

**Achievement of Nuclear Armament by China**

893. SHRI R. R. SINGH DEO : Will the MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (VIDESH MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether nuclear armament achievement by the communist China have further aggravated tension in this part of the sub-continent; and

(b) if so, the reaction of government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (VIDESH MANTRALAYA MEN UP-MANTRI) (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) and (b). There has been no significant development in China's nuclear posture. The impact of China's nuclear capacity is constantly under Government's review.

**पश्चिमी राजस्थान को उत्तर भारत, पश्चिम भारत तथा दक्षिण भारत से जोड़ने वाली सड़कें**

894. श्री पन्नालाल बारूपाल : क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) पश्चिमी राजस्थान को उत्तर भारत, पश्चिम भारत तथा दक्षिण भारत से जोड़ने वाली उन सड़कों का निर्माण जो रक्षा की दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण है, करने का कोई प्रस्ताव है ; और ?

(ख) यदि हां तो उन सड़कों के नाम क्या हैं ?

रक्षा मंत्री (श्री जगजीवन राम) : (क) और (ख) : रक्षा आवश्यकताओं का ध्यान रखते हुए पश्चिम राजस्थान को भीतरी प्रदेश से जोड़ने के लिए अनेक सड़कों का निर्माण तथा सुधार किया गया है। यह तो एक सदा जारी रहने वाला कार्यक्रम है जिसके लिए सीमा पार के प्रगतियों का निर्धारण और उन्हें पूरा करने के लिए की जाने वाली व्यवस्था के प्रकाश में

आवश्यकताओं का समय समय पर पुनरीक्षण किया जाता है। इन सड़कों के व्योरे बताना लोकहित में नहीं होगा।

12.01 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**FIRING ON WORKERS OF ISHAPUR RIFLE  
FACTORY**

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Defence (Raksha Mantri) to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

'The reported firing on the workers of Ishapur Rifle Factory on 22.5.71 resulting in death of some employees.'

THE MINISTER OF STATE (DEFENCE PRODUCTION) IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAKSHA MANTRALAYA (RAKSHA UTPADAN) MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on Saturday, the 22nd May 1971 at about 7.15 A.M. an industrial employee of the Rifle Factory, Ishapore, Shri Bikramjit Banerjee, who was travelling in a public bus to the Factory for work was dragged out of the bus at an intermediary bus stop by a gang of miscreants and fatally stabbed.

His fellow workers travelling in the same bus brought this tragic news to the Factory and the Factory management also immediately informed the Naopara Police Station nearby to investigate into this incident.

The news of this outrage rapidly spread amongst the workers in the Factory and at about 8.30 A.M. hundreds of workers entered the Office of the Officer-in-Charge

of the Factory and demanded to know the whereabouts of Shri Banerjee. The Officer-in-Charge informed them that the Police were investigating and he expected to hear from the Police shortly.

This did not satisfy the workers and they demanded that the Officer-in-charge should go with them in a procession to the Naopara Police Station. Persistent persuasion of the Officer-in-Charge against this course of action did not succeed. Meanwhile, nearly four thousand workers had stopped work in the various production shops and broke out of the Factory in a large procession in a disregard of the regulations of security search. Many officers of the Factory including the Officer-in-charge were forced out of their offices to join this procession.

At about 10.10 A.M. the processionists surrounded the Police Station, became unruly, threw brickbats on the Police, and tried to overrun the Station. Prohibitory order under Section 144 Cr. P. C. was already in force in this area and after due warning lathi-charge was ordered by the Police to disperse the crowd.

Seven persons were arrested by the Police and two bombs were recovered.

Later, at about 11.30 A.M. about 1,000 persons reassembled and obstructed traffic by placing barricades on the Barrackpore Trunk Road. The local Police authorities rushed in a contingent of the Central Reserve Police Force by way of reinforcement. At this stage the crowd started pelting stones/bombs on the CRP personnel and the local Police vehicles, resulting in injuries to two CRP constables. As the situation was getting out of control, the office-in-charge, Naopara Police Station ordered firing. The CRPF fired three rounds, which resulted in the death of one person and injuries to three others. Five more persons sustained minor injuries.

On Monday, the 24th May 1971 a 'bandh' was organised in the Barrackpore, Baranagar area stretching over a distance of 12 miles, as a result of which hardly any workers were able to attend the factories,

In consequence all the four Factories, viz. ; Rifle Factory Ishapore, Metal and Steel Factory Ishapore, Gun and Shell Factory Cossipore and the Ordnance Factory, Dum Dum, remained idle. Although a large number of workers turned up on the 25th May, very little work is done. This has seriously affected production of vital Defence Stores.

Subsequent to these incidents, the officers of the DGOF's Organisation called on the Chief Secretary, West Bengal. As a result of this discussion, intensive Police patrolling had been introduced and additional Police pickets have been posted in this area. I have also taken up the matter with the Chief Minister and the Chief Minister requesting them to strengthen the security arrangements in this area.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** This is not the only incident where one of the employees—this time Shri Bikramjit Banerjee—was dragged out of a public bus and stabbed to death but there are so many incidents where workers of the Rifle Factory, Ishapore, and Metal and Steel Factory, Ishapore, who are engaged in this production of very vital items pertaining to defence, as explained by the hon. Minister in his statement, were stabbed to death. This state of affairs is going on for a very long time. As President of the All India Defence Employees' Federation I personally have been taken up the matter and have written to the Chief Minister and Home Minister of West Bengal as also to the Union Home Minister and Defence Minister in this regard. I have also forwarded the telegrams issued by the various unions pertaining to these four ordnance factories mentioned by the hon. Minister.

Now, I would like to know whether this particular report that he has received is the report of the police authorities of West Bengal or of some independent agency, like some officers of the DGOF's organisation or of a Central agency deputed to investigate into the whole incident and to see whether this firing was necessary and whether the employee, who has been killed as a result of the firing, was an employee who had nothing to do with the whole thing and who perhaps wanted to go but could not go.

I would also like to know from the hon. Minister as to what concrete steps were taken by the factory authorities that particular area—there are Defence Security Corps people working in the factory for security purposes—to safeguard the interests of the employees against such antisocial elements because, as he has already mentioned in his statement, he was dragged out of a bus by gang of miscreants and fatally stabbed. He has not mentioned anything political about it ; it cannot be given a political colour as such.

I would also like to know whether, since many workers are involved in it and there was a strike by nearly 12,000 employees of Cossipore, Ishapore and Dum Dum, he has taken up the matter with the Chief Minister of West Bengal and has asked him to have a judicial inquiry into this so that the guilty persons may be brought to book. It is a sad affair which is going on in that particular area which is hampering defence production.

I may mention here that the Rifle Factory, Ishapore, is manufacturing the most sophisticated arms now and is producing them very well. This has affected production and production is bound to be affected more if these employees are likely to be killed. Therefore, naturally, I would like to know whether he has asked for a judicial inquiry by the State Government ; if not whether any senior officer will be send either by the Defence Minister or by the Minister to investigate into whole affair. Due compensation should be paid to the families of those who have been killed.

**SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA :** We have received the report about this incident from a senior officer of the Directorate General of Ordnance Factories whose headquarters is in Calcutta itself. We have also checked up the situation from the West Bengal Government because, as the hon. House knows, law and order matter outside the factory premises rest entirely with the West Bengal Government. After ascertaining the facts from them I have made this statement here in this House.

As far as the desirability or undesirability, the necessity or otherwise of firing

is concerned, that had to be decided on the spot by the people who were in charge of maintaining law and order in the area. As the hon. Member very rightly stated the situation in this area for some time past has been very unsatisfactory and several murders of defence workers, unfortunately have taken place there. We have been taking up this matter from time to time with the West Bengal authorities. Now, as I have stated in my main statement, I have taken it up at the highest level in the West Bengal Government and I hope, they will make the necessary arrangements in this area surrounding the factory so that the life and property of defence workers can be properly safeguarded.

As far as the question of security inside the factory is concerned, there too, we are taking additional steps to strengthen our security arrangements. Our security arrangements do exist there. But we feel that we should further strengthen our security arrangements inside the factory also.

We hope, as a result of the steps that have been taken, the situation will improve and the defence stores which are vitally necessary and the production of which has suffered as a consequence of these incidents will again pick up. I can assure the House that we are seized of the seriousness of the matter. Whenever it is necessary for any senior officer from here to go and talk with the West Bengal Government or it is necessary for me to go, we will definitely take necessary steps to see that all possible action is taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents there.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** What about the judicial inquiry and the payment of compensation ?

**SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA :** Generally, whatever steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of such things, we take up with the West Bengal Government and discuss matters with them. As far as the matter of compensation is concerned, we are looking into it.

**SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI (B:rahmapor):** Sir, so far as this matter is concerned, it is good that the Government

here has awakened to the seriousness of the situation there and has taken certain steps to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

I am not so much enamoured of judicial inquiries so far as West Bengal is concerned. You will remember that in pursuance of an assurance given by the Government here, when the State was under the President's Rule, a judicial inquiry was ordered and the judge himself, the ex-judge, was stabbed. Since then, no judge has come forward to head any judicial inquiry. So before we ask for such a judicial inquiry in West Bengal, we should also take steps to protect the lives of the judges. Already, one High Court judge has been killed in Calcutta. That is the situation of law and order in West Bengal. But we are precluded constitutionally to go into that matter just now.

What comes to my mind is this. Why did not the Factory Manager or the officer in-charge who was on the spot, when such a serious thing happened, immediately get into touch with the DGOF or his superior officers? He simply tried to put off the workers by saying that they have sent the First Hand Information Report to the Naopara police station. It comes to my mind that he should have immediately got into contact with the DGOF and his other superior officers in-charge of the Defence Department and taken necessary steps to see that the situation did not get out of hand. But the situation got out of hand and, ultimately, the tragedy occurred and one poor defence worker was killed. Why was this thing not done by the officer in-charge on the spot. Was there any kind of political prejudice or any kind of prejudice or any bias that prevented him from doing that. If there was no bias, he should have taken necessary steps. He took the things just as a matter of course. After all, when the Defence establishments were affected and the serious situation developed, why could he not use some judgment and some tact before hand?

**SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA :** I stated in my statement that he did not immediately as soon as the matter came to his notice. He immediately got in touch with the law and order authorities and I

suppose he also got in touch with the Office of the Director General, Ordnance Factories. A senior officer took up the matter as I have stated in my main statement, with the then Chief Secretary of West Bengal about this situation.

**SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI :** That was done later. When the thing occurred, when the workers in a body went to him, he put them off by saying : I have sent this to Naopara police station.

**SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA :** I don't think his presumption is correct. He did not want to put off workers ; he was anxious and very much concerned with the matter and he was very much disturbed. He did something to see that remedial action was taken. Unfortunately the situation developed in such a way that it got out of the hands of the workers as well as the management.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** (Diamond Harbour) : On the 18th May, in the Defence Production unit, the metal and steel division by name, Gyanchand Das was killed. On 19th May there was a pen-down, sit-down strike in protest against this. Vikramjit Banerjee was murdered. And then what happened? The CRP officer took certain action. The officer in charge of the Naopara police station fired at them, criminally lathi-charged. As a result 4 persons died and 15 persons are there in Barrackpore military hospital undergoing treatment. Those who are injured includes Deputy General Manager and General in charge of security. But nothing has been done. I went to ask one question, from the hon. Defence Minister.

When the United Front Ministry was in regime, when an incident took place in Cossipore under similar circumstances, the Government took very energetic steps and made a confrontation, but so far, in this case, we have heard nothing. The hon. Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram was in Calcutta, personally, on the 23rd May. Why is it that he observed absolute silence and said nothing at all? That is my question number one. I want to have a clear and categorical statement from the hon. Minister. Our hon. Minister was there immediately afterwards, but why is it that he

observed complete silence? Also I want to know this from the Government. What steps are they going to take against those butchers who have shot and killed these innocent workers and officer in charge in Naopera police station. What compensation in respect of damages are you going to give to those who have been killed indiscriminately by this unwanted firing?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (RAKSHA MANTRI) (SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM) : He has gone farther from what happened on the previous occasion. This was raised by the hon. Member Shri Tridib Chaudhuri. On that occasion the incident took place within the factory premises. This time what happened was this. This arose not in the factory itself, but outside. Naturally, it is entirely a question of the West Bengal Government.

He has mentioned something about my silence.

Have I to make statement about that?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : You took no steps.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I took notice of it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : What steps did you take?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : They have been enumerated.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Very unconvincing, if you ask me.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : West Bengal Government has entirely to deal with the question of law and order. For, this took place not in the factory precincts but in the jurisdiction of the entire police station of Naopara; and that is one police station which has been very much disturbed. Law and order is observed more in breach there than in observance...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : His party has been creating it. They have been

engaging Naxalites and anti-social elements and they have been murdering people...

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I have not made any mention of his party. So, why should he be so much disturbed?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : His party is doing it. The Congress is making use of the official machinery for this purpose.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : Now, it is clear where the shoe pinches. I was saying that the whole law and order situation in that police station was being observed more in breach than in observance.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : That is the creation of his party.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I wish the West Bengal Government takes very stringent measures...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : It is his Government.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : It may be my Government or his Government; but he cannot think of a Government of his party; because when they come in there will be more law and order problems.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Because we do not take to horse-trading as his party does.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I hope that the West Bengal Government will take measures to deal with the elements which are responsible for the breach of law and order in that police station, and as has been stated in the original answer, the matter has been taken up with the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of the West Bengal Government, and let us hope that they will take the necessary measures to enforce law and order in that station.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : His reply is misleading and evasive.