

Shri M. M. Shah: No, Sir.

Radio-Activity

*724. **Shri Gidwani:** Will the **Prime Minister** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many of the common vegetables as well as milk, ghee and rice have been found to be radio-active by a team of scientists at the Calcutta University College of Science; and

(b) if so, the effect of these on the human system?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs and Finance (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): (a) and (b). According to the report received from the Calcutta University, presence of small amounts of radio-activity in vegetables, grass, milk, etc., available in the neighbourhood of Calcutta has been reported. The nature of the radio activity has, however, not been studied. The levels of radio-activity measured in fall outs at present are not dangerous.

Shri Gidwani: Although the scientists differ as to the degree of harm done to mankind from the increased radio activity in the atmosphere as a result of nuclear test explosions, are they agreed that there is potential harm done not only to the present generation but also to future generations, particularly in their genetic effects due to entry into, and absorption in the body of radio active substances contained in the fall out of test explosions?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The hon. Member has referred to radio activity. I take it he is really referring to nuclear explosions, because radio activity is present in a hundred things including every X-ray photograph that might be taken. So far as nuclear explosions are concerned, everybody agrees that there is an element of danger. As to the measure of it, some people differ, but the probability is that the danger is more serious than is usually imagined. Therefore, it was desirable not to gamble with the whole future of humanity by continuing these nuclear explosions.

Shri Gidwani: Is it a fact that the British Medical Research Council has reported that strontium, the most serious component of radio active substances, has been found in the carcasses of sheep in wells as the result of eating plants which had been radio active? If so, is there not a danger of strontium being accumulated in the bones of human bodies and thereby resulting in the causation of cancer and other diseases?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I must bring to the notice of the hon. Member that he usually reads out long statements when putting questions. Questions ought to be brief and concise, and the answer also must come in that form.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: If I may, I would refer not only the hon. Member but perhaps others to the book that we have recently issued on nuclear explosions, which is in the Library of the House.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: There was a Press report a few weeks ago that a professor of radio therapy at the Calcutta Medical College was collecting relevant data and would represent the issue at the International Congress of Radiology to be held at Mexico City from July 21 to 31. May I know what has happened, particularly in view of the statement made at Calcutta by Professor Haldane that the protective elements against radio activity by way of rains and strong construction of houses are absent, to a large extent, in Indian conditions?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not quite know. He asked, what has happened to the protective elements. Our view is that these are dangerous and they should be stopped. We have put this before the Disarmament Commission strongly. We have taken the trouble to issue a book which, I believe, is the first attempt at putting all the available material together—I do not think any other country has put it together in that way. We are continuing this, so far as we can, everywhere. I do not quite know about what he said about a professor and the Congress. Probably he is going there, but I cannot say definitely.

Shri Renu Chakravartty: May I know if it has been brought to the notice of Government that Professor Haldane stated that the danger in India was five times as great as in England due to the fall-out of nuclear explosions, and that as yet in India we have had no quantitative data as to the amount that would be dangerous? May I also know whether Government are considering setting up a team of scientists who will be gathering these quantitative data?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I read this morning in the newspapers about a report of what Professor Haldane has stated. Probably the hon. Member refers to that. If we can profit by any suggestions of his, we shall do so.

Shri Kamath: Does the Prime Minister recollect that in the last session of this House, he said answering a question that our scientists had discovered increased radio activity in the Bombay air, and if so, may I ask whether there have been reports from Bombay that vegetables, grass, milk, ghee etc. there too have been affected in the same way as in Calcutta?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The answer I have read out was vetted in Bombay.

Shri Kamath: I did not follow.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He said that the answer he read out was vetted in Bombay.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Our chief place where this work is carried on is Bombay.

Shri Kamath: I want to know whether they have been affected in Bombay.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot say whether the vegetables, milk etc. of Bombay were specifically examined. But our chief place for inquiry and investigation in respect of radio activity is Bombay.

Shri Sadhan Gupta: In view of the warnings of danger given by Professor Haldane, have the Government considered the advisability of protesting to Britain against holding nuclear tests in Christmas Islands, because Christmas Islands are much nearer to India than the other venues of tests.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Quite apart from Prof. Haldane's speech, we have done so seriously and on repeated occasions. I am not referring to any particular place. There may be some confusion about the islands. But, about these nuclear explosions, we have been carrying on, if I may use that word, persistent 'agitation'.

Portugal's case before the International Court of Justice

*725. **Shri Kamath:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to refer to the reply given to supplementaries raised on Starred Question No. 1560 on 18th April, 1956 and state:

(a) whether Government have finally decided to nominate a judge of its choice on the Bench of the Hague Court at the hearing of the case arising out of the complaint lodged by Portugal against India in the International Court; and

(b) if not, how the matter stands?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs and Finance (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:

(a) and (b). Portugal's case before the International Court of Justice at The Hague regarding her claim for rights of passage across Indian territory is at present under expert legal examination. Until this examination is completed Government is not in a position to decide what further steps are necessary including the nomination of an *ad hoc* judge to the International Court.

Shri Kamath: What date has been fixed by the Hague Court for the submission of India's reply to Portugal's complaint?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I think we have been given six months after Portugal put in its memorial or petition, whatever it is called. I think those six months expire roundabout the end of December.

Shri Kamath: May I ask whether Government has taken at least a decision in respect of one matter and that is the question of *ab initio*—at the outset—contesting the jurisdiction of the International Court at the Hague to entertain this complaint?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I submit we can hardly argue the case here in answer to supplementary questions.

Shri Kamath. I do not want you to argue.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. I know. We are acting according to the advice of our eminent Counsel and among the things that we have done is to raise certain preliminary objections.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: In view of the pertinacity of Portugal's misbehaviour and in view also of recent instances where countries like Czechoslovakia have asked the World Court to take off its files certain complaints against it by other sovereign States, will the Prime Minister tell us if we have in contemplation the idea of asking the World Court to push off its files this complaint?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I think it need not be answered.

म्राजाद हिन्द फौज स्मारक, सिंगापुर

*७२६. श्री भक्त बर्षान : क्या प्रधान मंत्री ३० मई, १९५६ के तारांकित प्रश्न संख्या २६६२ के उत्तर के सम्बन्ध में यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे :

(क) क्या सिंगापुर में म्राजाद हिन्द फौज के स्मारक के सम्बन्ध में सभी आवश्यक जानकारी इकट्ठी की जा चुकी है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस मामले में क्या निश्चय किया गया है ; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो अभी तक कितनी प्रगति हुई है ?

बंदेशिक कार्य मंत्री के सभासचिव (श्री सादत अली खां) : (क) से (ग) मामले पर विचार हो रहा है ।