

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

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LOK SABHA

Wednesday, 22nd February, 1956

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

11-48 A.M.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

INCURSION BY PAKISTAN ARMY INTO
CHHAD BET IN RANN OF KUTCH

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have received a notice of an adjournment motion from Shri Vallatharas. What is his source of information?

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): The news has appeared in all the papers today and it is said that the matter is under the consideration of Government.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am asking the Government.

Shri A. M. Thomas (Ernakulam): What is the subject-matter?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I shall read it out.

"The very serious situation caused by the fact that a regular heavily armed section of the Pakistan Army had moved into and entrenched in suitable positions on or about 19th February, 1956 in the 35 mile pasture island of Chhad Bet in Rann of Kutch in Indian Territory with the avowed intention of occupying and holding the territory as Pakistan's own and are requiring the grazers to pay the grazing fees to Pakistan and not to the authorities of Kutch, and that there had been either inadequate or no efforts at all to check and push back the army and to safeguard the territory effectively."

I have received a notice from Shri Gurupadaswamy also on the same

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matter but in different language. It reads:

"The serious threat caused to the territorial integrity of India as a result of the trespass and unprovoked attack on the Indian military patrol with automatic weapons in Chhad 'bet' a thirty-five mile pasture island in the Rann of Kutch on Sunday the 19th February, 1956."

12 NOON

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): It is true that there was this incursion into Indian territory at this place called Chhad. The facts so far reported by the Chief Commissioner of Kutch are more or less simple and as follows:

I might mention that this place

Chhad is an area which is for part of the year under water. It is not an inhabited area and during the monsoon season for about four months it is under water and then for the rest of the year it is uninhabited grazing area surrounded by sand. This is a place where there is some grass, so that the question of possession really means the question of grazing rights there. There is no doubt about it that it is a part of India and possession has been exercised by India and we have been giving grazing rights to contractors who take their camels there for grazing purposes. Some attempt was made on behalf of Pakistan in the course of last year or so to state that this was disputed territory and belonged to them. We pointed out to them that this was an absolutely unjustifiable and baseless claim. Since then the practice has been for a police or sometimes military patrol of ours to go there about once a week. This time a police patrol went there in the ordinary course on the 17th of this month. They seemed to have just observed some activity on the other side and they reported it on their return. A day or two later, a military patrol went. It went on the 18th evening and it camped at some distance away and next morning went to Chhad 'bet'. On the 19th at about 11.00 hours, 400 yards

[Shri Jawaharlal Nehru] from Chhad 'bet', the Pakistanis, who apparently occupied positions on the other side and were equipped with automatic weapons, opened fire—L.M.G. machine gun fire. One sepoy was wounded in the stomach and as he was being taken away, two others were wounded by this fire and three camels were killed in this action. The patrol returned to Kagda and the casualties were taken to the hospital. Two of them are serious and have been removed to Bombay for further treatment. It is not known—naturally we do not quite know—what the casualties on the other side were.

These are the facts reported to us. It certainly is a serious matter, not serious in the sense of any big scale military action, but the seriousness is the incursion into our territory by Pakistan, and naturally the Government of India will take necessary action in the matter.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore) : May I ask for one clarification? The Prime Minister stated that it is a very serious matter because it is an incursion into our territory. May I tell him that it is a serious infringement of our sovereignty and this is not the first time that such an incursion has taken place? This is one of the series of incidents by which Pakistan has tried to violate our territory and our sovereignty. May I ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the seriousness of the whole question, he would consider the question of taking some positive measures such as seeking to appoint a commission of arbitration or enquiry to go into the whole question once for all?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru : No, Sir. We do not propose to appoint any committee of enquiry or arbitration as the hon. Member suggests. We shall take other measures.

Shri V. G. Deshpande (Guna) : What are those other measures?

Shri Vallatharas : From the nature of action taken by Pakistan it appears that they have intended to occupy this territory permanently and never yield to the Indian Authorities, and it is not an ordinary intrusion which will come and go out. In view of the fact that Pakistan has taken a definite stand and has stationed a great portion of the Army also for this purpose, may I know the numerical strength of that army and the nature of the strength of

their weapons, how many miles they have covered and whether it is a fact that they have collected grazing fees from the residents or compelled them on pain of certain punishment or some such thing?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru : The hon. Member wants me to give full details about the Pakistani force.

Shri Vallatharas : Deployed in that particular incursion.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru : I am wholly unable to do that. And as for the miles covered, it is measured in yards and not in miles. It is 35 square miles in area and it is a waste area. They are not standing all over the area but they are in the middle of the area. I cannot say, at least I have not at present got the information.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly) : May I know if the Pakistani troops have withdrawn or are still persisting in their wrongful occupation of our territory?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru : I presume they are still there.

Shri V. G. Deshpande : What are the other measures the Prime Minister proposes to take in order to stop this trouble?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker : Other measures than arbitration, other strong measures—the Prime Minister has said that. It is no use disclosing all those measures now though hon. Members are anxious to have the same.

In view of the statement made by the hon. Prime Minister and the action that is being sought to be taken, I do not think it is necessary to pursue this matter.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The Minister of Home Affairs (Pandit G. B. Pant) : I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following papers :

- (1) A copy of the agreement dated the 14th May, 1954, entered into between the President of India and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 306