

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, January 6, 1976/Pausa 16,
1897 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Postponement of General Elections

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*1. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE:

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE
AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased
to state:

(a) whether Government have
decided to postpone general elections
to Parliament and Assemblies in some
States which were scheduled to be held
in 1976; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE
AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
(SHRI H. R. GOKHALE): (a) and
(b). No decision about the holding of
general elections to the House of the
People and the Legislative Assemblies
of certain States due in early
1976, has been taken so far by the
Government.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I would
like to know, before taking a final
decision in this regard, whether the
Government would see that emer-
gency is removed and all political
parties will be given a free oppor-
tunity for canvassing and propagat-
ing?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE: It is a
hypothetical question. Firstly, if the
elections are not to be held—I say
because Government has not taken
any decision—then naturally emer-
gency is also one of the reasons why
they should not be held, apart from
the other reasons. Therefore, I can-
not anticipate and say anything just
now.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I would
like to know whether a final decision
is likely to be taken during this
session regarding this and discussion
will take place in the Parliament?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE: Yes.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: I
would like to know whether the
attention of the Government has been
drawn to a resolution adopted by the
AICC in Chandigarh in regard to the
postponement of General Elections
for one year? If the attention of the
Government has been drawn, then
what is the reaction of the Govern-
ment?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE: The
attention of the Government has
been drawn to the resolution of the
AICC. The reaction of the Govern-
ment can be known when the Govern-
ment makes a decision. Ultimately, it
is the House which has to decide.

SHRI D. N. TIWARY: There are
several by-elections pending in Bihar
and the members had resigned long
ago, say, a year before. May I know
whether they will be held or not?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE: I cannot
answer the question straight away.
As far as I know, it will depend on

whether the life of the House be extended or not.

SHRI N. K. SANGHI: May I know whether the Government had any assessment of the results of the inflationary trends in the country by holding general elections and also similar impact, in case the general elections and the Assemblies' elections are held together?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE: If I understood the hon. Member correctly, I think, he wants to know whether the Government will take into account the effects of elections on inflationary trends. Certainly, amongst other factors, this will be taken into account.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: I stood up for asking a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the House would be interested in taking up as many questions as possible. There will be more and more questions and less and less supplementary questions. Next question.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: We are not allowed to put any questions.

Construction of New Broad Gauge Bhavanagar-Tarapore Railway Line

*2. **SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bhavanagar-Tarapore broad gauge line in Gujarat will be constructed soon;

(b) if so, when; and

(c) the reasons for the delay in the construction of this long-awaited new Railway line, the surveys of which are already completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) to (c). Final location engineering-cum-traffic survey for the proposed line is in progress and is expected to be completed by June this year. The proposal will be processed further after the survey reports are received and examined.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: Although the Minister has said that the surveys are now going to be completed soon, that is, by June this year, may I know from him whether it is a fact that the proposed Bhavanagar-Tarapore railway line had really seeds as far back as in 1882 when the then Government thought of having some kind of broad-gauge link between Saurashtra and the rest of the country. Subsequently, there have been surveys in 1953 and 1957 and again in 1966. May I know how long the Government will take in having these surveys one after another and coming to any decision? Further, I want to know whether it is a fact that the Gujarat Government has already promised the Centre to make good any loss for five years in traffic revenues and whether the Government of Gujarat has also promised free land and, if so, why are the things being delayed?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: It is true that there have been surveys earlier also, in 1956 and 1957 and the cost estimated at that time was about Rs. 7.59 crores. Subsequently, the matter was dropped and the traffic survey was again taken up in 1966. As I have said in my reply, the engineering-cum-traffic survey will be completed in June this year. It is also a fact that the State Government has made an offer of free land and also to meet the shortfall in traffic earnings for a period of five years. Further details have been asked for from the State