

LOK SABHA

Monday, March 12, 1979/Phalguna
21, 1900 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Return of Deserters to Dandakaranya

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*282. SHRI SAUGATA ROY:

SHRI AMAR ROY
PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have fixed any time limit for return of Dandakaranya deserters to Dandakaranya;

(b) if so, whether it will consider extending the guideline in view of the resistance of deserters to eviction from Marichjhapi in Sunderbans;

(c) if so, upto what date and with what facilities; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

निर्माण और आवास तथा पूर्ति और पुनर्वास मंत्री
(श्री सिकन्दर बल्ल): (क) से (घ). एक विवरण सभा की मेज पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) भारत सरकार ने 24-1-1979 को पश्चिम बंगाल की सरकार को यह सुझाव दिया था कि स्थल छोड़कर पश्चिम बंगाल में चले गए परिवारों के वापस आने के लिये 31 मार्च, 1979 की तारीख निश्चित कर दी जाए और यदि वे उक्त तारीख तक वापस नहीं आते हैं तो उन्हें उन की भूमियों और मकानों को वापस देने तथा मंजूर की गई नवीन पुनर्वास सहायता देने के अन्तिम रूप से बंचित कर दिया जाए।

(ख) से (घ). पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार ने प्रस्तावित अन्तिम तारीख का औचित्य स्वीकार करते हुए 8-2-79 को यह सुझाव दिया था कि यद्यपि वह उक्त तारीख तक शेष स्थल छोड़ने वालों की वापसी के लिये भरसक प्रयत्न करेगी, फिर भी इस तारीख का दृढ़ता से पालन न किया जाए। इस के उत्तर में 26-2-1979 को उन्हें सूचित किया गया है कि भारत सरकार ने पर्याप्त रूप से लचीला दृष्टिकोण अपनाया है लेकिन स्थल छोड़ कर जाने वालों की भूमि और मकान अनिश्चित काल तक खाली नहीं रखे जा सकते हैं और उन्हें किस 7 भू दशा में लाभप्रद उपभोग हेतु आगामी खरीफ मौसम से पूर्व उन अन्य विस्थापित व्यक्तियों को एलाट करना होगा जो लम्बे समय से पुनर्वास की प्रतीक्षा कर रहे हैं और यह आशा की जाती है कि स्थल छोड़ कर चले गए शेष परिवार वस्तुस्थिति समझते हुए अधिक से अधिक खरीफ की आगामी फसल के अवसर का लाभ उठाने हेतु समय पर वापस आ जायेंगे।

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: I have gone through the statement laid on the floor of the House and it shows total lack of comprehension of the Rehabilitation Ministry to the problems of Dandakarnya refugees. The question of refugees from marichjhapi returning to Dandakaranya immediately does not arise because unless they can be persuaded, there is no question of returning them by force. The West Bengal Government tried it with firing on them which we have discussed in this House but they have not succeeded. But my question is relating to the Union Rehabilitation Ministry's attitude towards this whole question, I had asked specifically in (c) 'if so, upto what date and with what facilities. What will be the additional facilities given by the Government in order that he refugees may come? The cause of desertion of the refugees was two fold. One is economic, not getting proper rehabilitation in Dandakarnaya and the second is political. It was given to them to desert from Dandakaranya by some political parties who are in the Left Front Govern-

ment in West Bengal. In this context I would like to ask the hon. Minister—

(a) What additional facilities—what amount of extra money is being sanctioned to the Dandakaranya project so that the economic rehabilitation of the refugees can be attained and there is no further desertion from Dandakaranya, and

(b) Whether it is a fact that Shri I. C. Puri who was the administrator of the Dandakaranya project from May to September 1978 after the first day desertion took place, was summarily transferred within three months of his appointment on the request of Shri Biju Patnaik and this has caused great dismay and fears of fresh desertion from Dandakaranya?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: I am sorry the hon. member started prefacing his question totally digressing from the original question and ultimately collapsing down to the desire of Shri Biju Patnaik for the removal of Shri I. C. Puri. Hardly anything of this sort follows from the original question. The question as put originally relates to the date of the return of those refugees—8,000 of them, who are to-day in Marichjhapi. This desertion started from January, 1978. 14 months have elapsed. These deserters have received full and complete benefit according to the scale fixed for them. When I visited, along with the Ministers of West Bengal Government as well as the Minister of Orissa Government, the Dandakaranya area, I visited a number of villages. I met them individually and in groups. Not one of them said anything about the deficiency in providing relief and rehabilitation. There have been reasons, of course, of desertions and I have given them more than once over here on the floor of the House. The chief reason was that they have been wanting to live in environments which are conducive to their own culture, their own language, etc. Then of course there was some indiscreet statement by one of the West Bengal Ministers also. But the Government departed

from its policy in meaning thereby—those who have received full benefit of relief and rehabilitation, they have not to be accepted back, in spite of that the Government damaged its policies. I am prepared to give all the details—what second dose of relief is being given to them. But the fact is this does not relate to the original question.

I vehemently deny that Shri I. C. Puri was transferred on the wish or desire of Shri Biju Patnaik. This statement that he was transferred on the request of Shri Biju Patnaik is wrong. What has Shri I. C. Puri got to do? (*Interruptions*). This is entirely something administrative and I do not think this has anything to do with the original question.

ऐसा मालूम होता है कि पूरी विजडम की बारिश हमारे इन आन्तरिक मसैबर्स पर ही होती है।

The deserters are being given these reliefs—Loan of Rs. 500 per family for purchase of seeds, fertilisers, agricultural implements.

MR. SPEAKER: That you have mentioned.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: We have also introduced some productive steps on account of their being late for the Kharif season, for the interim period.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: The Minister has again totally evaded the main question. The Marichjhapi incident took place because the refugees were not being properly rehabilitated in Dandakaranya and it is also a fact that whenever there has been any officer in Dandakaranya who looked after the interests of the refugees there is a clique in the Union Rehabilitation Ministry who got him transferred. It happened earlier with Mr. Sukumar Sen, it later happened with Mr. Saibal Gupta, ICS and it has now happened with Mr. I. C. Puri. The Minister possibly does not know enough details of past reports. So he is saying off-hand that it has nothing

to do with the officers. But the main question is with regard to Dandakaranya. Unless a situation can be created there for rehabilitation of the refugees, this desertion cannot be stopped and the deserters cannot be sent back from Dandakaranya. In this context I refer to the 72nd Report of the Estimates Committee, 1974-75 of this Parliament where the Estimates Committee openly said that out of the total target of rehabilitation of 35,000 families, the Rehabilitation Ministry had reduced it to 12000 families and then to 7,000 families. There has been consistent conspiracy that the plan does not succeed. As far as the State Governments are concerned they took some interest in the matter because they were getting money from the Centre. But as far as the Rehabilitation Ministry is concerned....

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Sir, in this context I would like to ask the Minister (a) whether the Government will undertake a fresh study into the problem of Dandakaranya refugees and the causes of their desertion, and (b) whether the Government will reopen the question of rehabilitating these refugees in Andaman and Nicobar Islands where they can be properly settled.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: Again, I need your guidance whether the question of what is happening in Dandakaranya relates to the main question which has been put originally. But I might inform the hon. Member that out of about 1,20,000 refugees more than a lakh have returned and there are no more desertions. They have settled very properly and they are satisfied. There is no question of sending more East Bengal refugees to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Sir, I strongly protest against this remark of the Minister. He is off-hand rejecting that. Sir, I strongly protest and I

walk out of this House. He is not at all sympathetic to the cause of East Bengal refugees.

MR. SPEAKER: He is talking of his policy, you may agree or you may not (Interruptions).

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Sir, it is a matter of great regret that East Bengal refugees problem was not solved within this long period of 32 years. In the meanwhile the Government has wound up its Refugee Rehabilitation Department. Marichjhapi is not the main problem or the main root. Dandakaranya is the main problem. Marichjhapi is only a by product of it. And that is why the refugees were moving from one place to another like shuttle cocks. You will be astonished to know that in Dandakaranya the recorded rights, that is, pattas, were not given to the land distributed to the refugees. No proper housing is there. Homesteads are far away from the cultivable lands. There is no law and order there. Jungle rule is prevailing in the Dandakaranya area. Girls and women are to lead a shameful life. There are so many cases of rape by police officials even.

So, will the hon. Minister be pleased to state (a) what are the steps that had been taken to improve the living conditions in Dandakaranya for easy return back of settlers of Marichjhapi, and (b) whether it is a fact that the Dandakaranya deserters at Marichjhapi are not going back because of the instigation of leaders of Utbastu Unnayansil Samiti, an organisation led by Congress (I) and Janata people?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: Conditions in Dandakaranya are very satisfactory as is evident from the fact that from out of about 1.20 lakh deserters, more than one lakh have already returned. They are doing their job peacefully and everything is alright. I do not think the hon. Member has the latest information.

श्री आर० एन० कुरील : एक तरफ जब कोई जानवर या बिड़िया भी मारी जाती है, तो वह एक इन्टरनेशनल इश्यू बन जाता है, लेकिन जब इन्सानों को इस तरह से गोलियों से भूना जा रहा है, तो उस के बारे में सरकार क्या करने जा रही है? उन के साथ इन्सानियत से नीचे गिर कर व्यवहार होता है, वे बेचारे थोड़े धीरे भूखे हैं मगर पुलिस उन्हें गोलियों से मारे धीरे उन पर अत्याचार करे, देश के लिये इस से ज्यादा शर्म की बात धीरे क्या हो सकती है? सरकार इस के लिये क्या ठोस कदम उठाने जा रही है?

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : मैं अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि इस सवाल का सम्बन्ध वेस्ट बंगाल गवर्नमेंट के प्रदेशी मामलात से है।

SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI: Has it come to the notice of the Government that the main problem in Dandakaranya arises because of dual control. The Dandakaranya Development Authority is only a developmental authority. It has no rights so far as allotment of land, giving of patta rights and other things are concerned Has the Government thought of bringing about some coordination between DDA and the West Bengal Government?

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: That is, in fact, being done. In fact, these desertions took place after years of their having got settled over there. As I say, after the whole rehabilitation process had been gone through, after complete scale of rehabilitation had been provided, years and years, after that these desertions took place. But we are taking them back and settling them and there is complete coordination between the DDA and the Government.

Postal Accounts in Haryana

*284. SHRIMATI MRINAL GORE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of an article in the 'Current' weekly dated 10th February, 1979 giving details of some postal accounts in Haryana, the withdrawals and deposits;

(b) whether Government have ascertained as to whether these accounts are fictitious;

(c) whether the postal authorities have observed all the rules and regulations in the deposits and withdrawal of amounts to and from these accounts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEV SAI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government are aware of this article.

(b) A statement is placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

(c) and (d). Out of the 49 accounts detailed in the 'Current' Weekly of 10th February, 1979, in 13 accounts deposits in excess of the prescribed maximum of Rs. 25,000/- were accepted in contravention of Post Office Savings Bank Rules. Further, in one out of these 13 cases, two accounts were opened irregularly in the name of the same depositor in the same post office. These transactions were made from 1973 to 1976.

Statement

The Income Tax Department is investigating cases where deposits of Rs. 50,000 and above have been made in the Haryana Post Offices in March/April, 1974.

Enquiries have been completed in 38 out of 85 cases of deposits of Rs. 5 lakhs and above. On the basis of these investigations, the following three cases involving deposits of Rs. 145 lakhs have been found where the deposits could not be regarded as belonging to the persons in whose names they were made.