

18-15 hrs.

*CEASE FIRE IN NAGALAND

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we may take up the half-an-hour discussion. Mr. Chengalraya Naidu.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU (Chittoor) : Mr. Chairman, the Naga trouble is there from 1953 onwards. The Government is never serious about solving this Naga affair. In 1964 our Government went into an agreement with the underground Naga rebels and had a cease fire. They said that there should not be any further trouble. The cease fire is extended from time to time and again in October they have extended it for three more months.

Sir, though Nagaland belongs to us and is a part of the Indian Union—we say that —, the Nagas wanted to be free and they wanted to be outside the Indian Union. Naturally, when we feel that Nagaland is in the Indian Union, the Home Affairs Ministry must deal with it, but, unfortunately, the External Affairs Ministry comes into the picture. That means that on the one hand Government are agreeing that it is not in the Indian Union, but on the other hand they deal with it saying that it is an internal affair, because we find that the Home Minister sometimes answers questions relating to it as if they have got control. The Government themselves are committing a mistake. The External Affairs Ministry should not come into the picture but only the Home Ministry must deal with it, but unfortunately, the External Affairs Ministry is dealing with it.

The underground Naga trouble has become so much that in Kohima today we have got an elected government, but we have got at the same time another underground government also very near to it, camping and having its offices there. Today, the loyal Nagas are in a majority. Though there are just a few rebel Nagas, the loyal Nagas are suffering today and they are being harassed and attacked by the rebel Nagas. Today, the people of Nagaland are paying tax to the Government created by us and elected there, but they have also to pay taxes to the underground rebel Nagas. So, the people are paying taxes to both the, elected government and also the rebel Naga government.

*Half-an-hour discussion.

I cannot understand why our Government have allowed this.

I am afraid Government are not at all serious to put down this lawlessness. Under the cease-fire agreement, the rebel Nagas are gaining time ; in fact, they are not only gaining time, but they are sending their people to China for training in guerilla warfare and with the latest equipment; they are also sending their people to Pakistan for training there.

After training, they return back every time with automatic weapons. Our Government have accepted so many times that it is a fact that the rebel Nagas have crossed the border and gone to China as well as Pakistan. Have we become so ineffective as not to be able to control these Nagas and prevent them from crossing the borders ? Are we unable to control the borders ? I feel that our border security forces have become ineffective or they are not enough. If the strength is not enough, why should Government not increase the strength of the security forces in the border areas ? I feel that Government are not at all serious. They know that the rebel Nagas cross the border so many times and then come back so many times. This has been happening only due to the negligence of our Government.

Only the day before yesterday, the Chief Minister of Nagaland had stated :

“Unless the attempt by a section of the misguided underground Nagas to seek aid from unfriendly foreign countries is stopped right now, Nagaland would face as grave danger. This would turn the State into a battlefield.”

This was the opinion expressed by the Chief Minister of Nagaland only the day before yesterday. When even the Chief Minister of Nagaland is having that opinion, I do not know why the Central Government are not taking interest and they are not at all serious about the matter.

Let me tell you another thing that has happened. There is a Sainik school at Bhubaneswar. About 100 Naga students are undergoing training in that school. There was some trouble in that school between the Naga students and the local students and when they started to fight, it was found that the Naga students had

[Shri Chengalraya Naidu]

ammunition manufactured in China with them. The Government had found that out. I cannot understand how the Chinese ammunition could come into the hands of the Naga students at Bhubaneswar. That means that we are not at all in a position to know what is going on in our country and how this Chinese ammunition had come into that Sainik school at Bhubaneswar. When students are having this sort of thing, what sort of students are we training? Are we training rebel Naga students or loyal Naga students there? I am unable to understand this. This has happened. I think there is a member from Bhubaneswar present here. He will tell us more about it.

When this is the state of affairs, how can we have any discipline in the country. If we are going to allow the rebel Nagas to cross into China and Pakistan and come back so many times, what will happen if and when hostilities break out with China or with Pakistan? These Nagas are waiting for the time when they can rebel and strike at us. If Government are not going to be serious and are not going to take firm action, I am afraid there will be trouble not only with the underground Nagas but with the security of the country about which I am worried. When there is such trouble if and when the Chinese or Pakistanis attack, we will have a bigger problem. So I request Government to be firm and put down these rebel Naga activities and not to extend the cease fire agreement from time to time if they are really interested in solving this problem.

There is another thing. I was told that there is now not one rebel Naga Government, but three having headquarters in Nagaland. There is no connection between one rebel government and another. When there was only one rebel government, we were not able to put them down. Now there are three. If this is going to be allowed on account of our softness, I do not know what is in store for us. Now there is trouble in the Mizo Hills and other places. If firm action is not taken, the country is going to suffer for which the Government will be held responsible. So I request Government to take firm action.

श्री रणधीर सिंह (रोहतक) : सभापति महोदय, मैं आप की भारफ्त मिनिस्टर साहब से कहना चाहता हूँ कि मर्ज बढ़ता गया ज्यों ज्यों दवा की : यह नागालैंड का जो मसला है उस ने सारी दुनिया में हिन्दुस्तान की पोल पट्टी खोल कर रख दी। यह मर्ज है, यह फोड़ा है जिस को साफ करना चाहिये। वर्ना मैं सुन रहा हूँ कि नागालैंड को रिकग्नाइज करने की बातें हो रही हैं। नागालैंड की इंडेपेन्डेंट गवर्नमेंट को रिकग्नाइज करने की बातें पाकिस्तान और चीन कर रहे हैं। बीस साल से यह मामला लटक रहा है। अभी मेरे लायक दोस्त ने बतलाया कि तीन रिवल गवर्नमेंट पा चुकी हैं। साथ ही साथ अगर पाकिस्तान और चीन ने उन में से किसी एक को रिकग्नाइज कर लिया तो हमारे लिये कितनी मुसीबत खड़ी हो जायेगी? मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस में क्या बाधा है, क्या मुश्किल है, क्या मुसीबत है कि आप मुट्ठी भर आदमियों का इलाज नहीं कर सकते? फौज आप के पास है जो कि दुनिया में तीसरे दर्ज की है। इतनी बड़ी फौज कहीं नहीं। आप के पास ५० करोड़ आदमी हैं, इतने भारी रिसर्सिज हैं, आप क्यों मुट्ठी भर लोगो का इलाज नहीं कर सकते? आप को चाहिये कि आप फौरन ऐसा करें ताकि दुनिया में आप की साख बैठ जाये और यह फोड़ा भी साफ हो जाये।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : I am glad the hon. Member has raised this question. I very much appreciate the great care he has taken to study and understand the very difficult problems that face us in Nagaland.

At the outset I would like to disabuse him and the House of this impression that the Government is not serious to solve the Naga problem. This is a very delicate question where emotions and feelings of a large number of people are involved, and we have to be very careful in dealing with them.

The hon. member on the right put this question: why not solve this, what is there, it is a small problem and it is becoming more complex and our enemies are going to exploit it, so finish it once and for all. If it had been that easy, it would have been finished. I think this matter has been very carefully considered in this house several times. This so-called hard line which the hon. member suggests has also been raised by a number of hon. members, but the concensus of opinion in the House is that the policy that the Government is pursuing to solve this problem through negotiation, through peaceful means, through persuasion, is the best policy, because, after all, there has been conflict and operations there, but it did not solve the problem, and our view not only on this matter but on other matters also is that military operations do not solve problems, even though they may appear to solve something.

So, in this matter we have to be patient, tactful, diplomatic, try to persuade them. We have made it absolutely clear that so far as the question of negotiation is concerned it has to be within the Indian Union. Nagaland is a part of India. The Nagas are the valued citizens of this country as anybody else.

The peaceful situation that is prevailing in Nagaland has created a very favourable situation because a large number of people, the vast majority of the people have known peace, have tasted peace, and they are for once in their life, after a long period of strife and difficulties and violence, now knowing the value of peace. There are a number of viewpoints, rivalries among the underground Nagas, but the large majority of the Nagas want peace, the peaceful situation to continue. Now, the present Government is finding its feet, developmental activities are going on. They are able to contact the people. All this is to the advantage of the Nagas, and it is our belief that these extremist elements which may be incited by outside forces, or may have their own ambitions, are limited, and we may be able to persuade them ultimately. But if we give up patience and diplomacy and talks we will be giving up the cause, and it will not be in the interests that we all want to serve.

As for this question being dealt with by the External Affairs Ministry, this has been answered again and again. This is a part of the agreement when the State of Nagaland was created, and at the present moment there is no point on changing it.

The point made out by the member that the loyal Nagas are in a majority is very valid, although it cuts across the impression that he has tried to create. They are suffering. That is true. By and large they want to live in peace, have development and achieve their way of living, culture etc. in a peaceful manner. It may be that they are harassed but in recent months or in the last three years, no violent incidents in Nagaland have occurred. There have been some in Manipur recently but there also the people—the volunteer forces and others—are trying to meet it, and we may be able to control it, but in Nagaland there has been no violent activity in the last three years. That is again a good sign that people are coming to realise that disturbances and violence would not pay.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : I wanted to correct it. In the area not covered by agreement on the suspension of operations, there were incidents. In the Manipur area covered by agreement on the suspension of operations, there were some: I will tell you the number.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I am not disputing it. I am stating about Nagaland itself. I said that in Manipur there have been some incidents, but we are trying to meet it through the co-operation of the people.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH : What about the rumour that China is going to recognise the rebel government?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I am coming to it; I am going point by point. I will answer that also. Now, about Naga students having ammunition in Bhuvanewar, I have tried to check up. This matter is being investigated by the Defence Ministry, but so far as my information goes, there is no truth in that.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU : It has come in the papers.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : It may have, but so far as the information that we have

[Shri B. R. Bhagat]

got is concerned, our information is that it is not correct. Then, it is asked, why are we not able to prevent people from going outside or coming inside, and why do we not have enough security force so that we completely seal the borders. It is easy to say that. But the State of Nagaland has got very vast, long borders the State of Nagaland is full of dense forests, and it is a very difficult terrain. So, it is very difficult to claim that there will be complete, hundred per cent, sealing of the border. But what we have tried to do is that we have effectively prevented people in large numbers from going out or coming in. It is true that recently some people have gone to China and some of them have come back. We are keeping a very close watch over it, and I can state here very categorically that we will not allow any foreign intervention in this, that is, intervention in the internal

affairs of our country : or if any country tries to do that, we will deal with it as we deal with interferences from outside. The hon. Member has quoted the Chief Minister of Nagaland as saying that it will lead to a very serious situation if that happens. So, we are keeping a very careful watch on the situation and if any outside powers are getting interested in this area, with the best of our might and resources we will try to prevent it as we prevent any interference in our internal affairs.

These are some of the points that have been raised and I have tried to answer them.

18:39 hrs.

(The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, Novemebr 27, 1967/Agrahayana 6, 1889 (Saka).