

Sir, this external assistance will be made available for the completion of Bakreshwar project through Government of India. It is not as if the State Government is going to negotiate directly with any foreign country. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Now, we will take up the next question.

Slums near Railway tracks in Maharashtra

*104. SHRI BABANRAO DHAKNE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have requested the Maharashtra Government to shift slums coming within a distance of 50 feet on either side of the railway tracks;

(b) if so, whether Maharashtra Government has agreed to shift the slums; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. It has also been agreed to reduce the safety distance to 30 feet where the State Government agrees for construction of a boundary wall to separate the safety zone.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BABANRAO DHAKNE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, keeping in view the agreement reached, when will the follow up action be taken?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: The Government would take action only when the State Government agrees finally to the proposals made to them by the Ministry of Railways.

SHRI BABANRAO DHAKNE: Has

Maharashtra Government sent this proposal to you and if not, what steps are being taken by the Central Government to persuade the State Government to agree to this proposal.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Last negotiation in this respect with the State Government took place on 30th October. Thereafter we have heard nothing from the Maharashtra Government

SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: When was the agreement with the Maharashtra Government arrived at. Safety distance has been reduced to 30 feet and construction of the boundary walls has been started. You may be knowing about it. How many kilometres of the wall has been constructed. May I know the total length of such track falling under Western Railway and the Central Railway, separately? I want to know the details about it. Secondly, I would like to know whether any provision has been made for the slums located within 30 feet of track.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a dialogue on this issue started in April 1987 and the decision to take positive steps in this regard was taken in January 1989. But the work has not been started so far because a decision is to be formalised between the Maharashtra Government and the Ministry of Railways.

SHRI RAM NAIK: If the proposal submitted to the Central Government by the Government of Maharashtra is accepted about 60-70 km. long wall will have to be constructed to ensure a safety zone. If it is going to bring about improvement in the area beyond the range of 30 feet, will the government take a decision in the matter and convey its no objection so that the work of construction of boundary wall is started?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the State Government enters into a written agreement in this respect and is ready to take the responsibility of construction of a boundary wall, further action can be taken in this matter. It has been

conveyed to the Government of Maharashtra.

SHRI J.P. AGARWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, although this question pertains to Maharashtra, but there is a policy that the slum-dwellers living near the railway tracks should be allotted some place somewhere, before they are shifted from there. The hon. Minister is already aware of the fact that a large number of railway employees live in slums near the railway tracks. The hon. Minister had been their leader also. So, will they be provided some other place to lie before they are shifted from there? Usually, it happens that these poor slum dwellers are thrown out and are rendered homeless and jobless. I would like to know whether he has still any sympathy for these poor people?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is related to Bombay and the question asked by the hon. Member is related to the slums all over the country. The policy in this regard is decided after taking into confidence all the State Governments.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, people are living in the slums near the railway tracks in the country for the last 20 years. As a result, a lot of accidents take place in these slums. So, will the hon. Minister adopt any a policy so that they can be rehabilitated in some other place. Besides, will any efforts be made in future to discourage people from settling near the railway tracks?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this work can only be done after negotiations with the State Governments. The Ministry of Railways alone can not take a decision.

SHRI MANIK RAO HODLYA GAVIT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are Western Railway and Central Railway in Bombay. The slum-dwellers are living in the Central Government's and State Government's land near the railway tracks. Is the Ministry of Railways making any agreement to provide them land

to enable them to shift from there?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is mainly related to the railways. Regarding the slums on either sides of the railway tracks, there was a proposal with the State Government and the Ministry of Railways to construct a boundary wall with a distance of 50 feet along the railway tracks, so that the scheme of the State Government to provide water to slum dwellers could be implemented. There was a dispute whether this distance should be 30 feet or 50 feet. Later, the State Government agreed to construct a boundary wall within a distance of 30 feet, but it has not yet been implemented. A decision regarding the slum-dwellers living near the railway tracks will be taken only after a dialogue with the State Governments.

PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Maharashtra Government or the Ministry of Railways, will regularise those slums, after a boundary wall is constructed there. Besides, will the M.Ps. of that area be invited by the Government of Maharashtra, while having a discussion on this proposal.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is under the jurisdiction of the State Government. We cannot do anything in this regard.

SHRIMATI SUBHASHINI ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any scheme of providing compensation to the slum-dwellers, living near the railway tracks before they are removed from there for laying new railway lines. At the time of Janata Government, the then Railway Minister, Shri Madhu Danavate had given a compensation of Rs. 1900/- per jhuggi to those slum-dwellers in Bombay, who were shifted elsewhere. So, I would like to know whether the present Minister of Railways is also considering such a provision or not.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: There

is a proposal for granting Rs. 10,000/- per jhuggi to those slum-dwellers, who are living near the railway tracks and will be rehabilitated in some other place.

SHRI YUVRAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in places like Katihar, where neither there is any proposal for laying a new railway line nor a railway structure is coming up there, the poor living near the railway track for the last 25 years, are being removed from there, and the place allotted for resettling those poor people is low-lying. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether those low-lying areas where these poor people will be rehabilitated, would be levelled by filling earth and made fit for habitation?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: It is for the State Government to undertake the rehabilitation work. Railways cannot do this work.

Autonomous Board for Power Generation and Distribution

*105. **SHRI UTTAM RATHOD:** Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up an autonomous board for generation of power and its equitable distribution in the different regions of the country;

(b) if so, the nature of the organisation and when it will be set up; and

(c) what will be the relationship between the above autonomous board and the electricity boards of different States?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[English]

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: May I know if it is a fact that the Sarkaria Committee was appointed to look into the working of DESU

and suggest remedial measures where required? If so, what are the findings of the Sarkaria Committee?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: You will appreciate that this is a very specific question — whether there is a proposal to set up an autonomous board for generation of power and its equitable distribution in the different regions of the country. I am not aware of the Sarkaria Committee, but I will definitely supply this information to the hon. Member.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: My idea in asking this question was very specific...

MR. SPEAKER: But he is not aware whether there was Sarkaria Committee or not.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: What can I do?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: This is a very specific question about autonomous board for generation of power and equitable distribution of power. If there was Sarkaria Committee, it does not arise out of this question. But I will definitely supply the information to the hon. Member.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: By and large, the working of Electricity Boards all over the country is most unsatisfactory. The consumers are very much annoyed with the supply and distribution of electricity. Secondly, there is financial indiscipline and inefficiency. To look into all these things, the Sarkaria Committee was appointed. May be it was for this purpose. Will it not be possible for you to take some lessons from the findings of the Committee and make them applicable throughout the country?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: As you are aware, electricity is on the Concurrent List under the Indian Constitution. Generation of power is done both in the State and Central Sectors. The State Electricity Boards are autonomous bodies created under the Indian Electricity Act, 1948 by