

401 Re: Attacks on VAISAKHA 26, 1901 (SAKA) Reported refusal by 402
coloured people refugees at Marich Jhapi (W. Bengal)
Britain (M) to go back to Danda karanya (CA)

may be extended, and the sitting of the House may be extended for half an hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is a fixed time.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: It has happened many times.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We can take it up later.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: If you go on talking like this for hours and hours...

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It will be completed, but not just now.

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: How can I be deprived of my right to speak?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You are not deprived; it is only a question of time, because there is a discussion put down for a fixed time.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrack-pore): This has never happened that a calling attention has been suspended in the middle.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Can you cite any precedent when a calling attention motion has been suspended in the middle and some other matter taken up?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We will take up the calling attention after this discussion is over. Mr. Bosu.

18.36 hrs.

MOTION RE: ATTACKS ON COLOURED PEOPLE IN BRITAIN

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House is deeply concerned to note that coloured people in Britain are facing vicious attacks from different forces, namely, National Front, British Government and its police force and recommends

that an all party Parliamentary fact finding delegation be sent immediately to Britain in order to collect first hand information with the object of apprising the House and at the same time advising the Government for remedial measures."

I have given an amendment which has been circulated and I move it. I beg to move:

That in the motion, add at the end--

"such as restricting British Investors in India from operating in South Africa and Rhodesia where racialism is practised."

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): It is a very important motion on a subject which is of concern to the whole country. The hon. Foreign Minister is at this moment busy with a debate in the Rajya Sabha, and he has requested me to propose that the discussion on this motion may be taken up in the first week of the next session. I hope the hon. Member who has moved the motion will have no objection.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I agree.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: So, it is postponed to the next session. Now, we shall continue the discussion on the calling attention motion.

18.38 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE
—Contd.

REFUSAL BY REFUGEES AT MARICH-JHAPI (WEST BENGAL) TO GO BACK TO DANAKARANYA—Contd.

श्री एम० ए० हुताब बलहाज (बखिरहाट)
श्रीमान्, मैंकी सहोदय ने अपनी उत्तर में बताया है कि 25,000 परिवार स्वकारण से चले गए हैं और उनमें से 19,699 बाधित चले गए हैं। बाकी रह गए हैं 2,000 लेकिन अगर हम इन बाधितों की देखते हैं तो 8,000 परिवार रह गए हैं। बाकी 3,000

[श्री एम० ए० हनान अलहा ज]

फैमिलीज कहाँ गई, इसका पता नहीं है। वह 3,000 परिवार हवा में गायब हो गए, खुदा ही यह जानता है। मंत्री महोदय ने अपने बकनव्य में बताया है :-

"The Government of India have already advised the State Government that it will be best not to resort to coercive steps, but to persuade the deserters to return to the respective rehabilitation sites or work camps."

पश्चिम बंगाल के सबसे ज्यादा सर्कुलेशन वाले पेपर "आनन्द बाजार पत्रिका" में एक रिपोर्ट छपी है। उस रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि 3,600 पुलिसमैन ने उस आईलैंड को घेर लिया, 2,000 सी० पी० एम० के काइसलें ने 5,000 शरणार्थियों को वहाँ से भगाया, उनकी 1,000 शीपडियों को तोड़ दिया और 300 को जला दिया। उन्होंने 800 को जकड़ी किया और 200 को गिरफ्तार भी किया। इसके लिये गवर्नमेंट ने 30 लाख रुपये किये थे, पश्चिम बंगाल गवर्नमेंट ने 50 लाख रुपये पर किये थे, जिनका किराया एक-एक लाख पर 7,000 रुपये के हिसाब से 14 लाख रुपये होता है। मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि उन लोगों को शक्तिपूर्वक वापिस भेजने की कोशिश की जायेगी। मैंने अभी जो रिपोर्ट पढ़ी है, क्या मंत्री महोदय को उसके बारे में मान्य है ?

निर्माण और आवास तथा पूर्ति और पुनर्वास मंत्री (श्री सिकन्दर बख्त) : बुनियादी तौर पर जिन सबाल पर यह कार्लिंग प्रदेशन उठाया गया है, उसका सम्बन्ध केन्द्रीय सरकार से ही नहीं। वहाँ जो प्रब्लेम्स लाएंगे प्रार्थर का मामला है, बराहुरास्त उसका ताल्लुक वेस्ट बंगाल गवर्नमेंट से है। हमने खाली इतना बताया है कि जो खबर उनसे ले सके वह हाउस के सामने रख सके। हमने उनसे यह खबर ली है 15 तारीख तक कि 1050 फैमिलीज घा गई हैं जो कि भेजी जा रही हैं। और आज सुबह खबर मिली कि 1710 फैमिलीज वहाँ से घा गई हैं, 300 के करीब रह गई हैं। यह इतना वहाँ से मिली है लेकिन और किसी क्लिफ की इतना हमारे पास नहीं है।

श्री एम० ए० हनान अलहाज : 25 हजार परिवार में 19 हजार वापिस आये गए, जो उनमें कितनी फैमिलीज के सदस्य थे ?

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : जितनी फैमिलीज हमारे यहाँ से गई उसका, शिस्त हवा पर फल है, जितनी फैमिलीज वापिस आई उसका हिसाब हमारे यहाँ मौजूद है। तारीख-आफ्री में कितनी हैं वेस्ट

बंगाल गवर्नमेंट के पास उसका हिसाब मौजूद है, बाकी हिसाब हमारे पास नहीं है।

*SHRI A. K. SAHA (Vishnupur):
Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we the Leftists have always been fighting for the cause of the Refugees and will continue the fight in future also. But today some vested interests are trying to pose as the friends of the refugees and are inciting them against the leftist Government of West Bengal. They are the real enemies of the refugees.

After coming to power the Janata Government have taken steps and are still continuing their efforts to solve the refugee problem and I must congratulate them for that. They have also extended the date from 31st March to 31st May. Only some refugees are yet to go back. If under the incitement of a faction of the Janata Party, the Congress Party or the vested interests, it takes some more time for these refugees to go back to Dandakarnya then I would hope the Central Government would kindly accommodate them.

A little while ago Shri Hannan Sahib was saying many things. He says he comes from that area but I would like to say that perhaps he does not know the boundaries of his own constituency. He said that the leftists Government had tortured the refugees and they were beaten up by the police. All these are not true. These are the words of Ananda Bazar Patrika which has been conspiring to oust the leftist Government in West Bengal right from the time it came to power.

श्री एम० ए० हनान अलहाज : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मि० साहा ने कहा है कि मैंने जो कहा है वह "मिथ्या" है। शब्द "मिथ्या" मतपार्लियामेन्ट्री है इस को कार्यवाही से निष्काज दिया जाय।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Wherever the word 'untrue' occurred, if it

is unparliamentary because it depends upon the context, we shall remove it. We shall see the records.

*SHRI A. K. SAHA: Marich Jhapi is the protected area. No one can enter the place without permission. No one can fell trees but trees have been felled and *Bheries* have been set up. Shri Prafulla Sen says that there is no law and order. Sir, if today 10,000 persons want to settle down on the grounds near the Boat Club in New Delhi, without any permission will it be allowed? Beyond Marich Jhapi is the international border and beyond it is Bangladesh. It is a sensitive area. If the refugees go there without any permission and set up a parallel Government and challenge the State Government then will the State Government keep quiet? If the people had settled down on the Boat Club ground near the Parliament House then will the Central Government keep quiet? The Central Government had rightly said that the refugees will have to go back to Dandakarnya. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: He is coming to my rescue. I cannot understand it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have been understanding. But the whole problem is, he is saying things to which you need not reply.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: There is not a single question in the whole speech.

SHRI A. K. SAHA: I have already put the question.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: What is the question?

SHRI A. K. SAHA: I would like to know whether the Central Government would extend the date beyond 31st May if it becomes necessary to effect the return of the remaining refugees to Dandakarnya?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He wants to know whether the Central Government will give more time to the State Government.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: In fact, the time has not yet been formally extended after it has once been extended upto 31st March 1979. But the main question is, after 31st May 1979, if the people come back to be re-settled, they will lose their khariff cultivation. Therefore, they must come back before 31st May 1979, as proposed by the West Bengal Government.

SHRI S. K. SARKAR (Joynagar): Sir, I have been running temperature for the last three days. So, I am requesting you to allow me to read my questions.

At the outset, I would like to state that I am that unfortunate M.P. of that cursed region of Marichjhanpi. It is a cursed place, because it has given shelter to about 10,000 innocent refugees, who are not only poor proletariat but are also harijans..... *(Interruptions)* Their only fault is that they tried to make their own rehabilitation, without seeking any help from the Government, on a piece of marshy forest tidal land, which was already denuded by the Government of West Bengal, for plantation purpose a decade back. Perhaps, this fault of those poor harijan refugees seems to the Governments of both the State and the Centre an unpardonable offence and crime.

SHRI A. K. SAHA: Sir, he is a senior Member and yet he is reading his speech... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He has already taken permission for that, saying that he is running temperature.

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: Otherwise, how are they being punished by resorting to all sorts of tortures and cruelties, which surpassed the cruel-

[Shri S. K. Sarkar]
ties of fascists and Nazis of the past.
Women were molested and raped....
(Interruptions) I am showing you the
pictures. This is a picture which I
would like to present, which was pub-
lished in Onlooker....(Interruptions)
There was a news item in the Indian
Express, where also it is stated.....
(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not
know why everybody is getting excit-
ed.

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: Women were
molested and raped, old people and
children were beaten and killed by
firing and wounded by tear-gas and
innocent persons are drowned in the
rivers as per the instructions of the
Government of West Bengal. The
West Bengal Government promulgated
section 144 around the area and no-
including myself, MLAs and journa-
lists, was allowed to go there. A
citizen cannot be prevented from go-
ing anywhere in India, except on
defence installation.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What is
defence limitation?

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: If he could
not follow that, I cannot help it....
(Interruptions) Once, Shri K. K.
Maitra and other MLAs of the Janata
Party were arrested, when they tried
to go to see this horrible sight. The
horrible fact is that they imposed
economic blockade against the poor
refugees in such a way with the help
of thousands of police and motor
launch that the poor refugees were
prevented from getting a trickle of
food or a drop of drinking water, even
though they were hungry and thirsty.
A reign of terror was let loose. This
attempt can be compared with a
mouse trap by which mouse is killed
mercilessly. The civilised Govern-
ment is expected to behave in this
way. Fundamental rights of a citizen
of India are thus being denied by the
Government of West Bengal as a

torn waste paper. Even the Britishers
did not dare to apply such a barbaric
method of economic blockade against
the freedom fighters in their 200 years
of imperialist rule.

We have been constantly trying to
draw the attention of the Central
Government through you and by
representation to save these hapless
and homeless refugees from the calcu-
lated atrocities perpetrated by the
State Government, but we failed
miserably. Both the State and Central
Governments have taken it as a pres-
tige issue and as a result thereof,
these poor refugees had to die silently—
not less than 1200 in numbers—out
of starvation apart from death by
killing and tortures by the police.
This is not contradicted till today. Our
Prime Minister sent a team of three
members from Lok Sabha to study the
problems on the spot. They submitted
a report without contradicting the
allegations.

May I know whether it is a fact that
when the team started for Marich
Jhapi by motor launch they were
illegally intercepted three times and
their motor launch was tied by ropes
to prevent it from going there peace-
fully and whether it is also a fact that
upto 16-2-1979 the number of deaths
by starvation is 43, the number of
deaths by various diseases and by
suicide is 29, the number of missing
on the date of firing on 31-1-79 is 128,
the quantity of foodgrains snatched by
police is 64 quintals and 17 Kgs., the
number of boats seized by police is
60, the number of persons arrested on
31-1-79 is 52, the number of those
persons who went out in search of
food and arrested is 30, the total money
snatched by police is Rs. 2,778/- the
number of deaths due to police firing
is 12, the number of ladies raped by
police is 4, the number of tubewells
broken down by police is 2 and the
palm candy shop that is demolished is
one, and whether the Minister has got
information that Shri K. K. Maitra.

Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly held a press conference on 13-5-79 accusing the State Government of the following facts— that since January 24, in Marich Jhapi 131 died out of starvation, 239 died out of eating non-edibles like grass and roots of plants, 128 persons are missing due to clash with police and 500 persons were in jail. Further he stated that 150 persons were wounded due to lathi charge and tear gas and 24 women were assaulted.

Lastly, I would like to know whether it is a fact that the State Government allowed C.P.(M) members to occupy a forest land of 3,500 acres in the same region at Jharkhali under Basanti Police Station two months back for distributing that land amongst their own members cutting the jungles illegally and no steps have been taken by the State Government and the Central Government to stop these illegal acts (*Interruptions*). It would not be irrelevant if I accuse that because the refugees are all Harijans, they are being denied recognition for their rehabilitation, while hundreds of unauthorised colonies around Calcutta have been recognised because those colonies belong to general category of people. Would the Government of India come forward to view the matter sympathetically with human touch as suggested in the report submitted by the three-member team so that the inhuman tortures are stopped forthwith and ultimately this Marich Jhapi colony is recognised which they have built by their sweat and blood?

SHRI SIKANDAR BHAKT: I request the Chair's direction because all that has been related by the hon. Member by way of a question neither flows from the calling attention nor has any relationship with the functioning of my Ministry.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): The statement of the hon. Minister, I am happy to note, reflects the iden-

tity of approach to the problem between the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal, because it is the Union Government which agreed that the Government of West Bengal has got no opportunity or scope to rehabilitate the 120,000 Dandakaranya deserters who swamped West Bengal in the early part of 1978. I am happy to note that the Union Government and the Government of West Bengal have got an identical approach to the problem, and they have agreed that they should go back to Dandakaranya.

The statement really reflects the concern and anxiety of the Government of India for the hapless refugees who have been politically misled to desert their project area of rehabilitation and made a pawn in the hands of others. I am really happy that the Government of India have got sympathy for these hapless refugees. So far as the West Bengal Government is concerned, they are equally sympathetic.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: Their sympathy is shown with bullets and lathis.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I think the Professor knows etiquette.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please do not get excited. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The West Bengal Government has sought the rehabilitation of the unfortunate refugees within our state and outside. and we really feel sorry that they had to suffer miseries of various kinds, they had to suffer starvation etc. The West Bengal Government is aware of it and, as has been reported, about Rs. 4 crores have been spent for providing shelter, food, clothing and medical facilities to them and milk to their children, despite the fact that West Bengal suffered

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from an extreme flood in that particular year, despite the fact that the West Bengal Government was under tremendous financial constraint. Yet, the State Government, of course with the co-operation of the Government of India, did their best to do whatever was possible for rendering relief and mitigating their miseries and sufferings.

But, so far as the statement is concerned, I am really shocked to find that the hon. Minister could not keep himself immune from the partisan political approach of his partymen who had been to Marich Jhapi in a team. It was not a parliamentary delegation, it was merely a team of three Janata Party Members of this hon. House who took the trouble or visiting Marich Jhapi. Since this report has been mentioned, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would allow me to make certain observations about that Report. I possess the Report. The Report has got four aspects.

19.00 hrs.

One aspect is that there was interference by the Government or the administrative officers while they were proceeding to Marich Jhapi. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has apprised the Prime Minister of the circumstances under which the District Magistrate of the 24-Parghanas had to take certain precautionary measures and you would recall that the Prime Minister directed his party men, the Janata Party leaders in West Bengal that no prominent Member of the Janata party should accompany the team. He has directed that the local West Bengal Janata Party leaders should not accompany the team. It should be a team consisting of the Members of this hon. House.

AN HON. MEMBER: Far from truth.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I say that this was instruction given by the Prime Minister. Unfortunately, Morarjibhai leads a party which has got the least obedience or discipline.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The least regard for their leader.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I am not saying that. The Prime Minister did request the Janata Party Leadership of West Bengal that they should not accompany the team consisting of the Members of the Janata Parliamentary Party. You will be astonished to learn that the State Government... (Interruptions)

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: You ask him to put the question. (Interruptions) I had asked five questions.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I will have only one question. But allow me. I think I should have your protection. While he was speaking, I was a very patient listener. I think I should be allowed to put across my point of view.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Certainly.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The West Bengal Government wanted to have the privilege. . . (Interruptions) It wanted or desired to have the privilege of extending hospitality to the three hon. Members of this House. (Interruptions)

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: I had to arrange for the launch.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Has he got launches? How many launches does he possess? I am sorry that I do not know that the hon. member has got launches.

Any way, the West Bengal Government was very much respectful to the team. (Interruptions)

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: I can challenge you.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The West Bengal Government did extend their hospitality to the three hon. members of Parliament. Unfortunately the three hon. members did not accept the hospitality of the State Government and they made their own arrangement as admitted by our friend, Mr. Sarkar.

SHRI S. K. SARKAR: What is wrong in it?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: You say that you arranged for a launch.

The three hon. members of this House refused to accept the hospitality of the State Government and they accepted the hospitality of Mr. Sarkar. Therefore, I would say, the Chief Minister of the State of West Bengal has appraised the Prime Minister of the circumstances under which the administration had to take certain precautionary measures in his letter of the 31st March, 1979.

Secondly, a question has been raised whether there has been coercion, whether there has been force applied, for the evacuation of the refugees to go back to Dandakaranya. It needs a reply from the side of the Government of West Bengal.

I am referring to the report of the team. The report says that Marich Jhapi was not a dense forest but it looked like a plantation. As the hon. Minister has made the statement out of 1,20,000 families, 2,000 families chose to go deep in the Sunderbans and forcibly occupy the forest land of the Government of West Bengal. There is a Government of West Bengal which has received a massive mandate of the people. The West Bengal Government do declare that it has the authority to rule the State because they have got a massive mandate of the people. The report says that the *Udbastu Unnayan Shil*

Samiti has been a magnificent organisation, a strong organisation. What was the purpose of the organisation? It was for their survival. Survival against whom? Against the West Bengal Government, as they say.

As I have already mentioned, the Government of West Bengal and the Government of India want that the refugees should be properly rehabilitated at a proper place in Dandakaranya and not at Marich Jhapi. According to them, it is a dense forest and it is a very sensitive area, being an international border between India and Bangladesh. The Government has to take certain action. It was reported to the Prime Minister by the West Bengal Government giving an estimate as to the loss caused to the State Exchequer by felling the trees, the valuable timber trees and other forest material. The West Bengal Government has already reported it to the Prime Minister. Naturally, the State Government of West Bengal has got its authority and, in the interest of the State, in the interest of the forest wealth of the State—it is not only the forest wealth of the State but it is the wealth of the nation as a whole—if it is worth the name of the Government, the Government must take some strong action. What the West Bengal Government wanted to do was to establish its authority and to persuade them to go back to Dandakaranya and get themselves properly rehabilitated and settled.

As a matter of fact, it is only 300 families, according to the statement of the Minister, who are left and who are now preparing to go back to Dandakaranya. The West Bengal Government has made elaborate arrangements so that they may go to their place in Dandakaranya.

In this context, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India will take a proper note of the political situation prevailing in West Bengal and see that

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the Janata Party and its allies do not take action in order to malign the Government of West Bengal.

I also want to know whether the Government of India would assure that the Ministry concerned would examine the recommendations on Dandakaranya Project as have been mentioned in the 30th Report of the Estimates Committee, Sixth Lok Sabha, April 1979, and try to implement the recommendations of the Estimates Committee and create a proper climate conducive to rehabilitation and re-settlement of the Dandakaranya refugees, particularly the returnees. I have no time. I will only repeat that this Ministry should examine the Report of the Estimates Committee and take appropriate action so that a proper climate may be created at Dandakaranya for the proper settlement of the refugees, particularly the returnees from Marich Jhapi.

SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT: This Marich Jhapi question has been discussed earlier also, and the earlier Call Attention had exposed the futility of the question. I am really surprised to see the extent to which you could really bring your entire intelligence or agility to frame questions from whatever discussions have taken place.

There are two or three things that I would definitely like to mention. One is, the Dandakaranya Project was really conceived somewhere in 1958. In fact, the Project never got started for a long time; it did not get started even by 1960, and when it got started, the progress was only at a snail's pace. But I am really happy to inform this House that, during the last two years, the pace of progress of Dandakaranya Project has been accelerated. During the last few years, we have allocated Rs. 13 crores, whereas in the past, during all these years. GMGIPND—1123 LS—680.

the best allocation in a year was only about a crore and odd rupees. So, we have already taken the necessary steps to bring the Dandakaranya Project to a stage of completion as soon as possible.

The second thing that I want to repeat and assert—I have said this a number of times here—is that the desertions from Dandakaranya area was not on account of any failure on the part of the Rehabilitation Department. I am saying this from first-hand knowledge after a visit which I undertook myself along with the Ministers of West Bengal Government as well as the Ministers of Orissa Government. We visited a number of villages. We met the people individually. We met their deputations. There was not even a single person to come and say, 'We are leaving this place because we are dissatisfied or we have not been given relief which ought to have been provided'. (*Interruptions*).

And the third thing I would like to say is that things are not quite as innocent as they are depicted. There is the hand of Shri Satish Mandal belonging to Unnayinsil Samiti. Not only that, one of the Ministers has indulged in very irresponsible statements. It is not only an ordinary statement but his speech made a lot of difference when these desertions started. This is about Mr. Ram Chatterjee. The Government of India never intends to absolve him of this responsibility as also absolve the West Bengal Government of this responsibility.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned till 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.

19.16 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Half past Ten of the Clock on Thursday, May 17, 1979/Vaisakha 27, 1901 (Saka).