

of the Constitution by the President, for a further period of six months with effect from 19th July, 2009.

- (viii) General Discussion on Jharkhand Budget for 2009-10.
- (ix) Consideration and return of the Jharkhand Appropriation (No.2) Bill, 2009, after it is passed by Lok Sabha.
- (x) Consideration and passing of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2008.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation arising due to disturbance of peace in North Cachar Hills district of Assam

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Calling Attention to Matters of Urgent Public Importance. Shri Khekiko Zhimomi.

SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI (Nagaland): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to the situation arising due to disturbance of peace in the North Cachar Hills District of Assam.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the North Cachar Hills District of Assam with an area of 4,888 sq. km. is densely forested. It is sparsely populated, with a majority of the total population of 1.51 lakh (2001 Census) belonging to the Dimasa tribe. The other major tribes are Zemie Naga, Hmar and Kuki.

There has been ethnic tension in the NC Hills District between Zemi Naga tribes and Dimasas since March, 2009 following the killing of 4 Zemi Naga tribals in Mahur Sub-division between March 19 to 23, 2009. The cadres of a Dimasa militant outfit, Dima Halam Daogah (Joel group), who had been indulging in large-scale violence in the last two to three years, were suspected to be behind the incident. Some Nagas migrated to Tousem sub-division, Tamenglong District in Manipur.

Seven persons belonging to the Dimasa community were killed and 97 houses were burnt by Naga extremists suspected to be cadres of NSCN factions between 28th April, 2009 and 9th May, 2009 in the NC Hills District.

The violence perpetrated by the militants belonging to both Dimasa and Naga tribes has continued to occur on a regular basis. As per report received from the Government of Assam, 63 persons have been killed of whom 39 belong to the Naga community and 24 to the Dimasa community. 528 houses have been burnt of which 228 belonged to Nagas and 300 to Dimasas. The Government of Assam has set up 32 relief camps and is providing gratuitous relief. At present, 11,737 persons are staying in the relief camps. Among them, 6,841 persons belong to the Naga community and 4,896 belong to the Dimasa and other communities.

The situation is being closely monitored and the Government of Assam has been advised to take all necessary measures to contain the violence. The State Governments of Assam, Manipur and Nagaland were also sensitized that there was a likelihood of mobilization and movement of Naga militants who would use this opportunity to make their presence felt in NC Hills District capitalizing on the wide-spread resentment and reaction among the Naga civil society.

The security situation in NC Hills was periodically reviewed at various levels including at the level of the Union Home Secretary and the Cabinet Secretary. The Government of Assam was requested to intensify counter-insurgency operations against the extremists and take necessary measures to control violence. The State Government was also requested to provide relief to the affected persons and take steps for their rehabilitation.

A Central Team headed by Special Secretary (Internal Security), Ministry of Home Affairs, was also deputed to Assam on 26th and 27th May 2009 to review the situation. The train services on the Lumding-Badarpur Hill Section which were suspended due to attacks by militants of DHD(J) have since been restored.

I reviewed the security situation on 1st June 2009. Additional Central Forces, including Army Units, CPMF companies, and State Police personnel have been deployed in the district. The DHD(J) has been declared as an 'unlawful association' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. Sustained counter-insurgency operations are continuing against the DHD(J). The Chairman of the DHD(J) and his two associates were arrested on 4th June 2009 at Bangalore. During the period between 19th March 2009 and 6th July 2009, six cadres of the DHD(J) have been killed in action by the Security Forces and 24 cadres/linkmen have been arrested. The security forces have also recovered arms and ammunition and also Rs.1.51 crore from the linkmen of the DHD (J).

The Government of Assam has informed the Central Government that three border posts have been set up along the Assam-Nagaland areas to provide security to the villages and to check the movement of militants. Armed policemen have been deployed at 12 pickets to provide security to the sensitive villages. In view of the difficulties, in providing security to the widely scattered villages and hamlets in remote and inaccessible areas of the districts, the Government of Assam has identified 12 clusters for the Zemei Nagas and other communities in discussions with the apex bodies of the tribes. Measures are being taken to provide one platoon of force in each cluster for their security. Village Defence parties have also been activated and regular meetings are being organised with the Village Headmen (Gaon Burhas). Several 'Peace Meetings' have been convened by the State Government officials with both the apex bodies and representatives of the Naga and the Dimasa tribes. A proposal for the rehabilitation of affected families whose houses have been burnt in the violence is under consideration of the Government of Assam.

The security situation in the NC Hills district is being reviewed on a regular basis. The Government is committed to provide all possible assistance to the Government of Assam for

restoration of normalcy in the NC Hills district and also the rehabilitation of the affected people.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you want to seek any clarification from the hon. Minister?

SHRI KHEKIHO ZHIMOMI: Sir, I want to seek a few clarifications from the hon. Minister.

I would like to give a brief genesis of this incident. Both the communities, Zemei Nagas and Dimasas, share same historical rights as well as birth rights, which exist in the region, as they were the original settler in the region, as the history indicates and record speaks.

A handful of armed miscreants, who have no public endorsement of the issues, should not be allowed to flare up communal enmity between Dimasas and Zemei Nagas who have been living as good neighbours since time immemorial. The handiwork of uncivil elements, with some sinister designs, should therefore be checked at once and for all times to come.

Sir, it is a matter of satisfaction and appreciation that both the State Government and the Central Government have taken innumerable steps to curb violence in the area. One, over 80 companies of paramilitary forces have been deployed. Two, the arrest and suspension of Mr. Mohit Hojai, the Chief Executive Member of North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council.

Next, the banning of office of the DHD(J) and the arrest of its chief. The fifth point is the deployment of the National Investigation Agency. The prime investigating agency of the Central Government has been brought to undertake the immediate task.

Sir, again, it is heartening to note that Naga Hoho and Dimasas Hoho of Nagaland have come to a common platform to restore peace in North Cachar Hills and to resolve and settle the issue amicably. Towards this direction, a public rally was held at Dimapur on 29th June 2009 where thousands of ethnic groups of both tribes participated. Sir, I also read the press report regarding restoration of normalcy in North Cachar Hills district of Assam which is one of the flagship items of the Home Ministry for implementation in their first 100-days of the new Government. However, notwithstanding all these measures, it is a matter of grave concern that the ground situation still remains the same with fresh violence reported every day. This august House would like to know the reason as to why violence still continues unabated in the North Cachar Hills of Assam. The National Investigation Agency should make serious soul-searching. The situation definitely warrants initiation of more drastic steps at ground zero level to bring the situation under control without further delay.

Sir, I would also like to know about the details of the steps taken by the Central Government to instill a sense of security and confidence among the displaced Dimasas and Nagas, enabling them to return to their homeland. What other steps are proposed to be taken by the Central Government to restore normalcy in the area may also be elaborately indicated.

Sir, here, I read that the security forces have given two reasons. For their inability to contain the militants, they gave the reason that North Cachar Hills is a hilly terrain State where the operation of the security forces has become difficult. Sir, I would like to say that for football players, we make grounds; for cricket players, we make cricket stadiums. But, for the security forces, we cannot create any ground where they will be able to fight. The security forces shall have to content with the circumstances. Otherwise, the security forces may not have given this reason of their inability to contain the militants. The topographical hilly terrain of the region is not at all an answer.

Secondly, during the Second World War, the last great battle which took place in Kohima, the allied forces had the mind and confidence of the Naga people and with the support of the Naga people, many Japanese soldiers were captured. So, it is very important for the security forces operating in any area firstly to have the confidence of the people.

So, here, the militants have owned the confidence of their local public whereas the security forces have failed to own the confidence of their local people, and it is a failure. With all the sincerity, I appreciate the hon. Home Minister and the Government of Assam for whatever measures possibly they have taken at the higher level. But I think something is going wrong at the ground level, at the implementing stage. So, a thorough look at the implementing stage is required, and if it is properly implemented and then the will of the people is executed, it would be good. These two ethnic groups are living together and they would like to live together, and if sincere efforts are made, the problem may not go out of their control. With these few words, I appreciate the Home Minister and the Government of India for the action that they have taken. Thank you.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I think, the Calling Attention mentioned about the North Cachar Hill District of Assam only. But in this region, there is a lot of problem. And when the Home Minister was coming to respond to this, I think, he could have given some more information about that region. He has given information only about the Dimasas and the Nagas. But the Karbis are also there, and we know that there is always a fight between the Karbis and the Dimasas. There is less fight between the Nagas and the Dimasas, more fights between the Karbis and the Dimasas, and that is the reason, Sir, that since 1980 onwards, there are so many rehabilitation camps over there, and some unfortunate incident took place in 2002. I visited that area when about 76 people were killed, butchered, chopped off. So, I visited these camps also. Camps are there, bamboos are there, roofs are there. To guard those bamboos and roofs, there are people, I mean the police force is there, but nobody stays in the camp. They are not putting these people in the jail. They are putting these people in the camp. And those people who cannot stay in the villages, they are living in the camps, but there is no arrangement, there is no sanitation facility, there is no drinking water available, there is no kitchen. So, that is why people are living in jungles only. And the biggest problem of that area is the ginger lobby. This is a very fertile area for growing ginger, and the

whole fight is for ginger production to grab more land in that area, and it was a long standing demand of the Nagas to capture some more area, the Dimasas to capture some more area and the Karbis to capture some more area, and that is why, two Hill Councils are working. The Hill Councils were given a lot of money for development. But if you go there, you will not find any development. Although in every Budget, the Assam Government is giving enough money for the developmental works, yet there is no development taking place in that area. I do not know who is monitoring it, who is doing it, or, out of fear, the Government officials may not be visiting that area to monitor the developmental work, and whatever money they are getting, whether that money is used for the purpose for which it is given or not or whether they have siphoned off that money.

Nobody knows that, Sir. Again, Sir, there is a non-tribal population. That is in good number and their life is always in danger. Their properties are in danger and they are suffering day in, day out because of this extortion. Nobody is there to take care of them because it is, basically, declared a tribal area. So, all the rules, regulations, laws and incentives are meant for the tribal people only. But those who are non-tribals are not getting any incentive, any benefit out of that.

Sir, there is a very strong Organisation. Like you heard about Jewel Group, there is another Group called 'Black Widow'. You are aware of that. Recently, the Chief of 'Black Widow' was arrested in Bangalore. It is not that they are living in jungles only; they are living a very good life in a city like Bangalore also. He was arrested in Bangalore. They are coming here. And if you inquire, the children of these leaders of these banned outfits are studying in good schools, good colleges, either in Bangalore or in Bombay or somewhere else. You have Intelligence agencies. What are they doing? It is not one day's affair. Every three months, they are killing, killing not one person or two persons; in a series 50 people, 60 people or 100 people are being killed, and 100 houses are burnt. And their buffaloes, cows, lambs, sheep were killed. It is happening every day. Police is there; paramilitary force is there. But, still, it is happening! Have you started any formula, I mean negotiations with these three warring Groups Karbis, Dimasas and Nagas? Have you started any negotiations? Or you have just left them at the mercy of God that let them live like this only because that is also part of India, Sir, and that is also under the Indian Constitution; they should work. If Hill Councils are there, whatever money is given for the developmental work or for the betterment of that area – money is sent from Delhi – should be spent in a proper way. That work should be done. I do not know when last the North-East Council members visited that area or whether the Home Ministry officials visited or last when they visited and analysed the whole thing or done a review of that, and whether these two Councils are working in a right direction or not; I do not know. If he just gives this information to the House, I would be grateful to him. Thank you, Sir.

श्री श्रीगोपाल व्यास (छत्तीसगढ़) : धन्यवाद महोदय। माननीय गृह मंत्री जी ने काफी विस्तार से अपनी रिपोर्ट दी है। मैं केवल इतना ही जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उन क्षेत्रों में जो तत्त्व काम कर रहे हैं, उनके विदेशों से किसी सम्बन्ध के बारे में आपके मंत्रालय को या खुफिया एजेंसी को कोई जानकारी प्राप्त हुई है?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, the hon. Home Minister.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, may I thank the hon. Members for raising this issue and making some very important interventions? Sir, it is true that there are many tribes who live in that area, but the dominant tribes are, as far as the North Cachar Hills are concerned, the Dimasas and the Nagas. Going by the 2001 Census, the Dimasas outnumbered the Nagas by almost 4:1. The Nagas, of course, are a very large tribe, a dominant tribe, in Nagaland, and, also in some parts of Manipur, they are present. But as far as this area is concerned, the North Cachar Hills, the dominant tribe is the Dimasas.

It is true that these tribes have lived together for many centuries and it is our wish that they should live in peace and harmony. But that is not the fact. The fact is that there has been inter-tribal rivalry and this inter-tribal rivalry has intensified in the past two years, as a result of which the Dimasas killed the Nagas and the Nagas killed the Dimasas. It is sad; it is very unfortunate. Most of them are poor people. Instead of focussing on development, a significant number of them have taken to violence and this has resulted in inter-tribal rivalry leading to inter-tribal killings. We set up the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council in order to give them a measure of autonomy so that they can govern themselves. That experiment may have worked well for some time. But the last Chief Executive member turned out to be, as has been alleged against him now, a corrupt person who was diverting money meant for the Council to the militants. The Council has, therefore, been suspended; the Chief Executive member has been arrested; the senior Civil Servant of the Council has also been arrested; the cases have been transferred to the National Investigating Agency. In fact, as a result of what happened, that experiment, at least, for the time being, has failed. The Governor has taken over the administration of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council.

Sir, Karbis also live in that area. But their presence is in a much smaller number. Karbis are dominant in the Karbi Anglong district. Some Dimasas also live in the Karbi Anglong district. But this Calling Attention is confined to the North Cachar Hills district.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: I am aware of that. ...*(Interruptions)*... Both are adjacent areas.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: No. I am only answering the Calling Attention.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: This is a troubled area.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: This is a troubled area. Karbi Anglong is a troubled area. Every day I am learning about this area. But the Calling Attention is about the North Cachar Hills and, therefore, I have not dwelt on the conflict in the Karbi Anglong area. That is also an area where there is militancy and we are trying to put down that militancy.

Sir, there was some reference to a joint rally organised by the Dimasas and the Nagas. That rally, according to my information, was organised in Dimapur and that rally was organised in order to ensure peace among the two tribes in Nagaland. I don't think that had any impact on the North

Cachar Hills. In fact, as I speak today, the North Cachar Hills witnesses inter-tribal rivalry and there are inter-tribal killings.

Sir, my good friend, Mr. Ahluwalia, referred to the ginger crop and the ginger lobby. Nothing has been brought to my notice to say that it is the ginger crop and a ginger lobby which is behind this inter-tribal rivalry. Perhaps, it is true. We will probe into that further.

Sir, the problem has been accentuated by the group called DHD (J), that is, Dima Haram Daogah (Joel Group). It is an unlawful association. We have taken very strong action in the last few weeks and that has yielded results. The chief of the DHD (J) was nabbed in Bangalore. It was a very well coordinated intelligence and police operation in which he was nabbed. He has been arrested. Another major field commander was neutralised in a police operation. Another commander, who, we believe, is part of the time in India and part of the time across the border, has made a so-called offer of ceasefire. Since I took over, I have not entertained this kind of ceasefire. A militant group cannot offer ceasefire to a sovereign Government. A militant group must abjure the path of violence, surrender and lay down arms and then we can talk about any other problem they may have. So, we have made it very clear. I wish the whole House to know that we will not entertain any ceasefire offers from militant groups. A militant group is most welcome to abjure the path of violence, lay down arms and then come and talk to the Government. They can form a political party. They can contest as a political party. We have no problem. They have to come and talk to the Government and the Government will redress their grievances within, of course, the framework of the Constitution of India. I think the message has gone home. It is quite possible that the DHD (J) has got the message. It is quite possible that something may happen in the next few days or weeks. I would welcome it, I would take this opportunity to tell the DHD (J) to lay down arms, abjure the path of violence and then hold talks with the Government of Assam. The Government of India will facilitate those talks and if necessary the Government of India will directly hold talks with the DHD (J). Sir, I do not wish to go into the history and genesis of these problems. All I can say is, these Tribals are poor people. These Tribals have their own rich culture and way of life. They should be allowed to develop. They should be allowed to reap the fruits of development which the rest of India is enjoying or will enjoy as we grow at a brisk pace. But inter-Tribal rivalry, militancy is denying them the fruits of these developments.

The paramilitary, the police and the Army are doing a yeoman's job. These are difficult areas. In fact, when I reviewed the matter, I reviewed it with the Corps Commanders, with the paramilitary Chiefs and the State police and then we have clearly laid down their areas of responsibility. My review meeting was preceded by a visit of the Special Secretary and a team of MHA officials, which I have referred to in my statement. Following that meeting, I am happy to say, rail traffic has been fully restored, goods traffic has been fully restored. Passenger trains are now running and supplies to the North East, Assam and some other States of the North East have been fully restored. But these things are running under security cover. Being dense forest and hilly terrain, they have the advantage

of knowing the terrain better than anyone else. So, responsibilities have been defined for the State police, for the paramilitary and for the Army. These operations are underway. Even as we speak, the operations are underway. There have been some results, Not entirely satisfactory results, but there have been some results. There is enormous pressure being put on the DHD (J), which is the reason, I believe, they have offered the so-called ceasefire. I think they will get the message soon. They should abjure the path of violence, lay down arms and come and hold talks with the Government on any grievances they may have. We are willing to hold talks with them on any grievances they may have. In the meanwhile, I have requested the Governor who has taken over the administration of the North Cachar Hills district to ensure that the development works take place. Unfortunately, the Governor has passed away a few days after he took over. We have got a Governor of another State who is now temporarily looking after the affairs. We hope to be able to appoint a new Governor soon. I have requested the Chief Minister and I will request the new Governor to pay special attention to the development of the NC Hills. Huge amount of money is being given. Everybody knows that. Unfortunately, the bulk of this money finds its way into the hands of militants and terrorists. Therefore, we need to plug these loopholes. The NIA is investigating these cases and I am sure they will be able to find the culprits. They are already on the trail of these culprits.

Let me conclude by saying, we will pay special attention to the development works which have been neglected in the past few years in the NC Hills district. And, we will also continue to maintain pressure on the militant groups so that militancy comes to an end. On inter-tribal rivalry, I can only appeal to the leaders of the two Tribes, and the Hohos, the Dimasa Mono as well as the Naga Hohobury the hatchet, put an end to this inter-tribal rivalry, learn to live in peace and harmony, bring development and prosperity to your own people, give up this path of confrontation and inter-tribal rivalry.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I would like to know as to when you are going to hold elections for the North Cachar Hills Council. Like, if an Assembly is under suspension, or, is dissolved, then, there is a mandate that you have to bring in a Bill in Parliament and get it passed. But for such Hill Councils, when the Governor takes them over, there is no time bar. But only if the new leadership emerges, can the aspirations of the people be met. So, when will you hold the elections?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I think it is too early to talk about elections. We have just suspended that Council for gross dereliction of duty, I don't think we should talk about elections so quickly. Let us first get some development going there. I am sure there is a Constitutional provision – I am not familiar with it now – which requires elections to be held to this Council within a certain period. I would look into that provision. It is too early to talk about elections. My first goal now is to ensure that militancy, the DHD (J), is put an end to, that development works start in the N.C. Hill District. And, whatever the Constitutional requirement is, we will abide by that.

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: I would like to know whether there is any foreign hand behind this trouble.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Obviously, they get help from across the border, and many of the leaders are not here. They are across the border, in safe havens and sanctuaries, and they operate from there. In that sense, the Indian hand has become a foreign hand when it operates from outside. And, they have the support of other agencies and some other countries. So, obviously, they have the support of some foreign elements.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now we will take up the Appropriation (Railways) No.3 Bill, 2009.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, we will pass this Bill without discussion. But, the only thing is that in future, this Bill should come along with the Railway Budget. We do not understand how it was separated.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There was some delay this time because of some message which was to come.

GOVERNMENT BILL

The Appropriation (Railways) No.3 Bill, 2009

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2009-10 for the purposes of Railways, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up Clause-by-Clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2, 3 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I move:

That the Bill be returned.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House is adjourned to meet at 2.30 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at forty-five minutes past twelve of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty-five minutes past two of the clock, The Vice-Chairman (PROF. P. J. KURIEN) in the Chair.