

**World Bank—funded
Upper Indravati Project
—Is it a death trap for the poor—**

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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 5179 of

11th August 1992

"UPPER INDRAVATI MULTIPURPOSE PROJECT"

5179. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI

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

- (a) whether environmental clearance has been accorded to the Upper Indravati multipurpose project of Orissa ;
- (b) if so, the conditions prescribed at the time of granting clearance and how far they have been implemented ;
- (c) whether any environmental impact study has been conducted recently by the Government in this regard ; and
- (d) if so, the out come thereof ?

A N S W E R**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS**

SHRI KAMAL NATH

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir, The Upper Indravati Multipurpose Project was accorded environmental clearance in January, 1979 subject to formulation and effective implementation of such action plans as Rehabilitation Master Plan, Compensatory Afforestation Scheme, anti-poaching measures etc.

(c) & (d) The project authorities have taken up studies and surveys on various environmental aspects for evolving comprehensive environmental Management Plan.

UPPER INDRAVATI MULTI-PURPOSE PROJECT A CURSE, NEVER A BOON

Human, environmental and scientific considerations are sacrificed to suit engineering and construction demands. World Bank-funded Indravati Multi-purpose Project on the river Indravati on the border of Kalahandi and Koraput districts of Southern Orissa is a moving illustration of such a disastrous doctrine. It is a clear example to prove that man is for plan, not plan is for man. This is the first multi-purpose project funded by World Bank in India.

It is unique in that Indravati and its three tributaries are being dammed to create a deep reservoir of 110 sq. kilometres, covering both the districts (major part in Koraput district) rendering homeless thirty thousand people, mostly tribals, displaced due to submergence and wiping out a vast tract of dense forest. Two tributaries of Indravati river will be completely closed - Podagada and Kapur rivers—rendering them dead for ever. The main river Indravati and its tributary Muran will be closed by masonry dam. Surplus water may be allowed to flow in rainy season. But they will be completely dry in the summer and winter.

The main consideration of the project is generation of hydro-electricity with an installed capacity of 600 Megawat (4x150 MW) of power and the tail race water of the power house will be diverted to Hati river, a tributary of Mahanadi river flowing through Kalahandi district to irrigate about two lakh acres as estimated. The following pages will show how the hydro-project is a curse to the predominantly tribal district of Koraput, but a mixed benefit to the Kalahandi district. If hydro-electricity could have been given secondary importance as contemplated in very early stage, both the backward districts would have been benefitted.

When in January 1979 the project received the clearance of the Central Government, conditions were imposed that environmental aspect and resettlement aspect should be taken care of by the State Government by preparing a management plan and setting up a Monitoring Group to implement the safeguards suggested by the centre. Since then both the Central Government and State Government forgot about their responsibility.

Till World Bank assistance was available in 1985, there was hardly any significant progress in the work of the project. I.D.A. credit of 156 million S.D.R. and I.B.R.D. loan of 156.4 million U.S.A. dollars were sanctioned by World Bank for the hydro-electric aspect of the project and the work got some momentum. But while granting loan, World Bank did not bother about rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced persons, nor did they enquire about the problems of environment that will surface in future. All the internal directives of the World Bank regarding displaced persons particularly of tribals were thrown to the wind.

Orissa Government was totally negligent about its responsibility in the matter. Environment, they thought, is no concern for them. Because the displaced persons were poor tribals and the site of the project is out of easy reach, the project authorities never thought seriously about their rehabilitation. Those who were responsible at the state level thought payment of compensation for the lost property acquired was enough. They never bothered about the oustees or the tribal psychology which is different from others in the matter of rehabilitation. As if the interest of the people can be trampled under feet for a project which is meant for a larger section,

Indravati Gana Sangharsha Parishad under the leadership of a leading advocate N. Ahmed, that was

organised for the benefit of the construction workers of the project, ultimately took up the cause of the displaced persons because some of them were also working in the project. Then only the attention of the public was drawn and the rate of compensation was raised. But it was too late in the day and displaced persons were evicted from their hearth and home without any alternate arrangement. The plea that the administration all along took was that one colony was built for Upper Kolab Project oustees, but the displaced persons did not accept the same colony also. So let them make their own arrangement from the compensation money that they would get. Human consideration was at a discount.

Same was the question of impending disaster to environment caused by this unique project. Gana Sangharsha Parishad and Orissa Krushak Mahasangh raised this question along with the question of displaced persons. Only recently by the end of 1990 a Project Environment Management Committee has been formally set up, though no work has been done by State Government uptil now, after a lapse of fifteen years.

The programme of catchment area treatment and compensatory afforestation that was stipulated at the time of project clearance had not been scientifically prepared. So hardly there is any progress. Even today they seem to be unaware of the environmental disaster that the project is going to cause to a major portion of Nawarangpur, the down stream area of the project. Even now they have not tried to involve any competent environmental agency to draw up an environmental management programme for the project. As if, officials are competent to look after that aspect.

Orissa Krushak Mahasangh has castigated both Central, State Government and the World Bank for this

cavalier attitude which is bound to bring disaster to lakhs of people of the tribal district.

The detailed letter to the World Bank along with separate notes on Environment and Rehabilitation speak a volume about the apathy and mismanagement. On the other hand the project from the beginning has been bedevilled with inefficiency and corruption of a magnitude, which demand a thorough high level impartial probe. Despite World Bank's persistent warning about the safety of the project, the Project Administration and the State Government exhibited gross negligence and dereliction of duty, for which the state suffered heavily due to a disaster in a flash flood last year. A large number of lives were lost, the damage to the project was immense and the neighbouring villages suffered immeasurably. The enquiry was an eye wash and things moved merrily as before.

The mismanagement and inefficiency in the project at last made the world Bank suspend the payment of their loan last year. Now they have completely stopped it and cancelled the loan (I.B.R.D. loan of 156.4 million dollars) with effect from 5.12.1991. The State Government has been allowed to spend by the end of the current year the meagre amount of I.D.A. credit that has lied unspent. Still then the Orissa Government has not realised the gravity of the situation.

All these factors are responsible for cost escalation, casting a heavy burden on the state exchequer. The original estimate of the project was hardly Rs. 208 cr. in 1978, but the delay in implementation has caused a revised estimate of Rs. 1159 cr. (October, 1991), a rise of more than five times. The project which was to be completed in the eighties, is expected to go to the end of this century, if not beyond, though the latest target year is 1995 for the electricity and 1997 for irrigation.

All these are scandals, they cost the state heavily. But the project itself is going to be a disaster for Koraput and in some measure to Kalahandi—the two districts which often hit the headlines of the press for their poverty, starvation and ultimately starvation death. This project instead of proving a succour to the famished, will aggravate their misery.

The project is half done. But a time has come when experts of World Bank, India Government and State Government on the initiative of the Central Government should review the matter, if possible, redesign the project and save the new district of Nawarangpur (Koraput) from future desertification, which is round the corner. The progress of the work, may slow down, but the problem of the area should be taken up simultaneously. The displaced persons have fanned out to various parts of the two districts and have developed clusters of villages of their own without any amenities of human existence. It is the duty of the State Government to develop them immediately so that they are made to regain at least their old standard of living as soon as possible.

If World Bank continues to be an Indian Sahukar, let them quit the scene. If they remain faithful to themselves and to the directives and principles they have framed in the interest of the displaced persons wherever they fund a project from time to time, they should mend their ways and force the State Government to conform to them.

Orissa Krushak Mahasangh with the cooperation of all who want to associate themselves, will carry on the all struggle of the people till become conscious of the impending disaster and its solution. Better late than never.

JAI HIND.

14, Ashoknagar,
Bhubaneswar-9 (India).
November, 1992.

BANKA BEHARY DAS
President
Orissa Krushak Mahasangh

Orissa Krushak Mahasangh President and former member of Parliament, Shri Banka Behary Das writes on August 15, 1992 to Resident Director World Bank complaining about gross violation of principles settled regarding environment protection and resettlement of displaced persons in the Upper Indravati Project funded by World Bank.

Resident Director,
World Bank Mission,
55, Lodi Estate,
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

Though the Information Officer on your behalf replied to my letter of May 4, 1992 regarding the miserable plight of about thirty thousand tribals affected by the Upper Indravati multi-purpose project funded by World Bank, things have been worse since then. Your sharing with my concern for them and assurance for "taking serious note" of the problem, has not the slightest effect on the situation on the field.

Just before the current rains, by the end of last June, all the displaced persons, mostly tribals, have been thrown out of the reservoir after giving them compensation in cash. How can they resist the coercive steps of local officers, particularly of the police? What to speak of human rights, the minimum compassionate attitude for the tribals, who are the real masters of the area, was not shown. Orissa government committed brutality and World Bank tainted its hand by conniving at it, despite previous warnings.

I wonder that an international organisation like World Bank will throw to the winds all its declarations made from time to time, particularly since 1980, regarding displaced persons, more so about tribal persons. When the Bank made commitment of loan for Upper Indravati Project of Orissa situated in the backward tribal districts of Koraput and Kalahandi districts, it was very much aware of their obligation to the displaced persons. World Bank was absolutely negligent in making these obligations as part of the loan agreement. World Bank Mission has visited the local area large number of times since then, even during the first phase of evacuation, but forgot to see on the ground whether its internationally committed obligation is being implemented or not.

The ILO covenant (No. 107) categorically stipulates that indigenous and tribal people should not be removed unless they are provided with "lands of quality at least equal to that of the lands previously occupied by them, suitable for their present needs and future development." ILO adopted this in 1957 and Indian government ratified it in 1958. While according administrative and technical approval to the project, the local and central government did not bother about it, nor did World Bank lay any emphasis whatsoever at the time of grant of loan.

The Bank, after its bitter experience in various countries, adopted a policy in 1980 on involuntary resettlement, which is meant to ensure that displacement is minimal and the displaced "regain at least their previous standard of living". While making agreements regarding Upper Indravati Project, was it not the duty of the World Bank to see whether the project report fulfilled this condition. The Bank was not expected to behave like an Indian money lender who only bothers about the security of his loan money and timely repayment of it with interest.

Further in 1982 World Bank laid its policy specifically about the tribal population. It says that it will "not assist

development project that knowingly involve encroachment on traditional territories being used or occupied by tribal people, unless adequate safeguards are provided". World Bank violated its own policy towards the tribals and provided no specific safeguard for them at any time during the negotiations nor at the time of agreement relating to UI Project.

World Bank's operative directive of June, 1990 emphasises on minimisation and avoidance of displacement to the point, e.g. of reducing dam height. It also calls for "special treatment" for tribals and "grievances procedures". World Bank's latest operational directive on tribals of September 1991 concedes "full respect to their dignity, human rights and cultural uniqueness".

I had, to recapitulate these things only to remind you that World Bank in developing countries respect the wishes of the local governments who are more concerned with big projects and dams for their own reasons, not wishes of the poor people, even indigenous, who suffer the worst in the name of development. That is why the local governments function in secrecy and the World Bank colludes in the whole game. I am conscious that World Bank may well accuse me that I am a citizen living in Orissa where the Bank funded project is located and I ought to know the developments at every stage. I am a party to the guilt, but I am undone when neither the State Government, nor the World Bank provide us with any information. As if it is a conspiracy hatched in secrecy to keep the affected people and the public in cloud. We come to know when things happen on the ground. By then the thief has run away. So World Bank shares all the blames, including accusation of brutalities, committed on the tribal displaced persons.

There is no settled resettlement and rehabilitation policy as such. Paying some compensation in cash for acquisition of property and that too without any rationale basis, is not called resettlement and rehabilitation.

Similarly no attention was given to the environment aspect of the project, though huge area is going to be submerged and huge area is going to be dry expediting the collapse of the economy of villages on both sides of four rivers flowing in the district of Koraput (Nawarangpur Sub-division). These four perennially flowing rivers—Indravati, Podagada, Kapur and Muran—are not only being dammed, but virtually closed. Problem of water logging, salinity causing damage to the existing crop area and creating health hazards in proposed irrigated area has not been studied or assessed uptill now.

I am enclosing two notes—one on resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced persons and another on environment and health hazards—after my personal scrutiny on developments on the field, I hope you will seriously examine and attend to the problems to salvage the situation as far as possible. Otherwise World Bank will invite more and more criticism.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

BANKA BEHARY DAS,

Ex-M.P.

President, Orissa Krushak Mahasangh

(Note attached to the letter to World Bank regarding problems of environmental disaster in the Upper Indravati Project)

ENVIRONMENT - DOWN STREAM, UPSTREAM AND COMMAND AREA

The impact of Upper Indravati Project on the environment of this region in Koraput and Kalahandi districts of Orissa, was not studied before clearance was given by the centre to this project. Even though the project is halfway done and almost all the people have been removed from the area of submergence, proper environment impact study is not being done. So there is no question of taking corrective measures for the future. Because of peculiar character of the project, the environmental, effect on men and region is bound to be disastrous and may nullify the benefits proposed from the project by negative effect of it.

To get the benefit of electricity, the whole engineering design of the project has been so made that four beautiful perennially flowing rivers of Koraput district have huge area downstream of the project. Kapur and Podagada rivers are being closed completely removing them from the geography of the district, nay the World. The concrete dam on Muran river is so high that one may expect small quantity of water flowing in the rainy season in the river when the reservoir is full. The fate of the main Indravati rivers is also same as it is being closed by a high concrete dam to raise the water level of the reservoir to create a head for fall of water at Mukhiguda Power House.

Normally in hydroelectric projects, the water flowing through the power house is again diverted to the main river, so that it remains to be alive as before. But in case of Upper Indravati Project the vast and deep reservoir is

being created to divert the entire water through a tunnel to the power house so that the tail race water is diverted to another river (Hati) for irrigation purpose in Kalahandi district. One can well imagine the condition of the entire region down stream of these four rivers closed for all practical purposes.

The entire region through which these four rivers were flowing since time immemorial, will go a sea change in all respects. They are all in the Nowrangpur sub-division of Koraput district and the affected persons will be about two lakhs of people living in villages of both sides of these four dead rivers.

The agricultural land will be no more inundated and deposit of silt in rainy season will be lost for ever. Because of lack of natural fertilizer and of moisture, the cropping pattern will change and all high valued cash crops (tobacco, sugarcane, pulses and vegetables) will go out of cultivation. The water table will go down and the tube wells and lift irrigations points existing in the area for irrigation purposes will be useless. Dwindling water problem which is always acute in summer in this region, will cause concern in most of the years causing health hazards. The worst sufferers will be cattle population, to whom these rivers were the main source for their drinking water and for bath. The tribal economy is mainly sustained on water sources like rivers and springs. We take away these four rivers from them and it means hastening the collapse of the tribal economy of the region.

The State Government, the Central Government and the World Bank do not bother about this ecological change that will overtake the downstream region from this year. Once the project is completed and all leave the field, the people will be left to fend for themselves. The World Bank ought to have taken note of this question of environmental degradation created by the project at the time of scrutiny

of the project for financial assistance. Who can excuse the World Bank for its apathetic approach to the problem ?

So also the environmental problem of the upstream region—the reservoir and catchment area. Afforestation and soil conservation work have been highly neglected and one can expect what will happen to the artificial lake created at a higher attitude. This aspect ought to have been tackled along with the construction of the dam. The reservoir submerges one of the best dense forest of the State, but compensatory afforestation work has been neglected. Rather one can see that the process of silting up of the reservoir has started from now on, though project operation is far off. The fate of the people living in the semi-marooned villages situated near the periphery of the reservoir or on the hill slopes can be well imagined.

Similarly study has not been done in the command area of the project which fall mostly in the plain region of Kalahandi district. It is apprehended that large areas will be waterlogged and the problem of salinity will cause disastrous consequences for the farm land and to the agriculturists, majority of whom belong to tribal and scheduled caste community.

The problem of the oustees in the command area has not been attended to, though according to operational guidelines of the World Bank they are to be treated as displaced persons. The villagers who were evicted at Mukhiguda for construction of power house and officers' quarters at the preliminary stage of construction work, were just paid off.

The pitiable condition of about 25 villages of two Gram panchayats near Mangalpur barrage on Hati river where tailrace water from the power house merges in the river, is deplorable even now. Because of rising water

table, the villages are getting swampy, the floor of the mud houses are wet and sometimes the walls also are affected due to it. It has become unhygienic to live. Despite appeals from the people, they are not considered for rehabilitation as their houses or lands are not being acquired for the project. The environmental effect and vulnerability to health hazards should be studied and they should be treated as oustees for rehabilitation.

It is high time that the World Bank should lay emphasis on these problems of environment and health, which they should have done from the start. This negligence is unpardonable according to their own standard.

(Note attached to the letter to World Bank regarding rehabilitation and resettlement measure of displaced persons in Upper Indravati Project).

REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT OF DISPLACED PERSONS

Thirty thousand people, mostly Adivasis and Harijans, who were to be displaced due to the Upper Indravati Reservoir in Orissa, have been evacuated by force or, by coercion by paying them off compensation in cash. It was done in four phases and the last phase was completed by June end of this year (1992). Without caring for the economic status of the persons (under Land Acquisition Law, the person is paid compensation on the basis of his immovable assets like land and house etc.) a flat rate compensation of Rs. 29,575 per family was given in earlier stage. Towards the last phase the amount was raised to Rs. 40,200.00 per family because of rising price of land and building materials. A comprehensive

note on these aspects prepared by Mr. N. Ahmed, the leader of the displaced persons have been appended in the end to show how the amount is highly inadequate to purchase the stipulated amount of agricultural land, homestead land and housing, according to Government decision.

But the major question is that resettlement and rehabilitation programme of the displaced persons was not undertaken. Everybody knows that compensation is never a substitute for rehabilitation. There was no rehabilitation programme worth the name, nor was it implemented, if there was any. Without trying to understand the psychology and cultural habits of the tribals, one rejected colony for Upper Kolab Irrigation Project in Koraput and another newly built colony in Kalahandi district were shown to the displaced persons to settle. They rejected them because there was no amenities for human habitation. So to avoid the responsibility of rehabilitation, the displaced persons were asked to fend for themselves and only compensation money was paid before asking them to move out.

In this inhuman and brutal treatment to the displaced persons, the World Bank has colluded with the State Government, Under various conventions of ILO and policy decisions of the World Bank, it has the primary responsibility to oversee the preparation and implementation of rehabilitation work before and after loan is sanctioned. Where tribal people are involved, the responsibility is far more great according to World Bank. 'House for House', provision of land of "equal quality" or ensuring at least the earlier standard of living to the displaced persons - these pious assurances were observed by and large by breach,

So all the displaced persons moved hither and thither and at last tried to settle by establishing "clusters" of their own by paying huge amount of money for purchase of homestead land, agricultural land and housematerials.

Some of them settled in existing villages outside the reservoir also, which may be called as "appendix clusters".

The project authorities have not provided any amenities in these newly established villages by the outstees. Recently a few villages or clusters have been provided with drinking water tube wells. A few months back an action plan was drawn to provide basic amenities in each of the clusters. But nothing has been done uptil now. It was the duty of the State Government and the World Bank to see that minimum basic amenities were provided first before they were asked to vacate. But both are guilty of non-observance of humane treatment to the displaced persons. It was gross violation of human rights with collusion with World Bank.

No arrangement has been done for their health care, education facilities, communication and roads etc. The Action Plan that has been prepared for outside consumption and publicity after majority of the displaced persons have been forced out of their hearth and home, has proved to be a hoax and non-starter.

Nobody bothers about the other oustees of the command area, nor about the people living in villages near barrage on Hati river, which has been rendered unheathy for living because of impounding of water above the barrage.

Many of the villages which will be seriously effected due to the reservoir, has not been listed properly. So there is no question of their getting the opportunity of rehabilitation. Those villages where houses are not submerged, but agricultural land is being submerged, should be treated as submerged villages for all practical purposes for rehabilitation, otherwise it will be difficult for them to live after the water is impounded in the reservoir to the maximum extent.

An independent review committee should be set up to report to the Bank and to the public at large how the rehabilitation and resettlement of the displaced persons has been implemented and to suggest measures to correct it at the earliest. Otherwise the World Bank will be blamed for violation of its own norm and for murder of human rights, particularly of indigenous people in the interior of a backward region of the earth.

Untold miseries have been heaped on the people for a project (Upper Indravati Multipurpose Project) which is bound to be a disaster in future. Without proper data base, and sufficient investigation, the project has been contemplated. As a result, its economic benefit has been overstated, whereas social and environmental cost has not been assessed at all, what to speak of it being understated. To satisfy engineering skill without bothering for human misery, the project has been designed to create a big and deep reservoir by killing four perennially flowing live rivers which sustained the economy of a huge region. Such a project similar to it may not be found anywhere else. It is not so much to provide water to the parched land of Kalahandi district, but to generate electricity by destroying the environment and by inviting untold misery.

By damming the rivers of Indravati and other rivers in both the districts, more areas of dry land could have been irrigated without inviting more misery and environmental and health hazards. World Bank did not go into any of these vital aspects and the reasons are best known to them. An independent expert team can only investigate and find out the truth.

Every now and then it has been told that consultation with the people, affected and benefitted, should be constantly done in case of such projects. Brutland Report which have been accepted by the World Body and also the Government of India has emphasised on this aspect of

consultation and particularly in case of tribal people. It said, "they must be given a decisive voice in formulation of resource policy in their areas". The failure of the World Bank to live up to the expectation of developing world, is unpardonable. Future may prove that Upper Indravati Project is a "Death Trap", for the poor and hungry people of the region, not a saviour as was being trumpeted about in the past.

A note by N. Ahmed, Advocate and President, Indravati Gana Sangharsa Parishad regarding pathetic conditions of the displaced persons of the World Bank Funded Upper Indravati Multipurpose Project.

The World Bank is funding the Indravati multipurpose project of Orissa State, but the State Government as well as the World Bank have been utterly apathetic to the plight of thirty thousand displaced persons of the Indravati Project who are mostly tribals. The promises regarding proper compensation and rehabilitation made by the Govt. from time to time are yet to be fulfilled. What is worse, it has resorted to misinformation campaign to cover up its failures. On the other hand the democratic movement launched by the Indravati Gana Sangharsa Parishad have been curbed through police and repressive methods. Many activists fighting for the cause of proper rehabilitation were also sent to jail custody for months together. There is practically no respect for human rights of these poor people. This attitude of the Government is highly condemned by the poor tribals and others. They feel that the undemocratic attitude and curbing human rights by the Government is also supported by the World Bank,

Resettlement and rehabilitation expenditure is a part of project cost which is also financed by the World Bank. So, the blame goes to the World Bank for non-implementation of proper rehabilitation measures for displaced persons. People feel that the World Bank is creating poverty in these parts instead of prosperity. However, if the World Bank compels the State Government to draw a proper rehabilitation programme before the dams are completed, in consultation with the Indravati Gana Sangharsa Parishad, then thousands of poor people will be saved. The following aspects should be taken care of in the rehabilitation programme. Further, the construction of Indravati Dam has created a vast dry area downstream where thousands of people will be severely affected. Their problems are also mentioned here in annexure No. II. This project has also created some problems mentioned in annexure-III which need immediate attention.

1. The Government rate for cash compensation for acquiring lands of displaced persons are undervalued. It has been valued at the rate between Rs. 300/- and Rs. 800/- per acre. A person losing his land in the project has to purchase one acre of land at the rate of Rs. 30,000/- per acre whereas the Government has paid only Rs. 300/- to Rs. 800/- per acre. This is great injustice to the ousted persons losing their lands in the project for the larger interest of others. So, the rate should be revised keeping in view the market value of available land so that they will be able to purchase some lands for their livelihood. It may be mentioned here that the people losing sixty acres of land are not able to purchase even two acres of land with the compensation money paid to them.

2. Many families have been split into one adult-one ownership basis. Their properties including land have been divided, but Government treats most of such families as one unit. The Government's record to this effect is based on old records prepared without consulting the people. It is

demanding that the Government should re-survey the area and identify the exact number of families and pay them the compensation. There are many cases of wilful negligence in identifying the number of families by the concerned public servants. There should be a fresh survey and investigation in this matter.

3. The Government agreed in principle to provide rehabilitation benefit to each man of 18 years of age as an independent family unit irrespective of his marital status, but the project authorities do not endorse a man's age as stated by his parent and responsible persons of the locality. Only the Project doctor heading a Board can certify whether he has attained the age of 18. This should have been opened to any Government Doctor or even to any registered medical practitioner. In this process many deserving men of 18 years of age are deprived of the assistance. Even there are instances of younger brother getting full family compensation and the elder brother being disqualified for being under-age. So, there is a demand that an eligible person getting a medical certificate from any Govt. doctor or medical practitioner should be provided with the compensation assistance,

4. Through the Government is claiming that it treats both male and female at par, yet while giving compensation to the families/persons, it does not treat a woman of 18 years of age as an independent family unit irrespective of the marital status. Assistance is given only to male persons of 18 years. Our demand is that each person, whether male or female of 18 years of age should be treated as a single family unit. There should be no discrimination between men and women in this regard.

5. Tribal ladies are often deserted by their husbands. They are not accepted by their parents nor by their husbands. Nor there is any possibility of remarriage. Though the Government has promised to pay proper compensation to such deserted ladies, but it is yet to be fulfilled,

It is demanded that the Government should provide them proper compensation and take steps to rehabilitate them like any other family units.

6. In case a person tries to purchase lands for his own rehabilitation in nearby areas, then he is to go to the Land Registration office located at Nowrangpur or Bhawanipatna far away from their native places and has to spend a lot of money. It is demanded that the Government should open two new land Registration offices at Mukhiguda of Kalahandi district and Khatigudda of Koraput district to facilitate the registration of land. It is demanded further that as these persons are forcibly evicted and are to move hither and thither in search of lands at different places, the Government should waive the registration fees in their case.

7. Government claims that a total of 96 Revenue villages of Koraput district will be submerged, but in actuality many more villages are going to be submerged. Many have been left out as they are not listed and have not been accepted as revenue villages. Another serious complaint is that about fifty villages will lose their agricultural land, but not their the houses. They are compensated for the lands only as their houses are not being submerged. But once their source of income is snatched away, it does not make any sense to continue to live in those water encircled villages. These villages should be declared as submerged area. A list of such villages is enclosed in annexure-I. Besides these, many more villages will remain as marooned ones and they do not have any source of livelihood. They are to go about 20 to 30 K.Ms every day to eke out their livelihood through dense forest.

8. It is demanded that fifty cents of land should be given to each family for construction of dwelling houses instead of twenty decimals.

9. The villagers evicted in the first phase and second phase have been paid very small amount as rehabilitation assistance and some more amount is being paid to the persons who are now being evicted in third and fourth phases. It is demanded that there should not be any discrimination and all displaced persons should be uniformly compensated.

10. The Project authorities had assured the evicted families to provide one job to each family in the project. Though there are vacancies, evicted families are not given due preference. It is demanded that they should be provided with jobs in the project as promised. In case they are not eligible, then they should be assisted with cash for self-employment opportunity. The vacant posts should be filled up soon.

11. The rehabilitation assistance is now being given to the last phase oustees as follows :

i) Purchase of two and half acres of land @ Rs. 8,000/- per acre	Rs. 20,000
ii) Construction of a house	Rs. 17,000
iii) Purchase of land	Rs. 3,200
Total	Rs. 40,200

It is not possible on the part of any cultivator oustees to purchase two and half acres of land with Rs. 20,000/-. The real market rate of non-irrigated land in both the districts of Kalahandi and Koraput is at least Rs. 30,000/- per acre. So, Rs. 30,000/- per acre should be provided to the oustees for purchase of their lands instead of Rs. 8,000/- per acre. Likewise more cost assistance should be provided for purchase of homestead land.

12. Cash compensations should be provided for renovation of lands purchased by the people of submerged area as the compensation for lands is insufficient for purchase of better lands. Irrigation facilities such as deep wells should be made available for these lands in new areas where they have settled.

13. Displaced persons should be exempted from payment of royalties for various components for house construction.

14. Roads, Schools, Medical and drinking water facilities should be made available in rehabilitation villages. Free electricity should be provided to the houses of oustees.

15. The villages which lost 50% of their cultivable lands for this project work, should be given all facilities of a submerged village.

16. Those villagers who left their villages immediately after getting land compensation for their lands, in the initial stage should be provided with all other facilities provided to the submerged villages.

Rs. 17,000	(ii) Construction of house
Rs. 3,200	(iii) Purchase of land
Rs. 40,200	Total

It is not possible on the part of any cultivator oustees to purchase two and half acres of land with Rs. 20,000/- The real market rate of non-irrigated land in both the districts of Kalyandesh and Kothari is at least Rs. 30,000/- per acre. So Rs. 30,000/- per acre should be provided to the oustees for purchase of their lands instead of Rs. 8,000/- per acre. Likewise more cost assistance should be provided for purchase of homestead land.

ANNEXURE—I

The following villages have been left out from the list of Submergible **villages under Upper Indravati Project** :

Sl. No.	Name of the village	Name of Block	Name of district
1.	Begra	Tentulikhunti	Koraput
2.	Tangrikote	-do-	-do-
3.	Mundar	Dasmanthpur	-do-
4.	Chiktasil	-do-	-do-
5.	Mandra	-do-	-do-
6.	Haldisil	-do-	-do-
7.	Ankraguda	-do-	-do-
8.	Khajuriguda	-do-	-do-
9.	Suskhad	-do-	-do-
10.	Bargacha	-do-	-do-
11.	Pindapadar	-do-	-do-
12.	Birighat	-do-	-do-
13.	Nargachha	-do-	-do-
14.	Gaishil	-do-	-do-
15.	Nakimal	-do-	-do-
16.	Litiguda	do-	-do-
17.	Patipadar	-do-	-do-
18.	Khandapada	-do-	-do-
19.	Musajal	-do-	-do-
20.	Sarishpadar	-do-	-do-
21.	Cheptaghat	Thuamul Rampur	Kalahandi
22.	Juasuni	-do-	-do-
23.	Bhitardanga	-do-	-do-
24.	Palsapara	-do-	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the village	Name of Block	Name of district
25.	Bahardunga	Thuamul Rampur	Kaiahandi
26.	Kainchpur	-do-	-do-
27.	Kenarpas	-do-	-do-
28.	Durmusi	-do-	-do-
29.	Tangri	-do-	-do-
30.	Dalguda	-do-	-do-
31.	Baskuli Kondpos	-do-	-do-
32.	Badsukuli	-do-	-do-
33.	Mahulapatna	-do-	-do-
34.	Panasukli	-do-	-do-
35.	Litimoskar	-do-	-do-
36.	Talponga	-do-	-do-
37.	Uppar Temra	-do-	-do-
38.	Kundripad	-do-	-do-
39.	Sarpash	-do-	-do-
40.	Panapadar	-do-	-do-
41.	Tentulipadar	-do-	-do-
42.	Chungdipos	-do-	-do-
43.	Durkhal	-do-	-do-
44.	Mundakuta	-do-	-do-
45.	Kendumundi	-do-	-do-
46.	Kokelpadar	-do-	-do-
47.	Baminichechra	-do-	-do-
48.	Chirka	-do-	-do-
49.	Odori	-do-	-do-
50.	Badpafla	-do-	-do-
51.	Dhedpur	-do-	-do-
52.	Pendusi	-do-	-do-
53.	Phatkimahal	-do-	-do-
54.	Gopinathpur	-do-	-do-
-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-

ANNEXURE - II**DRY AREA PROBLEMS**

Due to construction of Dams over Kapur, Podagad, Muran and Indravati rivers a vast dry area has been created down stream below the dams. Normally, in a Dam Project producing electricity, the water from the reservoir is channelised to the power house and again released to the same river. But in the case of Upper Indravati Project, as the water is not being channelised into the same river. A vast dry area is created on both sides of those dammed rivers. All the four rivers will be dead for ever and will go out of Orissa's geography. All these rivers will be destroyed to create a big reservoir for the Upper Indravati Project. Hundreds of villagers living on the downstream of these rivers will have emotional problems and also their livelihood will be totally jeopardised. The people residing in those villages are apprehensive for their future. It is also very difficult on the part of the people to believe that the rivers will not carry water in future. The conscious people are worried about what is going to happen to them.

Several commercial crops such as tobacco, sugarcane, dal, bajra and vegetables are grown in these areas. There are also a number of lift irrigation points through which water is carried to the fields. People use their indigenous methods in some places to carry water. The villagers grow various crops and vegetables throughout the year.

When floods come in these rivers, the top soils of the lands become more fertile. The people seem to be better off in the area due to the easy availability of water from small irrigation projects.

The entire economy of these villages and of the people will be totally ruined. Therefore, the people demand that they should be provided with (1) Proper irrigation facilities ; (2) Deep tubewells linked with electricity should

be constructed for irrigating their lands, (3) Big tanks dug in each village to provided for irrigation to lands by daming Deopali nala, Bangri nala, Panchagaon Podagad nala and other small streams.

No programme has been made to solve the dry area problems, nor is there anything mentioned in the project reports. Most of these areas fall in Nawarangpur Sub-division of Koraput District. This should be given priority as Koraput district is going to suffer in all respects for the project, without getting any benefit.

ANNEXURE - III

OTHER DEMANDS OF THE PEOPLE

Due to the construction of the project offices, new townships have cropped up but the nearby villages are now facing a number of problems. They are noted below :

1. The area within 20 K.Ms around the project should be treated as project area and facilities like roads, schools, health care, electricity etc. should be provided.

3. The Project Hospital at Khatiguda (Koraput district) and Mukhiguda (Kalahandi district) should be developed. More beds are to be provided and expert doctors in surgery, medicine, orthopadic etc. should be appointed.

3. The Project authorities should take over management of Mukhiguda college. The private college located at Kamta should be taken over by the project authorities to cater to the needs of the project people of Muran Project.

4. It is being said that the electricity generated from the project will help the growth of many industries in this area. These industries will require a number of skilled workers. So, one Industrial Training Institute should be established to provide technical education to the youths of this area to ensure proper employment opportunities to them,

5. One Womens' College at Nowrangpur (Koraput district) should be established since there is no college for women.

6. The quality of work of the contractor companies constructing earthen dams is below standard. Water is leaking below these dams. Good standard of work is being sacrificed for abnormal profits. It should be investigated for taking appropriate step.

7. The villagers residing below the dams should be insured at the cost of the Government against any sort of disaster in future.

Statement in the Press Conference addressed by Orissa Krushak Mahasangh President Shri Banka Behary Das in Bhubaneswar in October 1992.

UPPER INDRAVATI PROJECT—A CURSE

I am releasing my correspondence with the World Bank regarding the rehabilitation and resettlement of thirty thousand displaced persons mostly tribals due to Upper Indravati Multi-Purpose Project in Southern Orissa and also regarding damaging environmental effect of this project in the down stream and upstream region and command area also. This project is the first hydro-project of India funded by World Bank, is the worst project of the country, may be one of the worst in the World.

The Project when completed, will be the greatest disaster in India, will hasten desertification of major part of Nawarangpur district (part of Koraput district of yesterdays) up to Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh, will cause mounting miseries for more than five lakhs of people, mostly tribals of Nawarangpur district and will invite worst problem of water-logging in Kalahandi district. Though it will bring some change in the agricultural sector of comparatively better-off plains region of Kalahandi district (the famine stricken area does not fall in the command area of the project), yet the socio-economic loss will exceed the economic benefit that it will bring to that part of Kalahandi

In a nutshell, it will be only misery and disaster for tribal dominated Nawarangpur region, and a mixed syndrome for Kalahandi district.

Originally this project was conceived from the feudal and British days till the end of two decades after independence, as an irrigation project. Subsequently it was changed to generate hydro-power too. For that the entire engineering design was changed drastically without scant regard to the benefit of those for whom it was originally conceived.

After touring the affected area, when I wrote a preliminary letter on March 15 last to World Bank, who is funding the project and to Government of India who has approved the project, the World Bank replied on May 4 last sharing my concern and assuring me that the resettlement aspect of the project will be properly taken care of. But to my dismay all the displaced persons have been hounded out of the proposed submerged area by the June end of the current year (1992) by paying them compensation money without any provision of rehabilitation and resettlement.

So on August 15 last, I wrote a long letter to World Bank accusing them that from the beginning when they considered the project for fund assistance, they were violating all their own committed obligations. India like anyother beggar country of the developing world, has been more interested to get loan without bothering about resettlement and environment aspect.

I accuse the World Bank for violation of International Labour Organisation Covenant (ILO—No. 1077 of 1957) regarding displaced persons, of its policy of 1980 regarding involuntary resettlement, of its policy of 1982 relating to displaced tribal population, of its operative directive of 1990 on displaced persons, particularly tribals and of the latest operative directives on tribals of September 1991 which concedes full respect to the dignity, human rights, and cultural uniqueness of the tribal population. All these principles and directives have been trampled under feet by the World Bank to keep India in economic bondage and in heavy indebtedness.

This is a part of the conspiracy either knowingly or unknowingly to destroy the life style, the culture, the economy of the tribal population in the name of grandiose schemes with so-called engineering feats costing astronomical amounts of funds. Had they shown slightest consideration for the honour of the poor and the deprived, particularly the tribals, they would not have conceived a project like Upper Indravati one by closing two rivers wholly and another two rivers mostly. Four rivers—Indravati, Kapur, Padagada and Muran—which flow merrily in Koraput district for ages up to Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh will be destroyed for good and will vanish from the map of the globe. The economy, civilisation and life style of the region and its poor people built since ages, will evaporate like mist within a few years.

The letter to the World Bank with a note on rehabilitation and resettlement problem and another on

environment aspect, is detailed and self-explanatory, which I am releasing to the press for the information of the general people. **Orissa Krushak Mahasangh demands that a commission consisting of men of high judicial reputation and of multi-disciplinary experts, should be set up by Government of India and the World Bank jointly to go into details of the project and suggest measures including change of design of the project so that existing economy of the area is not adversely affected and resettlement and environment problems are well taken care of.**

When the Upper Indravati Project was accorded environmental clearance in 1977, the Central Government stipulated conditions, such as "formulation and effective implementation of such action plans as Rehabilitation Master Plan, Compensatory Afforestation Scheme, anti-poaching measures etc." But for fourteen years the State Government did not formulate any action plan and the question of implementation did not arise. On August 1992, the Government of India replied on the floor of Loka Sabha that "The Project authorities have taken up studies and surveys on various environmental aspects for evolving comprehensive environmental Management Plan".

This is the way Orissa Government is behaving and Union Government is conniving in matters affecting the most backward region of the country. All of us should protest and effectively protest to help, not to heap miseries on these hapless innocent people. The expeditions progress of work relating to rehabilitation and environment - that is the minimum demand of the people today.

If I ultimately fail in convincing World Bank, the Government of India and the State Government to realise the seriousness of the emerging situation in a corner of India, which creates news of hunger, poverty and starvation deaths, my dissenting voice should go on record in the economic history of the State.

We need the attention and support of the poor and the deprived, but also of the media and intelligentsia of the country to create an awareness amongst the countrymen about the impending disaster.

Letter to the World Bank from Orissa Krushak Mahasangh President, Banka Behary Das Expressing Great Discontent of Displace persons of Indravati Project on March 15, 1992.

To,
Resident Director,
World Bank Mission
55, Lodi Estate,
New Delhi : 110 003.

Dear Sir,

You have been funding the Indravati Multipurpose Project of Orissa. When thirty thousand tribals of Koraput district, the most backward tribal district of Orissa, are being displaced, it is everybody's concern and you cannot escape the responsibility. The Global Institutions including U.N.O. is committed to the problem of the displaced, who become refugees in their own homeland.

But I am sorry to state that though cost of rehabilitation is a part of project expenditure, whether you are funding directly or not, no rehabilitation work has been done. After paying a paltry sum of compensation, the displaced tribals are being forced to vacate their hearth and home alongwith their agricultural land.

No colony has been established for them, nor has any facility been provided. A small area which was cleaned for another project and the displaced persons there did not accept it, is being shown as an area allotted for Indravati Project by them. It is far off and also does not suit to the living style and needs of the tribals

If rehabilitation programme is drawn up in consultation with tribal leaders of the area and also the voluntary activists who are functioning with them, it may be possible to prepare such a programme. Compensation is no substitute for rehabilitation. Alleviation of human misery should be the sine qua non of any rehabilitation programme.

I am not going into details of the matter as Government has not published their rehabilitation measures for the information of the public. People only know that when last year World Bank suspended payment of the loan, one of the reasons stated was improper rehabilitation policy. Many villages which will be submerged in the reservoir have not been listed and many villages where agricultural land will be submerged rendering the inhabitants pauper, are not being considered for rehabilitation.

As President of the Orissa Krushak Mahasangh, I have toured a portion of that area and talked to thousands of displaced persons also. I feel the entire approach is faulty, inhuman and smacks of heartlessness.

I felt duty bound to inform you and am sending a copy of this letter to the State Government also for their information, I am afraid the deteriorating situation may hamper the progress of the work, which is not desirable nor healthy. In fact since April, 3 last, progress of work has been greatly hampered due to intense agitation of displaced persons.

I hope the World Bank officials and State Government representatives will draw a proper rehabilitation programme, inform the displaced persons to get their cooperation and implement them faithfully before the dams are completed.

Yours sincerely,

BANKA BEHARY DAS

President

ORISSA KRUSHAK MAHASANGH &
former Revenue Minister.

**REPLY OF THE WORLD BANK TO ORISSA
KRUSHAK MAHASANGH PRESIDENT
BANKA BEHARY DAS.**

THE WORLD BANK
International Bank for
Reconstruction and Develop-
ment. International Development
Association.

Resident Mission in India
World Bank
55, Lodi Estate
New Delhi-110003 India

May 4, 1992

Mr. B. B. DAS
President
Orissa Krushak Mahasangh
14, Ashoknagar
Bhubaneswar-9
Dear Mr. Das,

Thank you for your letter and for sharing your concerns on the displacement of tribals in Orissa.

Please be assured that this is an issue of which the Bank has been taking serious note and we share your concerns. The Bank is working closely with the Government of Orissa to ensure that the resettlement aspects of the project are properly taken care of.

We are coping your letter to our specialists at head quarters to ensure that their views are considered by future supervision missions.

We appreciate your interest in writing to the Bank.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

IMLA NANDA BISSELL
Information Officer.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 5179 of

11th August 1992

"UPPER INDRAVATI MULTIPURPOSE PROJECT"

5179. **SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI**

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

- (a) whether environmental clearance has been accorded to the Upper Indravati multipurpose project of Orissa ;
- (b) if so, the conditions prescribed at the time of granting clearance and how far they have been implemented ;
- (c) whether any environmental impact study has been conducted recently by the Government in this regard ; and
- (d) if so, the out come thereof ?

A N S W E R

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

SHRI KAMAL NATH

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir, The Upper Indravati Multipurpose Project was accorded environmental clearance in January, 1979 subject to formulation and effective implementation of such action plans as Rehabilitation Master Plan, Compensatory Afforestation Scheme, anti-poaching measures etc.

(c) & (d) The project authorities have taken up studies and surveys on various environmental aspects for evolving comprehensive environmental Management Plan.

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