

ELECTION MACHINERY

***840. Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state:

(a) whether the election machinery had to face a number of difficulties during the General Elections in so far as communications, transport, satisfactory road conditions, availability of suitable buildings for polling stations etc. are concerned;

(b) whether Government have been apprised of such and other difficulties by the Central and State Election Organisations;

(c) what are the steps which Government are taking or are likely to take to remove such difficulties before the next general elections become due; and

(d) whether Government have appointed any body or created any machinery to collect all the data and suggest proper steps to be taken in this direction in the country as a whole?

The Minister of Law and Minority Affairs (Shri Biswas): (a) and (b). The election authorities were faced in some places with difficulties of the type mentioned by the hon. Member and these were brought to the notice of the Election Commission during the General elections. Such action as was practicable was taken by the Election Commission with the help of the Government of India and the State Governments.

(c) and (d). The Election Commission as the body responsible for the conduct of the elections, is alive to these difficulties and Government do not consider it necessary to appoint any other authority for collecting data or suggesting ways and means for the removal of the difficulties.

Shri M. L. Dwivedi: As I find from newspapers that a demonstration was made before a court of law that some ballot boxes could be opened without tampering with the seals, I want to know whether this fact has been examined by Government and if any steps have been taken to find out whether it is correct or not?

Shri Biswas: I am not aware of the specific matter to which the hon. Member refers, but I can assure him that all complaints which had been received at the Office of the Election Commission had been enquired into and proper steps taken.

Shri M. L. Dwivedi: May I know if any report in this connection has been prepared and will be placed on the Table of the House?

Shri Biswas: As I said the other day a report on the result of the General Elections will be submitted by the Election Commission to the Government. That has not yet been done—it is under preparation.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know how long will the Government take in order to present this report from the Election Commission?

Shri Biswas: As soon as the report is received from the Election Commission, it will be placed before the House.

Shri S. C. Samanta: The hon. Minister said that the Election Commission will do the needful. I would like to know how communication, transport and other difficulties would be removed if Government do not take the matter in hand?

Shri Biswas: Some of the difficulties arise from the nature of the terrain, for instance in the State of Rajasthan it is a desert tract; in Assam and in Madhya Pradesh, we have wild jungles. How can the Government overcome these.....(Interruption)

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order. Are we getting into a discussion of all the terrains?

Shri Punnoose: Since the Question deals with the election machinery, may I enquire whether there are cases of Polling officers, Policemen, peons, etc. who had been employed during the last election, but have not yet been paid?

Shri Biswas: I do not know. I shall make enquiries and let the hon. Member know if their remuneration has not been paid.

REHABILITATION OF EAST BENGAL DIS-PLACED PERSONS

***841. Shri B. K. Das:** Will the Minister of Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a representation has been made by the Government of West Bengal about the great dearth of land in West Bengal for the purpose of rehabilitation of East Bengal displaced persons;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to solve the problem; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to meet the present demand and for future emergencies?

The Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) to (c). No such formal representation has been received from the West Bengal Government but during the course of discussions between the Union Rehabilitation

Minister and the West Bengal Rehabilitation Minister and between the officers of the two Governments, it has been urged on various occasions by the West Bengal Government that sufficient land for the rehabilitation of the agriculturist displaced persons is not available in that State. The only alternative is to re-settle large number of agriculturists outside West Bengal. Efforts to that effect have been made but these have met with only partial success mainly on account of the reluctance of displaced persons from East Pakistan to move to rehabilitation centres outside West Bengal. These efforts will continue to be made.

Shri B. K. Das: May I know, Sir, whether any estimate has been made of the cultivable fallow lands available at present in West Bengal?

Shri A. P. Jain: The West Bengal Government is trying to find out the fallow lands which can be reclaimed but I do not know of any consolidated statement which has been prepared by that Government.

Shri B. K. Das: May I know how many more agricultural families are yet to be rehabilitated in that State?

Shri A. P. Jain: As many of them as remain over. For the next year we have an estimate of settling about 25,000 families.

Shri B. K. Das: What is the number of agricultural families that has been already settled in West Bengal?

Shri A. P. Jain: 80,000.

Pandit D. N. Tiwary: May I know whether East Bengal refugees have refused to settle in places outside West Bengal such as PEPHU and Andamans?

Shri A. P. Jain: They were never asked to go to PEPHU. Some families numbering 430 were sent to Andamans. Most of them have settled there but a few families have returned.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: May I know whether the squatters' colonies such as Baghajatin and Vijaygarh are model townships and as such, do the Government intend to legalise them?

Shri A. P. Jain: This is a question about agriculturists.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: May I know whether it has come to the notice of the Government that the offer of land for purposes of settlement by Bengal refugees by an organisation called the Colonisation Society in Bihar has been refused by the Government of Bihar?

Shri A. P. Jain: I have no information about it.

Shri G. P. Sinha: May I know whether the Government of Bihar has given plenty of opportunity to the people from East Bengal and they insisted on settling in one district only?

SINDHI AS REGIONAL LANGUAGE

*842. **Shri Gidwani:** (a) Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state whether Government have received any representations from Sindhis living in different States of India, that Sindhi Language should be recognised as the 15th Language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India?

(b) Have Government received any representation from Sindhis living in Bombay State, that Sindhi Language should be recognised as the Regional Language of the Bombay State?

(c) Have Government received representations that Sindhi Language in Dev-Nagri Script should be taught in the Primary Schools to Sindhi Children, in all States where Sindhis have migrated from Pakistan?

The Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research (Shri K. D. Malaviya): (a) and (b). Yes. Representations have been received to the effect that (i) Sindhi should be included in the list of languages contained in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and (ii) a directive be issued by the President under article 347 of the Constitution for recognition of Sindhi as a regional language in certain States including Bombay.

(c) In 1948 the Government of India had advised the State Governments to have Sindhi text-books for schools published in Devnagri script. This brought strong protests from Sindhi Associations in several places and the Government realised that since the Sindhis themselves were not of one mind on this question, it was difficult for the Government to impose its own decision on them. The Government was thus obliged to come to the decision that for the present provision should be made for text books in both the scripts, leaving the choice to local guardians in each place to decide in what script they would like their children to be taught. The Government hope that the responsible and representative Sindhi opinion will come to a common decision in this matter which the Government could adopt.

Shri Gadgil: Are Government aware that in most of the States where Sindhis have settled, Devnagri Script is used both for official and non-official purposes?