

[Shrimati Vimla Devi]

enough. And if the Government implements these suggestions, we will come forward with new suggestions.

It is said that we need 130 million tons of foodgrains by 1971 to feed the increasing population. How are we going to face this problem? We have to go up or down with our agriculture. This vital sector, which accounts for 50 per cent of our national economy, should be tackled with vigorous policies. Solving the food crisis does not lie in building buffer stocks or giving occasional supplies. It can be solved only if the production increases. The producer and the consumer should be given fair prices. The price line must be held. All these things can be done only by large-scale State trading in foodgrains.

Food is the sine qua non for existence. Let me warn the Government that the people are in no mood to tolerate for any long humbugging with their food. In a free India people shall not suffer and die when food rots with the hoarders. Bengal of 1943 shall not repeat for 1964 is not 1943 and people shall sweep aside the hoarders and profiteers and with them their friends in the Government.

12.44 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORT-
ANCE—contd.**

(ii) **MIGRATION OF CHRISTIANS FROM
EAST PAKISTAN TO INDIA**

Mr. Speaker: Before I call Shri Krishnapal Singh, Dr. Singhvi might take up the Calling Attention Notice. The Minister is prepared to make a statement.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): Which one?

Mr. Speaker: He will know it presently.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi (Jodhpur): I call the attention of the Prime Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

**"Migration of Christians from
East Pakistan to India".**

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): The House is aware that an unprecedented influx of Hindu and Christian refugees is taking place into the Garo hills district from the Mymensingh district of East Pakistan. It is known that this exodus from East Pakistan into Assam began on January 18th 1964, and that the total number of refugee men, women and children who have so far crossed over into Assam is about 52,238. Of this number, an estimated 35,000 are Christian families who belong to the Garo tribe. The reason for this exodus is that these Hindu and Christian members of the Minority Community in East Pakistan have been compelled to leave their ancestral homes due to organised large scale looting, arson, kidnapping and forcible occupation of their lands by the members of the majority community with the connivance of the Pakistan Police and the Village Defence Corps known as 'Ansars'.

The gravity of this mass movement of the minority population from East Pakistan has been brought out clearly by the recent visit by Indian and Foreign Correspondents to the Garo hills district in Assam where they met refugees and Foreign Missionaries who are looking after them. Father Buccieri, an Italian Missionary, is reported to have told the Correspondents that according to the figures he had collected on the basis of identification cards filled-up by the refugees themselves, on their arrival in camps, 20,000 of the Garos who had crossed into India were Roman Catholics. Two of the American Baptist Missionaries, Reverend Julius Downs and Reverend James Wood stated that

15,000 of the refugees were Baptists. The Correspondents also learnt, at first hand, of East Pakistan Rifles opening fire on a batch of defenceless Garo refugees fleeing into Assam on February 6th, 1964. Dr. M. Hussain, Sub-divisional Health and Medical Officer of Tura, showed them the bullets taken from the heads of the two children who were killed. Dr. Hussain informed the Correspondents that 7 men, 4 women and 2 children were brought to the hospital from the border out-post of Dalu on the night of February 7th, and that 6 of them had bullet injuries and the others had received injuries inflicted by spears and *lathi* blows. The refugees stated that the total number of persons who were attempting to cross the border was about 3,000 but only 1500 managed to cross the border near the Indian post of Dalu, 33 miles south-west of Tura. The others who are continuing to cross the border into Assam consist of the Hojong Banai, Koche, Rajbansi and Dalu tribes. All the refugees who have crossed into the Garo hills district, are from the 5 Thanas of Nalta Bari, Sribordi, Halvaghata, Durgapuh and Kamlakanda in the Mymensingh district of East Pakistan.

The Government of India in their Note dated February 13th, 1964, presented to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, protested to the Government of Pakistan at the shooting of the helpless refugees fleeing from persecution in East Pakistan. Though Pakistan has not acknowledged the occurrence of this barbarous act, the Pakistan Foreign Minister has had to contradict the reported statement of Khan A. Sabur Khan, Pakistan Central Minister of Communications, that "there is no truth in the Indian Press reports that Christians living in East Pakistan had started fleeing", by admitting in Dacca, on February 26th, that "some exodus" of Christians from Mymensingh district of East Pakistan into Assam had taken place and regretted on behalf of his Government that this "unfortunate exodus" is due to "acts

of highhandedness" by Muslims. The President of Pakistan has also admitted the flight of large numbers of Christians from Mymensingh district to India.

The House will recall that the Government of India in their Note dated February 1st, 1964, presented to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, the text of which was placed on the Table of the House on February 11th, 1964, by the Union Home Minister, had pointed out clearly to Pakistan its responsibilities for the restoration of communal peace and harmony in East Pakistan. If the leaders and the Government of Pakistan had taken heed of our advice, these minorities would not now be pouring across the Pakistan border into India and Pakistan would not have to speculate whether they would return to their ancestral homes from which they have been forcibly turned out. In a note dated February 29th, 1964 delivered to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, the Government of India has reiterated that the Pakistan Government should take immediate steps to restore communal harmony in East Pakistan and rehabilitate the minorities.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: On a point of order, Sir. While we are grateful to you for interrupting the other business and calling upon the Government to make a statement in answer to a Calling Attention Notice on an important matter I submit that it would have been much fairer to the House as a whole—of course, Dr. Singhvi and many of us are gratified—if in accordance with well-established procedural conventions an advance intimation had been given that this would be taken up at a particular hour, as has been done earlier. Why has there been a departure from that convention now?

Mr. Speaker: It is not a point of order. I owe an explanation to the House as to why this extraordinary procedure has been adopted at this moment. I had been receiving

[Mr. Speaker]

notices from three or four Members of this House. They have sent me Calling Attention Notices on this subject. I had asked the Ministry to find out the facts and give them to the House. Now, those notices had remained pending and we were awaiting as to what the reaction of the Ministry would be.

Then, this morning just after the Question Hour, I came to know that this information was being given to the other House today. Therefore, the Minister also feared that there might be criticism in this House that while the attention had been drawn to this aspect here, she has given the information there and not here. So, she expressed a desire that if I wanted, she might give the information here also. That was the sudden impulse and, therefore, I decided that even though I had to interrupt the proceedings of the House, she might also escape that criticism and I might also save my skin. Already I have received a very severe reprimand from my friend Shri Mirza, a long letter, that he was the recipient of a strong odium from me because he had stood up to raise a point of order day before yesterday on this very subject. So, these are the reasons why this extra-ordinary procedure I had to adopt. As Mr. Kamath has said, I have not been so fair at this moment to the House. But I had to take this extra-ordinary step on account of the circumstances that existed in this particular case.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Was it not possible or feasible for you to inform the House after the Question Hour....

Mr. Speaker: I had not known even after the Question Hour. I came to know of it later when I had started the other business.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The Government is not co-operating with you as fully as it should.'

Mr. Speaker: I expect the hon. Member would co-operate at least.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That means the Treasury Benches also.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: In view of the grave situation existing in respect of large-scale migration, may I know whether the Government have given thought to the desirability of going to an international forum on this question, to giving it a sustained and widespread publicity abroad, of rousing conscience of the world on this matter which constitutes a genocide, an oppression of minorities and the violation of human rights, and to the seeking of assistance also from international agencies in the matter of relief and rehabilitation to these unfortunate victims of highhandedness of the Government and the people of East Pakistan?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: I have stated already in the report that foreign correspondents as well as Indian correspondents have gone there....

Mr. Speaker: Now, there are four or five suggestions made by the hon. Member. The Member wants to know whether the Government is prepared to adopt them or would adopt them.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: Perhaps, consider also.

Mr. Speaker: These questions were exactly put when that general question of migration was taken up.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: Unfortunately, the Minister of Rehabilitation was replying to that and, therefore, we could not elicit full information.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: When the notice was received, one portion of it dealt with the influx of refugees and the other portion dealt with the

Importance

question of rehabilitation. That is why this question was handed over to the Ministry of Rehabilitation.

Mr. Speaker: That is right.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: In the other House, there was a demand only for the first part, namely, the influx of Christian refugees from Pakistan. That is why this statement is confined to that part only.

Now, Sir, two or three questions were raised, whether we have given enough publicity and whether we are going to rouse the world conscience with regard to this and, thirdly as to what things have been done for the rehabilitation of these refugees. As regards the first one, that is, publicity, it is already quoted that foreign correspondents have been there and the discussion here itself is a means of publicising it to the whole world. Regarding the second one about rousing the world conscience or appealing to the world organisations to come to our aid, so far we have never appealed to world organisations for solving problems like these. Even after the Partition, you would recall that 9 million people had to be rehabilitated and we had tightened up our belts and used resources at our disposal for that purpose. But I find that the Members of Parliament have already issued an appeal rousing the world conscience on this problem. As regards the third one, the Minister of Rehabilitation has already gone there and since the Government has already admitted that it is a national problem and a human problem, all efforts will be made to rehabilitate those who have come to India.

Mr. Speaker: One thing I might just put to the hon. Minister.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Burdwan): May we know one thing from the hon. Minister?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Just one thing I might put to the hon. Minister. They wanted to know whe-

ther the Government had done something to give publicity to it. The hon. Minister's answer was that the foreign correspondents were there and they have given or they must have given publicity to it. But the Members' demand is whether the Government does something of its own accord or leaves it only to the foreign correspondents that they might do whatever pleases them or in whatever manner they like. The other thing the hon. Minister said that so many Members have issued an appeal to foreign agencies that they should come to their aid. The question is whether the Government proposes to make an appeal, though the Minister has said that it is not usual for the Government to make an appeal.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That shows lack of will.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf (Nominated—Jammu and Kashmir): Have they made any sustained effort?

13 hrs.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: With regard to the question of publicity, we publicise it through our broadcasts, the local press and by hand-outs; also, all our Missions abroad have been given the correct details about the magnitude of the problem and they will certainly contradict the propaganda of Pakistan, because the Pakistan Government themselves are contradicting it. (*Interruptions*) Besides what we are doing by way of giving correct details about the magnitude of the problem, I was pointing out that the Pakistan Government themselves were contradicting the statement by one of their Ministers saying that this was not a big problem, that this was only an exodus of a small magnitude etc. These are some of the things.

The usual techniques of publicity are used to give the truth about what is happening in Assam.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: This calls for an unusual technique. May I point out, Sir, that your question is not being answered?

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: My question has not been answered.

Mr. Speaker: Are we to be content with the contradiction that is issued by the Pakistan authorities by their quoting one Minister against another, because they would do it only to a certain extent and not go the whole hog as we would require? Therefore, the Members desire that Government should take some positive and concrete steps.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: On its own initiative.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: I have already stated the concrete steps that are taken by Government, such as issuing press releases, broadcasts, and informing our Missions all over the world about the situation and asking them to publicise it in the local press and thus familiarise the people with what is happening.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Two late and too little.

Shri Bakar Ali Mirza (Warrangal): About the question of publicity, I would like the House to know that Mr. Bhutto made a statement saying that 10,000 Christian refugees went to India and most of them had come back. The very next day, the BBC broadcasts and the British press had the same story to tell. In contrast with this, here is an article from *Le Monde*, an official paper in Paris, where it is said:

"The bulk of unconflicting evidence leaves no doubt that all these refugees...."

—that is, Christian refugees—

"...saw their homes attacked by furious Muslim crowds and their property and cattle confis-

cated; young women were raped and many disappeared."

Recently, General Ayub...

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member should frame his question.

Shri Bakar Ali Mirza: I am coming to my question. It is in this context.

Mr. Speaker: That question is much too long to be answered.

Shri Bakar Ali Mirza: General Ayub had recently stated that the Muslims who were going from India, that is to say, the Indian Muslims were the people who caused this riot and attacked these Christians in order to send them away, so as to make propaganda. When a man like General Ayub, the Head of a State, makes a statement, and when the whole of the British press also publishes it, there should be some indication of what Government's views are. So far, there has been no indication, and this is the first time that Government have come forward with such a statement after such a long time. They should have come out with this statement much earlier. After all, this is a question which the whole world is discussing.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has not asked any concrete question which can be answered.

Shri Bakar Ali Mirza: This is my question. What have Government done to counter this? They have done nothing at all.

Mr. Speaker: What have Government done to contradict this?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: Government have issued contradictions almost every time, and only this morning I answered a question about the *Times* correspondent and what has been done by the Government of India. Every time that such exaggerated accounts

are given by the Pakistanis, we do issue contradictions. The Pakistan Government always accuse us of persuading these people to come away by giving them migration certificates easily etc. etc. This has been contradicted, and I can read out if necessary from the hand-outs that we have issued.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Jalore): The hon. Minister has stated that our Government have sent protest notes, to the Government of Pakistan, but she also clearly indicated that it was a calculated move by the Government of Pakistan. May I know the immediate political motivation for the Government of Pakistan to perpetuate such atrocities and inhumanities on the people, and whether Government have exposed that political motivation, what action our Government have taken in that direction?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: It is very difficult to know what the motives of the Pakistan Government are in this matter.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: What is the hon. Minister's understanding of it?

Shri Swell (Assam—Autonomous Districts): I can mention the motive.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: I do not want to express my opinions about these things.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: What is the answer to my question? What is the hon. Minister's understanding of the situation?

Mr. Speaker: She has said that she cannot say what the motive of Pakistan is.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: What is her understanding of the situation, why is there this exodus? Have the Government made any assessment? Without making any assessment, how are they going to proceed in this

matter? How are they going to take up the issues at the various levels? Surely, they must have made some assessment. Or is it that they have made no assessment at all?

Mr. Speaker: This is a matter which hon. Members can raise in the general discussion on the General Budget. But if a brief answer can be given, that might be given.

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: In my statement, I have pointed out why these people have left their homes; it is not as a result of the riot but because the majority community is harassing them, and I have mentioned very clearly in the statement the causes which led these people to leave their homes. More than that I cannot say.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: It has been said that it was with the connivance of the Pakistan Government.

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया (फर्रुखाबाद)

अध्यक्ष महोदय .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : जनाब

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया : एक छोटा सा सवाल मुझे पूछने दें ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : जब मैंने बाकी आठ आदमियों को इजाजत नहीं दी, तो डा० साहब कैसे समझते हैं . . .

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया : मैं आपका हुकम मानूंगा । लेकिन इस वक्त गुस्सा बढ़ता जा रहा है और सरकार का कोई नीति हां नहीं है . . .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : वह बहस आगे आ रही है । उसमें आप यह सवाल उठा सकते हैं ।

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): It is a vegetarian Government fighting a non-vegetarian Government.