Rao referred. The nalla is perilously near the bathing ghats. The religious sentiments of the people of this country cannot be violated. Recommendation No. 11, which I have quoted, is something which directly destroys the very sentiments of the people of this country. You cannot bring the nalla downsteam. On the other hand, it has got to be diverted, whatever the cost. Considering the health and well-being of a million and three-quarter people of this great city, cost cannot be a consideration.

**Shri C. K. Nair (Outer Delhi):** I first of all congratulate our Government for appointing a Jaundice Enquiry Committee to enquire into the jaundice epidemic affair. But for that immediate action, we would not have been able even to discuss this matter or would not have been benefited by such very valuable suggestions proposed in the report. Strangely enough, the colour of the book, let the report, also is yellow—reminding us of the jaundice colour. Now that we have tided over the crisis, I think we should dispassionately consider the report, study it thoroughly, understand the suggestions and see that they are implemented as early as possible.

I would certainly say that there is no use in apportioning blame to individual officers for the neglect of their duty. I am told that this is the first instance in the history of the medical world; in that respect also we have made history.

Anyhow, I think it is a blessing in disguise. It has opened our eyes to so many other terrible realities of the situation in Delhi, I have always been demanding the appointment of an organisation to draw up master plan for the city including everything—civic amenities, rehabilitation of the middle class and poor people etc. All these things are to be put in the form of a master plan. I have been pleading for it and I am glad to know that the same thing has been suggested in this report. I congratulate the committee which produced this report. I must also congratulate the Health Minister for having appointed such an authority, to draw a master plan for the city of Delhi. This is a very opportune time for that committee to take into account all the conditions that are prevailing in this city.

We should concentrate more on the avoidance of such occurrences hereafter. That is the most important thing. Some people are responsible for this. It is a notorious fact with regard to Delhi that we have got a number of statutory bodies which are moving in their own grooves, not giving attention to the comprehensive approach of the problem. Unfortunately, they come into conflict with one another and the sufferer is the citizen. This is the biggest eye-opener of all the recent occurrences. There are so many things that happen in Delhi which are ignored. That has been my complaint. Of course, the Ministry has upheld that it alone is responsible for the welfare of the people of this city. Now there are so many difficulties and our Ministry is struggling hard to tide over them and bring order out of chaos. I express all my admiration for the Ministry in this regard.

I had told even last time that this matter must be taken up on a war footing. I suppose the House remembers what I said the other day. When a great crisis was there, the Defence Ministry was approached. They said in their usual manner, "it is not possible for us to do it because our equipments are not here and men are not here..." and so on. This is the metropolitan city of India which is attracting the attention of the whole world and such excuses are inexcusable. The responsibility cannot be fixed on the Engineer-Secretary of the Joint Water and Sewage Board alone. Perhaps he is not allowed to spend more than Rs. 2,500 or Rs. 25,000, I

do not know. Yes Rs. 2,500. This amount is ridiculous by small compared to the responsibility of supplying water to the whole city which is growing from day to day before our very eyes. From 2½ lakhs, it has gone up to 17 lakhs and it is still growing. It is impossible for any Joint Water and Sewage Board to cope up with this growing demand. I may even congratulate that man who has been doing his best to cope with the situation, in spite of the difficulties he has to face. The difficulty lies in the nature of the situation that is there in our midst, namely, the organisation itself is incapable of executing any emergency orders, because they are not empowered with sufficient authority to do so. I hear a single authority has been created recently by the Ministry with power to supersede the powers of all the smaller existing statutory bodies. That is a good move in the right direction.

I want to give one important suggestion. The Najafgarh Nalla which was meant for storm water is now being used to carry sullage water and it is passing just behind the factory area where even tanning is going on and several chemical and other factories are situated. All the waste water—sullage, urine, etc.—flows in to that nalla and it passes through the refugee colonies of Moti Nagar, Ramesh Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Bharat Nagar, and a number of other colonies including Kingsway Camp, notorious for its insanitary conditions. It is unfortunate that we have created about 20 colonies in Delhi, without having any consideration for the sanitary conditions of those colonies. Now we have to face that problem. I am very sorry to say that no mention has been made about it in the report. I remember our Health Ministry opposing this idea of creating more and more colonies in the city without proper amenities being provided.

Another important suggestion I want to make is that this Joint Water and Sewage Board should immediately have

a Member of the Delhi State Health Directorate. Now that we are going to have a master plan, I would request the hon. Minister to keep the whole picture in view. Let this master plan be not a lifeless architectural picture alone. Let it be drawn up by some imaginative people who can approach the problem in a psychological and sociological manner. Let the representatives of the people be taken into confidence. I feel that the present organisation is working in a very rigid manner ignoring the appalling conditions that exist in the city of Delhi. As a matter of fact, the rehabilitation of about 5 or 6 lakhs of people in this city has to be handled. It is a human problem; it is not a mere architectural and physical one. It is a human problem which has to be approached with new ideas on house building. I am told that even in America and some European countries, they have come to realise that town planning is not an architectural question at all. It is essentially a psychological and sociological problem and as such it should not be lost sight of.

**Mr. Speaker :** Let me know the sense of the House. Are hon. Members willing, at short notice, to sit for another half an hour today and half an hour tomorrow?

**Some Hon. Members :** No.

**Some Hon. Members :** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker :** Let me see who are all against sitting for another half an hour.

**Some Hon. Members :** *rose*—

**Mr. Speaker :** All right; this will go on for another hour tomorrow. The House will stand adjourned till 10-30 A.M. tomorrow.

5.30 P.M.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Half Past Ten of the Clock on Tuesday, the 13th March, 1956.*