

**Shri Hathi:** It is under the provisions of the Act which this Parliament has passed.

**Shri Viswanatha Reddy:** May I know whether all the State Governments have expressed themselves against the setting up of Electricity Boards mainly because it limits their discretion to extend electricity to under-developed areas in their own States?

**Shri Hathi:** No State has objected on that ground. In fact, out of fourteen, including Jammu and Kashmir, nine States have already formed them. Only four have not. Nobody has objected on that ground.

**Shri Viswanatha Reddy:** That is because the Centre has rubbed it on the State Governments.

**Shri Panigrahi:** May I know whether the Electricity Board in Orissa will take charge of the Hirakud electricity project?

**Shri Hathi:** When it is formed, it should take charge.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** In view of the fact that it is the Centre that is providing money for Bhakra Nangal, has not the Centre overriding power over Punjab and Rajasthan to see to it that it sets up a Board very soon?

**Shri Hathi:** It is not a question of exercising any overriding power. The question is this. Loans are given to both the States, Rajasthan and Punjab. Before the assets are transferred by the Punjab Government to the Punjab Electricity Board, the interests of the Rajasthan Government have also to be looked to and for that, an agreement has to be reached between the two State Governments.

**Shri Ram Krishan:** In view of this difficulty, is there any proposal to set up a joint Board for Punjab and Rajasthan?

**Shri Hathi:** The whole question is under consideration whether a joint Board could be formed in this way or not. It is all under examination.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Has the Central Government tendered any advice in this matter to the Government of Punjab?

**Shri Hathi:** Yes, Sir. We have. Therefore we are calling a meeting.

#### Palam Air Port

\*1351. **Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come to any decision whether the Palam air port will remain with the Civil Aviation Department or with the I.A.F.;

(b) whether all schemes of improvement of the Airport have been held up so far pending decision regarding the ownership of the Airport;

(c) the nature of such schemes for improvements; and

(d) whether any steps are being taken to consider them even before a decision about ownership is taken?

**The Deputy Minister of Civil Aviation (Shri Mohiuddin):** (a) Palam Airport is, at present, in joint use by the Civil Aviation Department and the I.A.F. No change is contemplated in that position in the near future.

(b) to (d). A scheme for the development of Palam Airport for jet air-transport operations is under the consideration of Government. These developments are expected to be undertaken irrespective of what the ultimate decision regarding the ownership of the Palam Airport is going to be.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** We are going to have jet planes very soon. May I know whether the airport would be repaired to receive these aircrafts and heavier aircrafts by that time? What steps have already been taken in that direction?

**Shri Mohiuddin:** It is not only a question of repairs. It is a question of construction.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** I did not say 'repair'; 'developed', I said.

**Shri Mohiuddin:** The proposal to make the airport runway sufficiently long to receive jets is under active consideration of the Government and it is hoped that before the jets begin to operate, the runway will be ready to receive them.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** Is it a fact that there was a definite proposal for a separate civil aviation port and even certain equipment had been ordered for it and received here? May I know what has happened to that?

**Shri Mohiuddin:** The question regarding Palam Airport, whether it should be permanently under the I.A.F. or should be handed over for civilian purposes has been under consideration for a long time. As far as I know, no equipment was ordered for this purpose. Of course, equipment are flowing in all the time for the purpose of civilian use.

**Shri Hem Barua:** In spite of the fact that the Palam Airport is under double control of the I.A.F. and the Civil Aviation department, may I know if most of the damages are so extensive that recently an Aeroflot could not land and it had to be diverted to another airport in the U.P.?

**Shri Mohiuddin:** It is a fact that an aeroplane had to be diverted. That is due not to control by one or the other. That is due to the cracks in the runway which generally appear from time to time on every runway. They have got to be repaired. I am informed that in about a week's time, the runway will be restored to restricted use.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** May I know if flood-lighting arrangements in the Palam Airport are according to I.C.A.O. standards?

**Shri Mohiuddin:** It is an international port. I think they are.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** What is the administrative machinery at present functioning for the joint control and management of this port? What is the respective responsibility of the two sections?

**Shri Mohiuddin:** Administratively, it is under the I.A.F. and the civilian aeroplanes land there according to the rules and regulations that are laid down for the civilian use of the airport.

**Mr. Speaker:** Next question.

**Shri P. C. Borooah:** One question, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have allowed a number of questions. Earlier questions receive larger attention even though there may be other questions more important later on. Next question.

#### Establishment of a Subsidiary Port at Geonkhali

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\*1354. { **Shri S. C. Samanta:**  
**Shri Rameshwar Tantia:**  
**Shri H. N. Mukerjee:**

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme to set up a subsidiary port at Geonkhali is under the consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, action taken in the matter so far?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) No, Sir. In the opinion of technical experts, Geonkhali is not suitable for siting a new port.

(b) The question of selecting an alternative site for the construction of a subsidiary port to Calcutta is under investigation.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** Is it not a fact that all the requirements for a subsidiary port remain Geonkhali except that there is silting beyond Diamond Harbour? If so, may I know whether dredging arrangements beyond Diamond Harbour have been carried out?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** According to the expert opinion of the World Bank Technical Mission who visited us in