

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, 3rd May, 1955

The Lok Sabha met at Half-past Ten
of the Clock

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

10-39 A.M.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

PUBLIC DEBT (COMPENSATION BONDS)
RULES, 1954, AND PUBLIC DEBT
(ANNUITY CERTIFICATES)
RULES, 1954

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following papers, under sub-Section (3) of Section 28 of the Public Debt Act, 1944:

(i) The Public Debt (Compensation Bonds) Rules, 1954, published in the Ministry of Finance Notification No. S.R.O. 2754, dated the 18th August, 1954. [Placed in Library. See No. S—161/55.]

(ii) The Public Debt (Annuity Certificates) Rules, 1954, published in the Ministry of Finance Notification No. S.R.O. 2840, dated the 25th August, 1954. [Placed in Library. See No. S—162/55.]

COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION THIRD REPORT

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy (Salem): I beg to present the Third Report of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation.

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ELECTION TO COMMITTEE

INDIAN CENTRAL ARECANUT COMMITTEE

Mr. Speaker: I have to inform the House that the following Members have been elected to serve on the Indian Centre Arecanut Committee:

- (1) Shri A. M. Thomas.
- (2) Shri Basanta Kumar Das.
- (3) Shri A. K. Gopalan.

STATEMENT RE: REDUCTIONS IN IMPORT DUTIES ON COTTON TEXTILES FROM U.K.

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): Sir, I place on the Table of the House a copy of a notification issued today by the Ministry of Finance under Section 23 of the Sea Customs Act making certain reductions in the import duties on cotton textiles. [Placed in Library. See No. S—164/55.]

The House will recall that in the Budget of 1953 we raised the duties on cotton textiles to very high levels on revenue considerations. On goods of British manufacture, these duties ranged between 60 and 80 per cent. ad valorem. The United Kingdom Government have repeatedly represented to us that our duties are prohibitive and it is a fact that imports of cotton textiles into India have been small in the last two years. In this connection, the United Kingdom Government have also drawn attention to the fact that Indian textiles are subject to no import duty at all in the United Kingdom.

Government have examined the whole problem in close consultation with the leading Millowners' Associations and are satisfied that the reduced duties specified in the Notification will

[Shri C. D. Deshmukh]

cause no damage to the domestic industry. The Millowners' Associations have also accepted this view.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WORKING OF THE
KOSI PROJECT

Shri Kasliwal (Kotah-Jhalawar): Sir, under Rule 216, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Irrigation and Power to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Recent press reports making allegations against the working of the Kosi Project."

The Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power (Shri Nanda): Sir, with your permission I make a statement regarding the Kosi Project.

My attention has been drawn to some press reports expressing doubts regarding the technical soundness of the Kosi scheme, the eastward swing of the river at Baghjora, the role of public co-operation and the expeditious completion of flood embankments. I have kept the House informed of developments in respect of this scheme from time to time. I have thought it necessary now to apprise the House of the latest position regarding these aspects of the project in question.

It has been alleged that the present Kosi scheme is not technically sound. The scheme drawn up by the Central Water and Power Commission in November, 1953, was the result of detailed and prolonged investigations carried out since 1946. An Advisory Committee including several Chief Engineers and a Hydraulic Research Expert was appointed to scrutinise the project in December, 1953, and they reported that it would provide protection against flood damage for a reasonable period. I sent the Chairman, Central Water and Power Commission and a senior engineer of the Commis-

sion to China in the beginning of May, 1954, to study the various flood control measures on the rivers of that country. A careful study for a period of two months, of the flood control measures adopted in that country convinced them that the 1953 Kosi scheme was sound and was consistent with the experience gained on similar rivers in China, and that only a few minor modifications, like increasing the free board of the embankments, were necessary. These have been incorporated in the scheme. We have also consulted eminent foreign experts. Mr. Wang Hu Chang, Chief Engineer in the Ministry of Water Conservancy of China, who visited the Kosi Project area in January, 1955, endorsed the scheme as drawn up. Two American flood control experts, who recently studied the project, have expressed the opinion that the present plan had been devised after careful study by competent engineers and that it appeared to be the best of the several possibilities each of which had certain disadvantages.

In addition to the western and eastern embankments on both sides of the Kosi downstream of the barrage, the scheme provides for earthen banks both on east and west upstream of the barrage stretching to sufficiently high level to prevent inundation by the river. The eastern bank stretches for about 23 miles upstream of the barrage and serves to close a number of spills taking off from the river during high floods. Last year's floods in Kosi were the highest on record for a number of years and resulted in some of the eastern spills being abnormally active. Perhaps this caused some fear among the local people and exaggerated versions appeared even suggesting that the river was going to take a eastward swing, and that the project would become infructuous if the eastern flood bank was not completed and other measures undertaken before the monsoon. The fact is that the engineers had already included in their programme the construction of the eastern flood bank upstream of the barrage, but their main objective was