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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, August 2, 1966/Srabana 11,
1888 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Aid From Belgium

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- *180. Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:
Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri Subodh Hansda:

Will the Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 'Solidarity with India' campaign was started in Belgium in May, 1966 issuing 10 million forms through shops asking Belgians to give at least 50 francs each for India; and

(b) whether this campaign to paint India in such miserable condition was done with the previous consultation of Government?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Govinda Menon): (a) The Belgian Government, through the Belgian Committee for Campaign against Hunger observed a "day of solidarity with India" on the 1st June, 1966, for raising funds mainly to finance projects meant to increase the output of Indian agriculture. This committee opened a Postal Account of "Soli-

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darity with India" and distributed 10 million postal subscription forms all over Belgium through the cooperation of shops, departmental stores, large firms, advertising agencies etc. On each form was printed a request to deposit a sum of 50 Belgian francs to the Postal Account in favour of India.

(b) No, Sir. The campaign was organised entirely at the initiative of the Government of Belgium. According to the reports received by the Government, the Belgian Government made efforts at each stage to avoid painting a sensational picture of conditions in India and to focus the attention of the Belgian public on the long-term needs of the Indian economy, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: Does the Government regard that to distribute a form to every Belgian asking for depositing a mere pittance of 50 francs is anything other than painting India in a miserable condition in that country? Why has not the Government protested against it by saying that this is not so?

Shri Indrajit Gupta: They are proud of it.

The Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri C. Subramaniam): The question of protest does not arise particularly when it is done by a friendly country with a friendly motive. We have pointed out to our Embassies to contact the foreign Governments and to ensure, that such lurid pictures of the conditions in India should not be depicted for the purpose of collections.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: Will the Government of India reject this

offer of a mere pittance by saying that we will not accept such charity, what is called, the shameless thing, from them?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not know whether it will be proper to reject this. We will certainly take into consideration what the hon. Member has mentioned when an offer is made. So far no offer has been made with regard to this amount.

श्री म० लाला द्विवेदी: अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या भारत सरकार के मंत्री जी ने बैलजियम सरकार से यह प्रार्थना की थी कि उन्हें इस बात की इजाजत दे दी जाय कि वह दान का पात्र हाथ में लेकर बैलजियम के दर-दर पर घूम कर कहें, "हे कोई राम का प्यारा, जो हिन्दुस्तान के भूखों के लिए पचास फ्रैंक देगा?"; यदि हाँ, तो इस बारे में बैलजियम सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया थी।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: मिनिस्टर साहब ने कह दिया है कि हमने नहीं कहा है।

श्री कपूर सिंह: बैलजियम में राम के प्यारे कहां हैं?

Shri S. C. Samanta: The hon. Minister just now said that under the Campaign against Hunger, the Belgian Government asked Belgians to give money for India. May I know whether, under this programme, any money was collected by them for any other country?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I am sorry I have no information. I can say that not only this year but even in the past there used to be collections under such programmes for the development of under-developed countries in which India was also included.

Shri Subodh Hansda: Under this Campaign against Hunger, why is it that all the propoganda was only

towards India? Has it not pulled down the status of the Indian people?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Perhaps, they took into account the conditions that prevailed during the current year in which there was large-scale drought. But my impression is that these drives are made in regard to the other countries also.

श्री बागड़ी : क्या मंत्री महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि क्या कोई इस तरीके से इकट्ठा किया हुआ अनाज और पैसा या इमदाद है, जो भीख की किस्म का है और जो बैलजियम या किसी दूसरे मुल्क से भारत सरकार को मिला है, और सरकार ने भारत के खिलाफ समझ कर उसको न लिया हो।

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not think that this should be taken as begging for anything. In the world community, wherever distress arises, there is now a spontaneous response to help those areas. For example, we in our own country try to help another part of the country when it is in distress. We have collected for other countries also whenever distress occurred there. Therefore, when help is offered in conditions of distress and scarcity, it does not mean that it is begging. I should think that this is a recognition of the fact that a world community conscience is developing that no part of the human community should be allowed to suffer.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: A little while ago, the hon. Minister said in contradiction to what he is saying now—he implied—that certain lurid pictures had been painted abroad about India's condition.

Shri C. Subramaniam: No, no; it was the other way.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: He said that he was trying to correct the lurid picture or something like that. The other hon. members also heard him. I would like to know whether he

has got any information as to whom he considers responsible for circulating this lurid picture as a result of which not only in Belgium but in many other countries—Latin America and Europe—school children and other people have been giving voluntarily small donations from their pocket money in order to help Indians who are supposed to be dying in millions out of starvation. Is the Government not responsible in any way for that?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I might say with all respect and humility that discussions in this House also contribute to the spread of the idea that there are starvation deaths and all those things associated with famine and acute scarcity. We cannot prevent that. Therefore, from that point of view, when a friendly government makes a drive like this, we cannot say that they are doing something wrong. But, on the other hand, we have impressed upon the Governments and we have sent specific communications that they should not paint lurid pictures. Generally they have accepted our suggestion.

Shri Hem Barua: Is it not a fact that this image about India being a starving, famine-stricken country has been created by the statements made from time to time by our Ministers depicting such a picture?

Shri C. Subramaniam: On the other hand I think I mentioned in this House that in an assembly of all the ambassadors I pointed out that the exaggerated pictures of starvation deaths etc. that are depicted in the foreign press in their respective countries should be stopped and they all agreed and to my knowledge most of them have sent communications to their governments in this regard.

वनस्पति का तस्कर व्यापार

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* 181. श्री सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद :

श्री वृकम चन्द्र कछवाय :

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह:

श्री रामेश्वरानन्द :

क्या खाद्य, कृषि, सामुदायिक विकास तथा सहकार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या उनका ध्यान 15 मई, 19-66 के "साक्षी" समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है कि बड़े पैमाने पर वनस्पति दिल्ली से विरोधी देशों को चोरी छिपे ले जाया जा रहा है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या इस मामले की जांच की गई है ; और

(ग) इस सम्बन्ध में अब तक कितने व्यक्ति गिरफ्तार किये गये हैं ?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Shinde): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report in the "Shakshi" about smuggling outside the country was of an indefinite nature which could not form the basis for initiating an enquiry.

(c) Does not arise.

श्री सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद : श्रीमन्, क्या सरकार को इस बात का पता है कि साक्षी में जो रिपोर्ट प्रकाशित हुई थी, उसके पीछे कुछ तथ्य थे। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार ने उन तथ्यों के बारे में कोई जांच की ; यदि हां, तो वह जांच किस ढंग की थी और उसका क्या निष्कर्ष निकला ; यदि नहीं, तो सरकार इस नतीजे पर किस आधार पर पहुंची कि यह रिपोर्ट सत्य है ?

श्री सुरेन्द्र नाथ द्विवेदी : स्मर्गलिंग का साक्षी नहीं मिल रहा है।

Shri Shinde: This pertains to the period, April-May. In April-May, there was no restriction on the movement of vanaspati from Delhi to outside areas. So the term 'smuggling' used by *Shakshi* has no rele-