

MR. SPEAKER : The question is about Naval Training Institute.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Since Chilka is being silted up so heavily its depth will not be enough for ships unless they do proper dredging.

MR. SPEAKER : This question is about the Institute.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : How can the naval crafts go to Chilka unless it is sufficiently deep ? It is a pertinent point.

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry, it is not relevant.

Trade with East Pakistan

*14. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are contemplating to take steps to normalise trade relations with East Pakistan ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) and (b). It is the policy of the Government of India to continue making efforts to normalise relations with Pakistan, including the resumption of trade relations. However, the response of the Government of Pakistan to our initiatives has not so far been positive.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : In view of the changed circumstances, will the government tell us that for ensuring free travel, trade and cultural relations they will extend recognition and material help to the Provisional Government of Bangla Desh ? If not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) : I am sorry, it does not arise out of this. This question relates to trade.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : It is a burning issue. Sardar Swaran Singh is a

very powerful man. He can express his views boldly. He can tell us the policy of the government.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I would request the hon. Member not to ask this question at this stage.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Why have they allowed partial trade with Bangla Desh and Meghalaya ? For four days a week crafts are visiting Meghalaya to carry limestone. So, why do they not approve normal trade relations with other borders of Bangla Desh and India ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I would like to clarify the position. Our stand throughout has been that we are all for having trade with Pakistan, including East Pakistan and it is the Government of Pakistan which has been very stoutly resisting our efforts to normalise trade. So, I do not know what is the relevance of the question that is put by the hon. Member.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Trading is taking place at the Meghalaya border between India and Bangla Desh. Crafts are plying four days a week to carry lime stone from Indian territory. How is it that you are allowing this to happen at one end of the country and not at another end ?

MR. SPEAKER : He has answered the question.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I would allow it anywhere. The hon. Member, I am sure, is familiar with the problem across Meghalaya. If, for instance, we can sell some limestone at Meghalaya or at any other place, we will be happy to do that.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Why not cement ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : We are prepared to sell anything. We are not coming in the way. So, he cannot say, "If you are permitting it at one point, why are you not permitting it at another point ?" I am not coming in the way. It is at the receiving end that difficulties are there. We should appreciate it in the proper perspective.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : I am sorry, you have to convince us.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : I am so happy that the hon. Minister is trying to normalise trade relations with Pakistan. Now a different situation has taken place. I would like to know whether the same trade relations will continue with the newly formed government there or whether they will await General Yahya Khan's orders. According to the newspapers— I do not know how far it is correct ; the hon. Minister knows more than I do—there is a provisional government there. So, I would like to know as to what will be our trade relations with Bangla Desh : whether they will be at the instance of General Yahya Khan or at the instance of the new Military Administrator or at the instance of the head of the provisional government in East Pakistan.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I would like to reiterate that we have never come in the way of trade at Government level or at private level, at any level. Therefore, if at any time, there is any opening for resuming trade, we will welcome that.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Sir, I seek your protection. I know, it is an awkward question.

MR. SPEAKER : I think, this question was very embarrassing.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : There is a government formed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the people of East Pakistan in Bangla Desh under Major Jia Khan. I want to know whether the same trade relations will continue and they will toe the line of imperialists headed by General Yahya Khan. That is exactly what I want to know. We want our trade relations to be normalised with Bangla Desh.

MR. SPEAKER : Your question refers to the Government of Pakistan. I wonder how any other question is relevant.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : The question was dated 16th March.

Ban on Over-flights of Pakistani Civil and Military Planes

*15. **DR. KARNI SINGH :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the handing over of the two skyjackers, who recently skyjacked an Indian Airlines plane to Lahore and later destroyed it, was made an express condition by Government for lifting the ban on the overflights of Pakistani civil and military planes ;

(b) whether India has now agreed to Pakistan's holding an inquiry into the matter and is no more pressing for the return of the two skyjackers ; and

(c) if the replies to parts (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, the reasons for this vital change in the Government's stand over the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) :

(a) In view of the rejection by Pakistan of our protest against and destruction of our aircraft, and of our demands, the suspension of over-flights by Pakistani civil and military planes continues. The position can be reconsidered if Pakistan pays compensation for the loss and damage caused to India, takes suitable action against the two hijackers and give assurances for the future.

(b) Pakistan has not asked for our agreement for holding the inquiry, and no question of our agreement therefore arises. We continue to press for action against the hijackers.

(c) Does not arise.

DR. KARNI SINGH : I would like to know if Government will give a categorical assurance to this House that no flights of Pakistan planes will be allowed over India until such time as compensation is paid and the hijackers are returned to India and that our stand will be so strong that we will not falter one way or the other as a result of this trouble that is taking place in Bangla Desh.