

as heads of villages as well as against the continuation of payment of heavy tribute to the Chiefs;

(c) whether they have also expressed their opinion in favour of the democratic Village Panchayat; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any action in this connection?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Chief Commissioner of Manipur is contacting leading Hill people, both Kukis and Nagas, in order to ascertain whether any change is now called for and if so, to what extent.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Is it not a fact that apart from making several representations from time to time to the Government of India, the tribal people in Manipur, through their organisations, made written as well as personal representations during the visits of hon. the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to Manipur, demanding forthwith abolition of Chieftainship and stoppage of feudal levies either by the proclamation of the President or legislation, and the establishment of fully democratic village panchayats, and if so, may I know how the Prime Minister and the Home Minister have taken account of this demand?

Dr. Katju: Some representations were received and they are all under examination.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Are Government aware that several persons were imprisoned and heavily fined for refusing to pay feudal levies? May I know also whether Government are aware of the fact that the Government of Manipur is trying to collect the feudal levies through the police, on behalf of the Chiefs, and the tribal leaders thereupon have appealed to hon. the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to intervene?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: How many questions in one question? Order, order, please. It is impossible to retain in mind all these questions. Two questions have been asked; that is enough. The hon. Minister.

Dr. Katju: I am fully aware of the whole position. It is not so bad or so dark as it is tried to be painted by my hon. friend. These areas are very ancient areas, ancient in their

customs, ancient in their outlook and not accustomed to quick change. The Tribal chiefs discharge very responsible duties, administrative as well as police duties and there are usually certain customary levies. They are in themselves, if not misused, not of an excessive description. We are taking the most active steps to find out as to what the tribal opinion as a whole is and what changes should be introduced. If changes are introduced, it may be that fairly extensive administrative machinery will have to be introduced in every village in order to discharge the duties. So far as allegations have been made about concrete cases, I should require notice I have tried to give a very complete answer to all the aspects that are raised.

सेठ अचल सिंह: क्या मंत्री महोदय बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि मनीपुर के चीफ्स को कितना रुपया सालाना दिया जाता है ?

डा० काटजू: मनीपुर के चीफ्स को कुछ भी नहीं दिया जाता है। सरकार की तरफ से धेला भी नहीं दिया जाता है। वहाँ का तरीका यह है कि जब फसल खरम हो जाती है तो वहाँ के रहने वाले, गाँवों के बाशिन्दे, उनको एक कनस्तर में धान भर कर देते हैं और अगर वहाँ कोई जानवर हलाक होता है तो उसका एक हिस्सा दिया जाता है। वहाँ का यह पुराना दस्तूर परम्परा से चला आ रहा है।

Shri Sarangadhar Das: Is the hon. Minister aware that a Bill has been introduced in the Assam Assembly to grant the panchayat system in the villages, and whether the conditions of these feudal chiefs in Assam are the same as in Manipur?

Dr. Katju: There are two questions: whether the conditions are the same and whether a Bill has been introduced. So far as the introduction of a Bill is concerned, I can take information from my hon. friend. Whether the conditions are the same, that is a matter of opinion.

DISTRICT COUNCILS IN ASSAM

*1695. **Shri Rishang Keishing:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether the District Councils have been functioning in all the Autonomous Districts of Assam; and

(b) whether any efforts are being made to bring the districts of the North East Frontier Agency to the same category of the Autonomous Districts of Assam?

The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (Shri Datar): (a) Yes, except the Naga Hills.

(b) The North East Frontier Agency areas are comparatively undeveloped and cannot, therefore, straightaway be brought to the same administrative level as autonomous districts. Every effort is, however, being made to extend regular administration into the interior of tribal areas of the North East Frontier Agency. A Five Year Development Plan for the North East Frontier Agency has been prepared and is being executed according to the programme. The Plan contains various schemes for development of agriculture, forest, education, health services and roads.

Shri Rishang Keishing: May I know whether it is a fact that the people in the autonomous districts of Assam have seriously felt the incompetence of the District Councils to safeguard even their minimum interests, and if so what consideration will be given to this?

Shri Datar: They have not felt so at all. On the other hand, the District Councils are working extremely well.

Shri Rishang Keishing: May I know why the District Councils cannot be granted to the districts of the North East Frontier Agency under the present set up?

Shri Datar: The North East Frontier Agency is under the direct control of the Governor. So far as these districts are concerned, they are autonomous districts. Therefore, it is better that they continue as autonomous districts.

Shri N. M. Lingam: May I know if these Councils are statutory bodies and what their powers are?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): I would invite the attention of the hon. Member to Schedule VI of the Constitution.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know whether any complaints have been received that these Councils are not doing proper justice by the people?

Shri Datar: To our knowledge, no complaint has been received.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

Shri Rishang Keishing: One question, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We are trying to make allegations. This Hour is not used really for getting information. Either suggestions are made or debates are started or there are inferences and opinions. Twenty-five per cent. of the time is used for eliciting information and the rest of the time for giving information to the Minister.

Shri Rishang Keishing: One question, only.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Member is going on saying that the Councils are bad. The other side says that the Councils are extremely good. What am I to do?

Shri Rishang Keishing: I want to know whether it is true or not.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is the opinion of the hon. Member. All right; the hon. Member may put the question.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Arising out of the answer, am I to understand that District Councils are already in existence in the North East Frontier Agency?

Shri Datar: There is no question of District Councils so far as the North East Frontier Agency is concerned. They are in the other five out of six districts.

MAINTENANCE OF ACCOUNTS BY TOBACCO GROWERS

*1697. **Shri S. V. L. Narasimham:**

(a) Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state whether any representations have been received from tobacco growers about the hardships suffered in maintenance of accounts?

(b) If so, what steps do Government propose to take in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri A. C. Guha): (a) and (b). Representations have been received about the maintenance of accounts mainly on two grounds (i) that most of the tobacco growers are illiterate and hence incapable of maintaining accounts, and (ii) that since English is understood only by a few, accounts should be allowed to be maintained in regional languages.

2. As regards (i) only large growers farming 10 acres or more of land for tobacco, and who constitute only 4