

LOK SABHA

Thursday, 5th December, 1957

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of
the Clock

[MR SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

U.N.E.F.

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*814. { Shri Radha Raman:
Shri Shree Narayan Das:

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state.

(a) whether any indications are available as to when it would be possible to take back the Indian contingent to U.N.E.F. from the areas in Egypt in which they are posted at present; and

(b) what is the present strength of the Indian force there?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon):

(a) No.

(b) The present strength of the Indian Contingent is 1174 officers and men.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether the Government has any proposal with regard to the time for which this Force will be kept in Egypt, and is so, what is that?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: No, Sir. No time limit has been fixed for the functioning of this Force.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know the amount that is being spent by the Indian Government on maintaining

this Force and whether it is shared by the United Nations Organisation and if so, to what extent?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: There is an initial allotment of 10 million dollars for the expenses of this Force, out of which India's share is in proportion to our contribution to the United Nations.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know what is the organisational set up of the U.N.E.F. and whether it is taking orders from our own Commander or from the United Nations Commanders, and from which country he comes?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: Our contingent will take orders from our own Commander

Shri Kasliwal: It appears from press reports that two or three countries which had also joined the U.N.E.F. have subsequently withdrawn their forces and that there is a proposal for the creation of an International Police force to replace the U.N.E.F. there. May I know how far it is correct and if so, what is the reaction of the Government to such a proposal?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: The creation of an International Police force is a larger question and it does not arise out of this.

'India, 1957'

*815. Shri V. C. Shukla: Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to some inaccuracies contained in "INDIA, 1957", the official reference volume of the Publications Division, in which under "Highest Mountains" descriptions of mountain peaks and their heights have been given which are

contrary to the facts as published in the record of the Surveyor General of India; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to ensure that the official reference volume does not contain such wrong information in future?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Corrections are being made in consultation with the Surveyor-General of India.

Shri V. C. Shukla: May I know whether any other inaccuracy like the one mentioned in this question has been brought to the notice of the Government?

Dr. Keskar: This Reference book is a book of statistics and data and every effort is made to see that the facts furnished are quite accurate. But, it is possible that in the preparation of such a big comprehensive volume, inaccuracies might creep in here and there. There have been minor references made by correspondents who have pointed out what they considered to be inaccuracies. In one or two cases, they have been correct. But, in other cases, they have been proved to be inaccurate. Wherever any inaccuracy is brought to our notice, it is corrected.

Payments for Imports in Rupee

*816. **Shri V. P. Nayar:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the present foreign exchange difficulties Government have taken any steps to make foreign suppliers of machinery and capital goods accept payments in India in Indian Rupee; and

(b) if so, the names of the countries whose manufacturers are accepting payments in Indian Rupee at present?

The Deputy-Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) Presumably, the Honourable Member is referring to the agreements concluded with some countries pro-

viding for commercial payments to be effected in Indian rupees which may be converted into sterling on demand.

(b) In pursuance of the arrangements concluded by the State Trading Corporation with some manufacturers and exporters in East Germany, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, payments are being made in rupees, which are to be utilised for the purchase of Indian goods.

Shri V. P. Nayar: Unfortunately, the hon. Minister's presumption is not correct. I want to know whether the Government have taken any steps to see that foreign suppliers of machinery required by Indian importers are paid for in Indian rupees in India.

Shri Satish Chandra: If the hon. Member is referring to countries other than those mentioned by me, payment accepted by the suppliers in Indian rupees does not amount to any saving in foreign exchange because rupees can be converted into sterling at any time according to obligations under the International Monetary Fund

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether in the matter of import of machinery in Governmental account, Government have discussed the question with suppliers as to whether they will accept payment in Indian rupees in countries which are not listed?

Shri Satish Chandra: Some of the suppliers have agreed to take payment in Indian rupees. As I said, these are convertible into sterling on demand.

Shri Hem Barua: In view of the fact that the hon. Minister has mentioned about Czechoslovakia that has agreed to accept payment in rupees, may I know whether it is also a fact that Czechoslovakia has reserved for herself the option to demand payment in sterling in case the sterling balance position of India improves in the near future?