

LOK SABHA

*Saturday, March 16, 1963/Phalguna
25, 1884 (Saka)*

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**India's Relations with Foreign
Countries**

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- *428. { Shri Harish Chandra Mathur
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
Shri Basappa:
Shri P. C. Borooah:
Shri Sham Lal Saraf:

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplate to take any further steps to improve and strengthen India's public relations with U.S.A. and Afro-Asian countries; and

(b) the important public figures other than Head of States, from these countries who are likely to visit India this year and vice-versa?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) Government is constantly striving to improve and strengthen India's public relations with all friendly countries, including USA and Afro-Asian countries, through media of publicity and exchange of visits of important public figures. Proposals are being considered to set up information posts in some of the newly independent countries of Africa as well as those African countries where no information posts exist at present. Government are contemplating setting up new information posts in Dar-es-Sallam and Addis Ababa as well as two new posts in West Africa.

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(b) Several important public figures from foreign countries have been invited to visit India this year as in previous years. It is not possible to give precise information at this stage as the programme and actual dates of the visits have not been finalised. In view of foreign exchange restrictions it will not be desirable to send out many people from India. However, it might be necessary for some people to go from time to time.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Are Government aware that even the best friends of India have always complained, more particularly recently, that India's image is not properly projected in these countries? And now in the context of the Chinese invasion and their activities and money flowing, what has been done recently to meet this situation?

Shri Dinesh Singh: I would not say that we have not been able to carry our views across. In the Lobby near the Library we have placed some of the publications we have brought out in the External Publicity. Apart from that, we utilise all the media available locally, press, television and radio. On the whole, I think our case is well presented.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Is it not a fact that for the most part, we depend on officials who are service people and envoys and ambassadors to reflect India's image? Have Government considered the necessity of having non-official agencies, particularly MPs and journalists, to do this work?

Shri Dinesh Singh: We have necessarily to rely on our ambassadors and other envoys there. From time to time when people go out, we supply them with the necessary information material. But in view of the shortage of foreign exchange, it is very difficult

to send out large delegations.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: In view of the fact that Pakistan and China have accelerated their anti-Indian activities particularly in African countries, what are we doing at the moment to counter such anti-Indian propaganda?

Shri Dinesh Singh: As I mentioned earlier, we have brought out pamphlets and we utilise local media. We are opening more publicity posts in these areas.

Shri Daji: As regards opening more publicity posts, I would like to know in how many places in the African countries we have not got posts and how many we propose to open in the next year?

Shri Dinesh Singh: I mentioned two places specifically Dar-es-Salaam and Addis Ababa and to places in West Africa. We have already posts in several countries of North Africa; we have got them in Cairo, Rabat, Algiers, Accra, Nigeria, Congo, and in Khartoum in East Africa.

Shri Hem Barua: In view of the fact that India was double double-crossed in the Moshi Conference, may I know whether steps have been taken to ascertain from the Governments of the participating countries whether their attitude is similar to the attitude reflected in the Moshi Conference?

Shri Dinesh Singh: I would not like to comment on the preamble to the question, but so far as the question is concerned, the delegations at Moshi were private delegations of these organisations; they were not official delegations. And the official views of the Governments are already well known to the House.

Shri Hem Barua: No, Sir. My question has not been replied to.

Mr. Speaker: His question was whether the views expressed at the Moshi Conference are identical with or shared by the sponsoring countries.

Shri Hem Barua: No, Sir. My question is whether those views are shared by the Governments of those countries whose representatives participated in the Moshi Conference.

Shri Dinesh Singh: As I mentioned earlier, they were not representatives of Governments, they were representatives of the Afro-Asian Federation.

Mr. Speaker: The question is whether Government have tried to ascertain whether the views expressed by these representatives at the Moshi Conference from the various countries are really the views of those Governments.

Shri Dinesh Singh: They are not necessarily the views of the Governments.

Mr. Speaker: Did the Government try to ascertain this?

(No answer was given)

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Even when you have put the question, no answer is given.

Shrimati Savitri Nigam: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that not only some foreign diplomats, but also some Members of Parliament have from time to time complained that our external publicity has been very weak, and that is why reactions in favour of India have been very late?

Mr. Speaker: That is too general a question, and then the lady Member is not in her seat. I would not allow it.

Shri Tyagi: I am sorry I tried to catch your eye a number of times, but it slipped over my head and mostly fell on Savitri Nigam.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I think Shri Tyagi's would have done the same if the lady Member was there!

Shri D. C. Sharma: What an eye!

Shri Tyagi: Are the Government aware that the bulk of the population in USA are not aware of the fact that more than 50 million Muslims are

citizens of India and reside in India? I wonder what their missions are doing. Do they only distribute the bulletins sent from here, or have they got some initiative to take?

Shri Dinesh Singh: I mentioned earlier that we utilise the media of the local newspapers, television, radio etc. Our Ambassador in USA has given many television and radio interviews.

Reverting to the earlier question about the Moshi Conference, the views of the Governments of these countries have already been expressed and have been published in reply to the letter that was sent by the Prime Minister. On the whole, the replies from them have been favourable to us.

Mr. Speaker: Savitri Nigam, after Tyagi.

Shrimati Savitri Nigam: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that not only foreign Ambassadors and dignitaries, but also some Members of Parliament, have complained that our external publicity has been very weak and that some people who have been chucked out of AIR have been taken in the publicity service?

Shri Dinesh Singh: If the hon. Member would give me specific cases, we can look into it, but on the whole I would like to repeat that with the means at our disposal, our external publicity has not been weak at all.

Border Roads Organisation

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*429. { **Shri Bis'hanchander Seth:**
 { **Shri Hem Barua:**
 { **Shri Ravindra Varma:**

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made by the border roads organisation on the 200-mile frontier on the Nagaland-Burma border;

(b) whether it is a fact that this organisation has started to undertake several other adjacent roads connect-

ing this road with other places in Nagaland;

(c) if so, when they are likely to be completed; and

(d) the amount of expenditure incurred thereon?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Defence (Shri D. R. Chavan): (a) The construction of a road connecting Chakhabama with Imphal via Meluri (about 156 miles) is included in the programme of the Board. Survey and trace cutting for the road up to Meluri was sanctioned but not much progress has been possible.

(b) Other roads in Nagaland included in the programme of the Board are:—

(i) Kohima-Chakhabama-Mokokcha,

(ii) Mokokchang-Tuensang,

(iii) Meluri-Tuensang.

Work in respect of the road from Kohima to Mokokchang was taken up but later suspended.

(c) The question of resumption of construction of roads by Border Roads Organisation is under consideration.

(d) The amount of expenditure committed and incurred on road schemes in Nagaland up to December 1962 is Rs. 53.14 lakhs.

श्री बिशनचन्द्र सेठ : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि टस्कर प्रोजेक्ट के संबंध में जो पहले गड़बड़ हुई थी और उसके लिये एक कमेटी बैठी थी...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह प्रागे प्रा रहा है ।

श्री बिशनचन्द्र सेठ : इस संबंध में मैं यह कहना चाहता था कि यह इतनी महत्वपूर्ण सड़कें थीं कि उनको एक कंट्रक्टर को देने के बजाय कई लोगों को डिस्ट्रिब्यूट करना चाहिये या जिसमें कि यह काम अच्छा हो सकता ।

Mr. Speaker: It is a suggestion for action.