

state whether the team of officers deputed by the Government of India to study measures for the prevention of flood damage in Assam has submitted its report?

(b) If so, what are the chief suggestions made in that report?

FLOOD CONTROL

*262-A. **Shri Tushar Chatterjea:** (a) Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether any requests have been received by the Government of India for inclusion in the Five Year Plan of the scheme to take permanent measures for stopping the damage by river floods to the town of Dibrugarh?

(b) If so, what action have Government taken in the matter?

(c) Has it been brought to the notice of Government that many centres of India require flood prevention measures to be immediately undertaken?

(d) What schemes for flood-control are included in the Five Year Plan, in which States and what is their total coverage?

COMMITTEE OF OFFICERS SENT TO ASSAM

*273-A. **Shri Beli Ram Das:** (a) Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that an expert Committee of officers was sent to Assam to investigate into the ways and means to save that State from successive floods every year?

(b) What are the recommendations of the said Committee?

(c) How far are these recommendations going to be implemented by Government?

(d) What suggestions were made by the State Government regarding the Scheme?

FLOODS IN ASSAM

*279-A. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) How many times Assam was flooded in each of the years from 1947 to 1952;

(b) the recommendations of the Expert Committee appointed by the Central Government to check recurrence of the flood there;

(c) the approximate amount of loss of property in those years; and

(d) how much extra amount over and above the usual allocation to the State is going to be sanctioned to have a permanent solution in the matter?

The Prime Minister (Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru): As the House is aware, the State of Assam has suffered considerable damage in recent years from recurring floods. In August 1952, it was announced in Parliament that a team of Central Government Officers was proceeding to Assam to study and report to the Government on the immediate problems created by the floods as well as on the long-term problems of Assam such as soil erosion, border trade, border security and disruption of communications as a result of Partition. The team led by the Home Secretary and consisting of representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Transport and Irrigation and Power visited Assam between the 26th July and the 17th of August, toured the districts of Golpara, the Garo Hills, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Lakhimpur, and also made an aerial flight over parts of the North-Eastern Frontier Agency where serious damage had been caused by the earthquake of 1950. It undertook, during this period, an intensive study of the special problem of erosion of Dibrugarh town and the various embankment and drainage problems in other parts of the State, as well as the problem of communications, particularly in the hill districts and on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra. The officers subsequently discussed their provisional conclusions with the Assam Government and submitted a report to the Government of India containing agreed recommendations.

2. The main recommendations of the team were the following:—

(1) A stone revetment about four miles long should be erected at Dibrugarh; this was the only permanent safeguard against erosion. The estimated cost of this revetment excluding the cost of acquisition of the necessary land would be about Rs. one crore, fifty per cent. of this cost should be provided by the Central Government as an outright grant and the remaining 50 per cent. as an interest-free loan repayable out of the proceeds of a proposed levy on the people of Dibrugarh.

(2) A beginning should be made with the collection of adequate hydrological data which would enable a long-term plan to be prepared for the prevention of erosion and for the control of floods in the State. A River Investigation Division should be set up for this purpose in charge of a suitable Executive Engineer provided by the Central Government.

(3) A contour survey should be undertaken all over Assam. A beginning should be made in the Kopili valley where a survey was partially done sometime ago.

(4) Various schemes for embankment and drainage works which had already been prepared by the Assam Government and estimated to cost about a crore of rupees should receive adequate priority and Central assistance under the Grow More Food schemes.

(5) Communications in the State should be improved. The Assam Road from Tezpur to North Lakhimpur should be made an all-weather road; for this purpose four bridges should be constructed. Half the cost of these bridges would be borne by the Centre. A number of roads (estimated to require an outlay of about Rs. two and half crores during the next five years) should be constructed in the hill districts.

3. The team has also made certain other recommendations with a view to improving border security and the economic conditions of the tribal people in the Hill areas.

4. The Government of India and the Assam Government have generally accepted the main recommendations subject to further discussions regarding the percentage of the cost of the revetment at Dibrugarh to be treated as an outright grant. Meanwhile, action has been initiated to implement the recommendations. The Assam Government have agreed to the setting up of the proposed River Investigation Division; some of the staff required for the Division have been selected and arrangements are being made for their training in the Punjab. A new Division in charge of an Executive Engineer is being set up for preparing detailed plans for the Dibrugarh protection work. The programme of road construction drawn up by the Assam Government, has been examined and accepted by the Government of India subject to further discussion on a matter of detail. Certain schemes for embankment and drainage under the five-year plan prepared by the Assam Government are being scrutinised by the Government of India and other schemes are under preparation.

5. The cost of carrying into effect certain of the recommendations of the team is still to be worked out. Moreover, the long-term measures contemplated will have to be fitted into the Five Year Plan for Assam included in the report of the Planning Commission which is to be finalised shortly. The programme of road construction in the hill districts will be financed entirely out of the development grants to be provided by the Centre. The Central Government has also made available adequate funds for undertaking the proposed contour

survey and has further agreed to meet the cost of the River Investigation Division except in respect of the staff provided by the Assam Government. Any further proposals for financial assistance will be considered when the details have been fully worked out.

6. The Government is aware that considerable damage occurs every year from floods in different parts of the country. Until recently no statistics of this damage were collected regularly and whenever heavy damage resulted from a flood in the larger rivers, flood control measures were undertaken on an *ad hoc* basis. Extensive embankments were thus constructed in parts of Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa. The problem of flood control is now invariably considered in conjunction with multi-purpose projects, as the construction of large dams to store flood waters is the most effective way of preventing flood damage.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: When is the construction of this embankment likely to be undertaken?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot say the exact date when it will be started. In fact, before it is started, preliminaries have to be gone into.

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee: How long will it take to complete all these elaborate plans which the Prime Minister has read? Before the next floods come?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Perhaps I have indicated how long some of the plans may take, but obviously the plan itself is likely to take a very considerable time to finalise. In fact it may go on for years and years. Take this Dibrugarh town. It is a very great job to erect a stone revetment for four miles in the Brahmaputra. I cannot say how long it will take. As a matter of fact I was recently in Dibrugarh. The temporary steps taken had some effect in saving the town. They are not permanent by any means but the process of erosion has been slowed down very much.

Shri Tushar Chatterjee: I want to know whether there is any special scheme to control flood in the State of West Bengal.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know. I cannot answer that question. If there is, it is not a major one so far as I know.

Shri Beli Ram Das: Has any action been taken in Assam for checking the floods?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The whole scheme has been prepared with a view to checking floods. May I just say, Sir, with your permission that the whole of the Damodar Scheme which is one of the major schemes is meant for that purpose.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know, Sir, whether any major change will be effected in the steps that are being taken or will be taken, when the Finance Commission will submit their recommendations?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: First of all, the Finance Commission has not yet submitted its recommendations. How can we know what they are going to say? Secondly, this has nothing to do with this question.

Shri S. C. Samanta: I meant, Sir, that the Finance Commission will recommend the share of the money that will be given to the State. Will the allotment of the financial help that will be given to Assam State be taken into consideration at that time?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We have to consider this question in the existing circumstances. We are trying to be as helpful as possible in the shape of grants and loans. If the Finance Commission makes any recommendation that is a separate matter whether it would be considered as such.

Shri Sarmah: Who will actually execute the work in implementing these recommendations, the Central Government or the Assam Government?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Both, I imagine.

Sri K. P. Tripathi: Recently we found that the Pakistan Government has imposed a cordon along the Khasi Hills so that the oranges and potatoes which used, normally, to go to Pakistan should not go at all. The crisis about oranges particularly is deteriorating. In view of these, will the Government consider setting up a Canning.....?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Sarmah: Will Government please instruct its experts to take into consideration locally expressed opinion in protecting Dibrugarh town?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We always wish to take advantage of the experience of local experts. They have completely and absolutely failed to do anything. We are asked to take over charge.

INDIAN SETTLERS IN CANADA

***248. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether the wives and children of Indians who have acquired Canadian nationality are allowed to go to Canada to settle down there?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda): Yes. The husband or wife and unmarried children under 21 years of age of a Canadian citizen legally admitted into and resident in Canada are allowed to go to Canada to settle there provided:

- (i) they otherwise comply with the provisions of the Canadian Immigration Act; and
- (ii) the settlement arrangements in Canada are to the satisfaction of the Canadian authorities.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether the close relations of Canadian citizens of Indian origin such as their brothers and sisters, are also allowed to go there?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: Yes, Sir, within the quota.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether persons who intend to marry Canadian girls of Indian origin are experiencing difficulty in proceeding to Canada?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: A similar question arises later in the day, Sir.

PEPPER FOR EXPORT

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

(a) whether any test is applied before pepper is exported to foreign countries as to whether it comes up to standard; and

(b) if not, why not?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes. It is reported that the trade generally cleans pepper before export with a view to making the quality conform to specifications of foreign importers' Associations.

(b) Does not arise.

Shri C. R. Iyyunni: May I know whether there has been a fall in the export of pepper due to want of standardisation last year?

Shri Karmarkar: No, Sir. I am not aware of a fall in export of pepper on account of this reason.