

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 29th February, 1996/10th
Phalguna, 1917 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Nehru Memorial Pavilion in Alleppey

*41. SHRI M.A. BABY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted the revised proposal regarding the Nehru Memorial Pavilion in Alleppey;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM) (SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c): Does not arise.

SHRI M.A. BABY: Sir, the question relates to the Nehru Memorial Pavilion in Alleppey. I don't know, Sir, whether anything associated with Pandit Jawahar Nehru has apparently become anathema for the present dispensation or not and if that be the case, whether it is the case with regard to the Kerala Government or whether it is the case with regard to the Central Government or whether it is the case with regard to both the Governments. Therefore, I would like to know, through you, Sir, from the hon. Minister whether there are any substantial reasons for the original project proposal of the Nehru Memorial Pavilion being rejected and on what ground the Central Government wanted the original project to be modified. As I understand,

Sir, in August, 1991, when the then Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism visited Kerala and participated in the Nehru Boat Race, which is a very remarkable tourist attraction in Kerala — when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the Prime Minister he happened to visit Kerala and to see the race; he got inspired and he, in fact, jumped into a boat and participated in the race and after his return he sent a trophy with his signature; that is how it has become Nehru Trophy Boat in Kerala—he assured that a pavilion dedicated to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would be built with a tourist complex as a part of that, so that more Indian and foreign tourists could be attracted. This was the assurance given by him at that point of time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you formulate your question.

SHRI M.A. BABY: Therefore, I want to know from the Minister what prevents the Central Government from modifying its own project and carrying it out and whether the Central Government will considering the historic importance of this, approach the State Government and whether the Central Government will persuade the State Government because politically both the Governments are in tune with each other, to give a revised project so that the project can be implemented.

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Sir, it is our commitment and we stand by our commitment that Rs. 35 lakhs have to be given for the Pavilion. The hon. Member will appreciate that the place where this Pavilion is to be constructed is in water. This Pavilion is to be used only for 6 hours in a year. So, what we had said was, "You give us a report, you send us a project and we will give you the money". In the initial stage they sent us a project worth Rs. 50 lakhs and we had asked the State Government to scale it down to our commitment of Rs. 35 lakhs.

After that they have said, "we will have to look into it and see whether we can have a project by which we can utilise it not just for 6 hours but throughout the year"

So, this correspondence is going on. In no way is this commitment going to be dishonoured. We are going to honour this commitment. We are waiting for the project to be revised and to be sent to us by the State Government. The hon. Member can rest assured that this will be done.

SHRI M.A. BABY: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister when exactly modification of the project was sought.

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Sir, this announcement was made in August, 1991. Then in September-October, 1991 they had sent a project worth Rs. 50 lakhs. We asked them to scale down the amount. Then again in March, 1992 we wrote to the State Government to give us a report. Now the latest is, in February, 1996 they told us that they were redoing everything and that they were coming up with a new project. They are looking into it. They want to see that it can be a floating restaurant and a pavilion which can be used throughout the year. The hon. Member must appreciate,—this is something on which we might seem to be going slow—he must remember, that ecology and environment, of which Kerala is so proud, have to be protected. We do not want to do anything for which we might regret for a long time to come.

SHRI M.A. BABY: This exercise had started in August, 1991. It cannot be part of a Five Year Plan project. We cannot take five years on such a small project.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Sir, it is not that there is something wrong on the part of the State Government or on the part of the Government of India. The then Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister,

when he visited Kerala, in his own judgement, said that he was ready to assist the State Government with an amount of Rs. 35 lakhs.

Subsequently, as my colleague has said, a proposal worth Rs. 50 lakhs was sent to us. The Department of Tourism told them that they were in a position to sanction only Rs. 35 lakhs. Subsequently, another proposal worth Rs. 87 lakhs was sent to us. But later on the State Government itself withdrew the proposal. I appreciated it. They said that it was not proper to spend this much amount just for six hours, so it was better to have a floating restaurant which could function for the rest of the year as a floating restaurant and for that particular event as a pavilion. Very recently, the State Government has taken a decision that instead of having a permanent structure at one place which could be used only for six hours, we should have a floating pavilion which could be used as a restaurant. It is not that we will just provide them only Rs. 35 lakhs. Once they come up with a new proposal for a floating restaurant in lieu of a permanent structure, we might enhance the money from our Department.

SHRI M.A. BABY: Sir, now I do not insist on their giving an assurance because both the State Government and the Central Government are going to change very soon.

SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Sir, there are so many centres in Kerala which attract a large number of tourists. It is very clear that these centres need special care for maintenance of beauty and attraction. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has got any proposal pending for the development of various tourist centres in Kerala.

SHRIMATI SUKHBANS KAUR: Sir, this is an ongoing process. Every year the State Government comes up with certain projects for which they want Central

assistance. We are helping them in all the projects. There is no doubt that Kerala is very beautiful place and it is attracting a lot of tourists. The Kerala Government is doing a lot of tourism. They are participating in all the foreign markets, festivals and fairs. We are providing them money for whatever projects they bring to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 42.

Introduction of Lok Pal Bill

*42. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to introduce the Lok Pal Bill in the current Session of the Parliament;

(b) if so, what are the salient feature of the proposed Bill; and

(c) what are the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

The Government propose to introduce the Lokpal Bill during the current Session of Parliament.

श्री विष्णु कान्त शास्त्री: माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या लोक पाल बिल बनाने के लिए कोई संयुक्त संसदीय समिति बनायी गयी थी और क्या उसकी सिफारिशें आ गई हैं? क्या पूर्व सरकार ने इस बिल को वापस लिया था? यदि हाँ, तो क्यों लिया था?

*"या बयासरजपि कअस अजरयअीत असेद पि रमा नीवि नि रमा यिसा बत 'मवज]जसमपय ऐअपर 'मअसरवज ।

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I am not going into the reasons why the former Government withdrew it or did not withdraw it. I am only saying that two discussions have taken place in this House as well as the other House during the present Government's tenure. We have given an assurance, Sir, that we are working on it. In fact, the Home Minister, in the last Session, had called a meeting of leaders of all political parties in both the Houses. They have given their opinions. I had also written to the leaders of the political parties in both the Houses. Forty-nine letters were sent. We got only five replies...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: The AIADMK has not received any letter... *(Interruptions)* It is one of the main parties.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am sorry. Forty-nine letters were sent. All the parties have acknowledged it. You have said it now. But, in the last Session, nobody mentioned that it was not received. We have received five replies, Sir, and I can say — I have also said this earlier in the House — what response we got.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: When did you write this letter?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: everybody got it ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: what was the date?

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Was it two years back?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It was sent last year itself...*(Interruptions)* It was during last May that it was written. I got the replies...*(Interruptions)* Sir, let him speak after I have finished...*(Interruptions)*

श्री विष्णु कान्त शास्त्री: येरा तो एक ही सवाल था, आप सीधा जवाब नहीं दे रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*