

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Monday, May 6, 1963/Vaisakha 16,
1885 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Naval Base in Eastern Zone

*1177. **Shri Subodh Hansda:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to establish a Naval Base in the Eastern Zone of our country is under the consideration of Government;

(b) if so, its location; and

(c) whether any preliminary survey has been made in this regard?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Defence (Shri D. R. Chavan): (a) to (c). Government decided in principle some time ago to the establishment of a major Naval Base and Dockyard at Visakhapatnam. The project is being implemented in a suitably-phased programme.

Shri Subodh Hansda: In view of the fact that there is no adequate arrangement to guard the sea waters of Bay of Bengal, may I know whether it is not desirable to set up this naval base either at Andaman or at Calcutta?

Shri D. R. Chavan: It is a suggestion, Sir.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether sometime back the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been surveyed for setting up this naval base?

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Shri D. R. Chavan: It does not arise out of this.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: In view of the statement made by the hon. Defence Minister last Monday that the Chinese Navy is capable of operating in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean and in view of some Chinese leaders' reported statement that the key to the domination of Asia is control of the Indian Ocean, is it intended to make this naval base strong enough to meet this threat and if so, does Government propose to obtain assistance and expertise from friendly democratic countries of the west like U.K. and USA, just as the Government is doing for the Army and the Air force?

Mr. Speaker: Does he think all this information should be given?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I am sorry, Sir. He is a very intelligent Minister, no doubt. . . .

Mr. Speaker: The Minister is very intelligent and therefore I was reluctant. I put it to the hon. Member himself whether he thinks that it would be in our interest to say all these things here.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: He himself said last Monday—but it came at the fag end of the question hour.

Mr. Speaker: I leave it to the Minister.

Shri Tyagi: Is the Minister fully conscious of all these problems?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Y. B. Chavan): We are conscious, Sir.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: He may answer the second part of the question whether the Government is prepared to obtain assistance and expertise for the navy, just as for the air force and army from friendly democratic countries of the west?

Shri Y. B. Chavan: As far as taking help from democratic countries is concerned, I think the attitude of the Government is quite clear. It has been explained many times on the floor of the House.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: May I know how long it will take to establish this naval base at Visakhapatnam and how long it will take to establish a submarine base along with that?

Shri Y. B. Chavan: All these matters are not connected with this problem. As I said, the Government's intention was explained last time. As far as the project is concerned, it will take quite a long time.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that the World Bank experts, by-the-by, expressed their wish that between Haldia port and Paradip port there is a possibility to establish a naval base?

Mr. Speaker: That is a different thing; it is not connected with this.

Shri R. G. Dubey: May I know whether this matter came in for discussion with Lord Mountbatten, British Chief of Staff, and whether there was a coordinated view taken of this matter?

Shri Y. B. Chavan: The question of this project never came in for discussion.

Diplomatic Immunity Enjoyed by Indian Diplomats Abroad

*1178, **Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers and other personnel in Indian missions abroad who enjoy diplomatic immunity from civil as well as criminal prosecution;

(b) whether the claim to diplomatic immunity of one or more such officers or personnel has ever been challenged; and

(c) if so, when, where and in what circumstances?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): (a) All India-based diplomatic officers and the members of their families enjoy immunity from civil as well as criminal prosecution. Non-diplomatic staff and members of their families enjoy immunity from criminal prosecution but in respect of civil proceedings the immunity is limited to actions performed by them in the course of their official duties.

(b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: So far as the various echelons of diplomatic personnel are concerned, at what level or rank does diplomatic immunity cease to operate, and may I know whether not merely the diplomats and their families but also their cooks and other servants, clerks and chambermaids are also given diplomatic immunity in foreign countries?

Mr. Speaker: Is he very particular about the last portion?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That is what is reported in some London papers.

Mr. Speaker: About chambermaids he wants to know particularly?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: As far as the domestic servants of diplomatic officers are concerned, they enjoy immunity from civil and criminal proceedings only to the extent admissible by the receiving State.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Arising out of the answer to parts (b) and (c) of the question, is the Government aware of certain proceedings launched last year—I believe last year or the year before that—or sought to be