

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Were they permitted only within the precincts of the Gurdwara, there?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** Does the hon. Member mean that they were not permitted to move in the precincts of the Gurdwara?

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** No, outside?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I really do not know, Sir; I will have to enquire.

**Sardar A. S. Saigal:** As regards the police escort to the Sikhs who are visiting Gurdwaras and they are not being allowed to go outside, will the Government be kind enough to make an enquiry, Sir?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** There is no question so far as the first is concerned. We have pilgrims from Pakistan coming to various places in India and our police accompanies them, not to harass them but to help them and to see that no untoward occurrence takes place. But the other point is certainly apart, whether they are allowed to go outside the precincts or not, we shall enquire into that.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Are the pilgrims coming from Pakistan to India visiting their sacred places in India subjected to any restrictions as to their movement, in seeing their friends etc.?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** Not that I am aware of. But there were in particular places some arrangements actually in the place of pilgrimage, but, otherwise, I do think there have been no particular restrictions.

**Dr. N. B. Khare:** Is it a fact that India is liberal and Pakistan is not?

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Has our High Commissioner, ever since partition, sought at any time the permission of the Pakistan Government to go round and see these holy places, shrines, temples, and gurdwaras, whether they are kept in proper repairs?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I could not give a straight answer to that question, Sir. The High Commissioner normally resides in Karachi. He does pay visits to Lahore and parts of the Punjab. I know for a fact that he has been taking great interest in these matters because we have been corresponding with him about these gurdwaras. We have been writing to the Pakistan Government and our High Commissioner has also done that. As to the places he has visited in the course of the last one or two years, I cannot say anything definite.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** On a previous occasion, we were told that a request had been made to the Pakistan Government to negotiate on the question of these visits in the respective countries and there had been no answer to that. May I know, if subsequent to that any reply has been received, whether the Pakistan Government wish to convene a conference or discuss these things?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** If the hon. Member gives notice of that question—I have not got the papers here—we could get facts and place them before the House.

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** Has the High Commissioner or the Deputy High Commissioner at Lahore considered the importance of going round and seeing whether these holy places are kept in proper repairs?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** That, Sir, if I may say so, is our constant advice and we shall do it again if the hon. Member likes. We have constantly written on this subject to the High Commissioner who is greatly interested in it. Certainly, we shall pursue the matter further.

#### PREVENTION OF ASSAM-EAST PAKISTAN BORDER INCIDENTS

\*1229. **Shrimati Khongmen:** (a) Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the P.T.I. Report appearing in the "Hindustan Times" and "Hindustan Standard" of 30th November, 1952 to the effect that the discussion between the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District officers and Sylhet District officers to prevent occurrence of border incidents between Assam and Pakistan broke down and whether the purport of the report is correct?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above is in the affirmative, what steps Government are going to take to safeguard the lives and properties, specially paddy crops and orange crops, of Indian citizens of border areas in Assam and particularly of Khasi and Jaintia Hills?

(c) How many Indian citizens of Khasi and Jaintia Hills District are in the custody of Pakistan marauders or Pakistan Government and what steps Government are contemplating to take to obtain release of these prisoners?

**The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda):** (a) and (b). There has been no breakdown of discussions as reported in the

Press. An interim agreement was reached between the Deputy Commissioners of Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Sylhet that force would not be used by either side over harvesting of paddy and that nationals of both sides would not go to disputed areas pending a decision at Government level. There have been instances of violation of the agreement by the Pakistani side. The Assam Government have taken precautions to safeguard the lives and properties of Indian nationals by posting sufficient border police at different places.

(c) Forty persons, including 35 women, arrested mostly for entering Pakistan territory without passports or visas and for smuggling, are in Pakistani custody. Three persons are reported to have been kidnapped from Indian territory. The Assam Government has taken up the matter with the East Bengal Government with a view to securing release of the prisoners

**Shrimati Khongmen:** May I ask, Sir, whether Government is aware of the fact that many of the simple and ignorant people have not the slightest idea of the necessity of taking passports, before entering into Pakistan area?

**The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** It is quite true. These international documents or passports etc. are not known even or understood by large numbers of people living there and doing business there and quite unknowingly they walk across a certain line and get into trouble because they are called smugglers or trespassers on foreign territory. It is very unfortunate and we should try to help them as far as we can.

**Shri K. P. Tripathi:** What steps were taken, after these people were arrested and taken away, for harvesting their paddy?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** This refers to Pakistan territory. Presumably they had gone to Pakistan territory and had been arrested for trespassing on their territory. They did not know that probably there is no harvest land there. But what does the hon. Member refer to by 'steps'?

**Shri K. P. Tripathi:** As a matter of fact, there was firing and as a result thereof the paddy fields were left un-reaped. So I want to know whether any steps have been taken within our border for getting those crops reaped in time?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I presume so, but I do not know.

**Shri Beli Ram Das:** Is it a fact that similar incidents took place in the border of Garo hills also?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That does not arise out of this question.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** What steps are Government taking to get back our citizens who have been taken into custody by Pakistan, and how many are still in custody there?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** The figure given in the reply is 40. These persons according to the Pakistan Government were trespassing into their territory without passports and the rest. Even if technically that charge is true, it is obvious that these persons were not intending to commit any offence. They may have walked across. It is therefore a simple matter. The Assam Government is in touch with the Pakistan authorities, and it may be that the two adjoining officers would meet and consider this matter.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** Have we released the few persons who were arrested within our border?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** In this connection, or some other connection?

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** In this connection. The Deputy Minister read out that four or five had been arrested.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I am afraid I do not know. We will enquire into it.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Next question.

**Shri S. C. Deb:** May I know whether the report is true that these persons were arrested in our border?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. I have called the next question.

#### COAL TRANSPORT

\*1230. **Shri M. Islamuddin:** Will the Minister of Planning be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been recommended to the Planning Commission to provide transport facilities for coal; and

(b) if so, what is the scheme and how much will it cost?

**The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cost of the scheme will be about Rs. 710 lakhs. The details of the scheme are laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VII, annexure No. 52.]

**Shri M. Islamuddin:** May I know whether any part of the scheme is under execution?