

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Friday, 14th February, 1958.

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Change in the Course of River Ravi

*129. **Shri Radha Raman:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 1234 on the 18th December, 1957 and state:

(a) whether a detailed report regarding 22 Indian villages said to have gone over to Pakistan as a result of the river Ravi changing its course, has been received;

(b) if so, the nature thereof; and

(c) the present position of the private and public losses suffered as a result of this and steps which Government have taken in this respect?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of External Affairs (Shri Sadath Ali Khan): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the report, 15,586 acres of Indian territory in District Amritsar had been affected as a result of changes in the course of the river Ravi till the end of 1957. The entire area of 22 villages (9,414 acres) and portions of 29 other villages (8,172 acres) have gone over to the Pakistan side of the river. As against this, 11 Pakistan villages, comprising 3,442 acres have come over to the Indian side.

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(c) Full information about private and public losses is still awaited. However, the State Government have taken the following steps:—

(i) Constructed protective and training works along the Ravi to hold the river in course;

(ii) Granted relief by way of loans, free clothes and rations. After the 1957 floods, such relief measures consisted of Taccavi loans (Rs. 2,10,000), Free rations (Rs. 19,455); Free clothes (105 bundles); Free medicines (Rs. 270).

Shri Radha Raman: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary just now said that the Government of India has undertaken some protective works to save the villages on the Indian side. May I know what is the cost incurred by the Indian Government on these protective works, whether in future also there is a plan to continue this kind of work and what is the estimated cost to be incurred on that?

Shri Sadath Ali Khan: The House will be interested to know what in 1953, the Government of Punjab constructed intensive protective works to prevent the Ravi from further changing its course. Those works withstood the normal floods very well. In October, 1955, however, on account of abnormal floods in the river, the bund was breached in a number of places. It was, therefore, decided to raise the protective works to withstand the level experienced during 1955.

Up to November, 1956, an expenditure of Rs. 30,19,458 had been incurred on the construction of protective works on the Ravi. The Punjab Gov-

ernment have under examination the problem of resettlement of those families whose lands have been thrown on the Pakistan side of the river and they hope to arrive at a satisfactory solution shortly.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether the 6,000 acres and odd of land which have gone over to Pakistan are cultivated by the Indian cultivators who owned that land or not?

Shri Sadath Ali Khan: I should like to explain this point. In the unsettled conditions that followed partition, it was agreed between the Indian and Pakistani authorities that pending demarcation of the boundary between Pakistan and India in regard to Punjab, the river should form the boundary where the river flows near the border. Lands which are thrown to the other side as a result of changes in the course of the river are in the same position. Legal ownership is not affected, but effective control passes to the other side. I suppose the cultivation is carried on.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Since it is a recurrent problem, may I know if the protective bunds which have been built will be a permanent solution of the problem or whether the Government have any permanent solution of this recurrent problem?

Shri Sadath Ali Khan: I do not understand what is a permanent solution. Protective works, as I have indicated, are being carried on.

Lac Export

*130. **Shri R. C. Majhi:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of lac exported to foreign countries during the last three years (year-wise); and

(b) whether any Export Promotion Council has been set up with the assistance of Government to maintain and promote lac export?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Sajish Chandra):

(a) 1954-55	Rs. 10.55 crores
1955-56	.. 11.71 crores
1956-57	.. 9.47 crores

(b) Yes, Sir.

Shri R. C. Majhi: What is the total production of lac in our country, how much is consumed by us and in what way?

Shri Satish Chandra: The total production of lac in 1956-57 was 13,15,000 maunds.

Shrimati Renn Chakravartty: May I know what is the reason exactly why there has been a fall in the export between 1955-56 and 1956-57?

Shri Satish Chandra: The main reason is this. Lac was used mostly for making gramophone records. Now other synthetic materials are being used particularly in the U.S.A. There is also competition from other producing countries, mainly from Thailand.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know whether it is a fact that research into the new uses of lac is very much lacking in our country and whether that lack is going to be made up?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): The Indian Lac Research Committee is continuing research and it is being intensified to find other uses for lac.

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: There was a proposal to divert.....

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Sinha. The hon. Member starts off even before he is called. He must wait and catch my eye. He blocks the others. I know whom to call on any particular question.

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: You called my name, Sir, otherwise I would not have asked.