

my question is whether the condition of handloom products, which is already in doldrums, will deteriorate further.

MR. SPEAKER : You are giving too wide a scope to it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU ; May I try my hand at relevancy, Sir ?

MR. SPEAKER : It is for me to say. I only speak something, whether it is relevant or not. Even that you deny to me. If you are in a position to answer, I do not mind.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : There is a separate question on handloom. This year, we have been able to restore our old quota for handlooms and there is not going to be any difficulty this year. But as he is aware, they have changed the definition of handloom also and bedsheets and towels are not being included in handloom. If these two things are excluded we will lose to considerable extent. But this year, the old definition and the old quota system will continue. This is as a result of the last discussion we had with the British minister.

Study made in regard to geological and hydrological condition of geothermal areas.

*845. SHRI RAJDEO SINGH : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) Whether a beginning has been made to study the geological and hydrological condition of geo-thermal areas ;

(b) whether Laboratory Studies have been carried out on these factors at different places in various parts of the country ; and

(c) whether harnessing of geo-thermal energy is possible in a big way and if so, the economy of it ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. Regional geological and geohydrological studies of the major hot springs have been carried out from time to time in the country.

(b) Yes, Sir. Some studies have been carried out by the Geological Survey of India, Jadavpur University and by the National Geophysical Research Institute, of the various hot spring areas regarding temperature, flow and chemical analysis of the waters of hot springs and also on the thermal gradients prevailing in the hot spring areas.

(c) This is yet to be established. Under favourable conditions, geothermal generation is known to be very attractive as the cost of generation from geothermal sources can be comparable with the cost of generation from hydro sources. Detailed investigations proposed to be undertaken (with the assistance of United National Development programme) will indicate whether the geothermal energy be harnessed in a big way, in India.

SHRI RAJDEO SINGH : May I know by what time the Government expect the proposed detailed investigation to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : This project has been put before the UNDP as one of the items of the country's programme. After that is done, then the investigation will be taken up.

SHRI RAJDEO SINGH : May I know whether the proposed investigation will be done by our scientists or will be done in collaboration with the scientists of other countries ?

DR. K. L. RAO : The investigation will be done by our own scientists. Only, the drilling is a bit difficult technique. It has got to go very deep, 10,000 ft. Even there, we have got our own people but still we may seek assistance in getting drilling technical men.

Flood control measures for West Bengal

*847. DR. RANEN SEN : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state.

(a) whether West Bengal Government have asked for Rs. 11 crores from Central Government immediately in order to undertake the flood control measures ; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) : (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b). The Government of India have agreed to provide in the last two years of Fourth Plan, special financial assistance to some States including West Bengal for speedy implementation of priority flood control and drainage schemes determined on the basis of experience of floods in recent years. In this connection, the Government of West Bengal have furnished the details of requirements for the priority schemes in their State totalling to Rs. 11 crores, of which Rs. 4.91 crores is for 1972-73 and Rs. 6.09 crores for 1973-74. The issue of sanction of financial assistance for 1972-73 to the West Bengal Government is being processed.

DR. RANEN SEN : In view of the fact that there is flood almost every year in West Bengal, in Bihar and in other States also, and there is no proper preventive arrangement to control the floods, to prevent floods taking place, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India has suggested any comprehensive flood control scheme to the Government of West Bengal so that not only West Bengal but also Bihar is spared from the devastation of floods ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : The various States are having their own projects. West Bengal has done quite well. They have a number of projects. But a comprehensive scheme will come up only after the Ganga Flood Control Commission is set up. It has been sanctioned. The Government of India is going to bear the cost of the Commission. That is going to be put up shortly. We are just looking for officers. When that is done, then will have a comprehensive flood control scheme for the whole of the Ganga basin.

DR. RANEN SEN : May I know whether the Government of India has taken any notice of the suggestions made by the Irrigation Minister of the then United Front Government asking for the Central Government's help for North Bengal Master Plan to control floods in North Bengal which occur almost every year ? Then, I want to know whether the Government of India has got any scheme of controlling the Mahanadi-Ganga flood which is bound to take place in view of the Farraka Barrage ?

DR. K. L. RAO : The Farraka Barrage has nothing to do with floods. With regard to the Mahanadi embankment, it has been sanctioned and it is going to be assisted by

the Government of India by way of additional finances. That work is being taken up.

DR. RANEN SEN : My first part of the question was about the Master Plan for north Bengal to control floods.

DR. K. L. RAO : There is a North Bengal Flood Control Commission set up. That is functioning now and investigating and also implementing some schemes. If any scheme comes, it will be considered.

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : बंगाल देश में बाढ़ का जो पानी आता है, वह दामोदर नदी से अधिक आता है। क्या कोई ऐसी योजना है कि दामोदर का पानी बिहार को सिंचाई के लिये दे कर इस बाढ़ को कम किया जाय ?

MR. SPEAKER : That is not relevant here.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA : I would like to know whether the Government of West Bengal have asked for any financial assistance for the Suvarnarekha embankment scheme, for which the government is conducting an investigation on the river Dolong ?

MR. SPEAKER : Does it arise out of this ? Because, I have no idea about these rivers.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA : This question is about flood protection schemes and this river is under investigation.

DR. K. L. RAO : Suvarnarekha is one of the rivers which is giving trouble to Bengal and Orissa. Our original idea of putting embankment has not been found very favourable. Now we are trying to set up reservoirs for which investigations are going on with the State Governments of Orissa, Bihar and West Bengal. Recently the Bihar Government reported that it is coming up with a scheme. If it comes up with a scheme and it is found useful, then flood control work would be started in Suvarnarekha.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : In view of the fact that Ganga Cauveri project is aimed at controlling the floods, may I know how far that project has come.

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह तो वैस्ट बंगाल की बात है।

श्री बसन्त साठे : लेकिन गंगा का उमड़े सम्बन्ध है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : कावेरी का पानी वैस्ट बंगाल में कैसे चला गया ?

श्री बसन्त साठे : अगर गंगा का पानी कावेरी में जाएगा तो बड़ा फनड नहीं आएगा ?

DR. K. L. RAO : It is yet to be decided.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDA HALDER : May I know whether the West Bengal Government have asked for money for completion of the lower Damodar project ?

DR. K. L. RAO : Yes, Sir. The lower Damodar is one of the priority projects for which the Government of India is going to give assistance. This year think there is a provision of Rs. 2½ crores for that project. That money will be provided to the Government of West Bengal to do the work.

SHRI DINEN BIJATTACHARYYA : Arising out of the Minister's reply, may I ask him one question ? I am sure the Minister will be very glad to answer it. The Minister has admitted that the DVC scheme is only half-finished ; not completed. It is a Central Government project. The earlier reply was about lower Damodar scheme. My question is about the whole Damodar scheme.

MR. SPEAKER : I have not permitted him to ask the question. I am not bound to allow him merely because he has stood up.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : May I know whether it is a fact that the Suvarnarekha project was accepted by both the Governments of West Bengal and Orissa and the work was also started ? If so, when was the project work started ? What is the exact time-schedule when the renewed scheme that the government is contemplating about Suvarnarekha is going to be actualised and when is the work going to be started ? Secondly, I have made a representation to the Minister about a small project costing Rs. 32 lakhs, Barachoka basic stream project. For the last five years nearly Rs. 50 lakhs have been spent by the government on various studies connected with irrigation. This flood control project will cost Rs. 11 crores. May I know whether the Barachoka project will be taken up ?

MR. SPEAKER : He is asking for Rs. 11

crores for a small project. How does he expect the Minister to reply to that during question hour ?

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : It has been forwarded to the Ministry by the Government of West Bengal.

MR. SPEAKER : When the Minister is very obliging and answering all the questions, what can the Speaker do ?

DR. K. L. RAO : Neither the West Bengal Government nor Orissa have sanctioned the project. But the hon. Member was correct that, in the absence of embankment on the left side, there would be considerable amount of damages in Midnapore District. We were once thinking of putting up an embankment, but later on we found that a number of villages were located within the embankment and that they would be subjected to very heavy damages. Then we thought that the river water must first be controlled by detention reservoirs. That is what we are thinking of doing. I am also anxious that some steps must be taken to control that river. The Bihar Government is coming forward with some schemes. I think, we will be taking a decision in this direction shortly.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : What about the second one, Sir ? He has not replied to that (*Interruptions*) That is included in the projects submitted to Central Government by West Bengal. I wanted to know whether priority would be given to that.

MR. SPEAKER : He is not getting up
Next Question.

Upgradation of Health Unit Grade II at Bhatinda

*848. SHRI B. S. BHAURA : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Health Unit grade II provided at Bhatinda Railway station is insufficient to cope with the medical needs of about 14,000 Railway workers and their families there ;

(b) whether the Railway workers of Bhatinda have been demanding for a long time upgradation of the Health Unit and augmentation of medical facilities ; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard ?