

[Shri Chitta Basu]

postponed or rather did not agree to open Andamans for further rehabilitation. Now the Prime Minister recently had gone on record to say that to him or to the Government the question is open. Therefore, he has not given fully correct or absolutely correct answer.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has a right to point out which you have not.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know whether his Ministry also considers it as an open question and also sees and explores the possibility of rehabilitation of displaced persons. I do not say about Dandakaranya people because there are more persons who are still to be rehabilitated. Therefore, for them whether the possibility of Andamans can be further explored in view of the very clear statement of the Prime Minister of this country.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: As far as my Ministry is concerned, the decision is very clear. I have not yet received any fresh directive from the Prime Minister. The position with my Ministry, as it is today, is that no more East Pakistani refugees are to be settled in Andamans. That is the position today.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What is the reason?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: The reasons have been enumerated half a dozen times in this House. The reasons were there and in fact this decision had been taken much before our Government came into power. The reasons are ecological reasons. If, therefore, further afforestation is to take place, it will have to go to the tribals who are living in that Andaman Islands and many others. These are the reasons. I have made the position of my Ministry very clear. As things stand, in my Ministry there is no proposal to take more refugees to Andamans at the moment.

As regards the question of ensuring that the Dandakaranya Project is expedited, we have already spent about a hundred and odd crores: out of Rs. 135.82 crores, Rs. 19.61 crores are the amount which we have planned to spend during the current year; otherwise, all the rest of that has already been spent under the Dandakaranya Project. I can assure the hon. Member that these lands which have been allotted to the refugees in the Dandakaranya area are going to be very fertile lands, and we are seeing to it that things are expedited there.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: What are the commitments you have made so far? You have said that you will honour your commitments. What are those commitments?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: The commitments are these. The quantum of assistance which has been committed is: housing Rs. 3,075 out of which the amount in excess of Rs. 1,500 or 50 per cent, whichever is more, will be by way of grant; agricultural inputs Rs. 1,725; homestead well Rs. 150; subsidiary occupation Rs. 300; in addition to these, the displaced persons are given maintenance grants at prescribed rates for three seasons—at full rates for two seasons and at half-rate for the third season. Besides that, there are three categories of land which has been allotted; five acres of land which is not irrigated, four acres of land which is partially irrigated, and three acres of land which is wholly irrigated. This is the assistance which we are giving and to which we are committed.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I want to seek one very important clarification. Will these maintenance grants be given to those who will be taken back there?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: In addition to these, 800 sq. yds. of land for house....

MR. SPEAKER: What he wants to know is whether you would give some maintenance grants to those who will go back to Dandakaranya.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: We have not yet considered that.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I want to know whether Government propose to have a conference of the State Rehabilitation Ministers to correct the situation in all the States.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: After I am informed of what the difficulties are, I will certainly consider the suggestion.

13.18 hrs.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

### SIXTY-SEVENTH REPORT

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): I beg to present the Sixty-seventh Report of the Public Accounts Committee on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Two Hundred and Twelfth Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) relating to Customs Receipts, 1972-73.