

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: It is a long question and one will have to give a long lecture to answer it but so far as fuel is concerned, I would like to say that we have been supplying fuel to Nepal as all other essential commodities on rupee payment till 1974. In view of the shortage of oil which we are experiencing and the massive rise in the world price of oil, it was decided that fuel to Nepal from 1975 onwards against rupee payment will be stopped.

He has also said that some press notes have been issued by the Nepal Government. I have to tell him that there is no such press note from the Government of Nepal.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Our Chairman participated in the Nepal King's Coronation ceremony. It was held in Rahukula. Here in India when Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed became the President, the previous night hymns were chanted by priests and various other religious heads. Will the Government of India take the example of Nepal and see that superstitions and other things in this secular country are not given importance?

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: I am not aware of any such thing. If he writes to me, I will examine them.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Although it is a small country they hold Coronation in Rahukula whereas in India hymns are chanted by priests and other heads of religions throughout the night. Will the Government of India take the example of Nepal?

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: Sir, this does not arise out of this Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This does not arise from this Question. Next Question.

Survey of limestone deposits in Kerala

*500. **SHRI VISWANATHA MENON:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mineral Exploration Corporation has made an agreement with the Kerala Government for intensive survey of limestone deposits at Walayar in Palghat district, in that State; and

(b) if so, by when the survey is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The time set for completion of the work is April, 1975 and that for submission of the Report is July, 1975. The time of completion of the work may have to be extended by a month or so as the Walayar area is thickly forested and infested with wild elephants etc. which hampers the progress of work.

SHRI VISWANATH MENON: Sir, Kerala is a State where a lot of minerals are there. Whenever we raise an issue about these minerals the attitude of the Central Government is always in the negative. The question of iron ore which is lying in abundance in the Calicut district has been raised by the Kerala Government and the people of Kerala in press and outside without any political differences but even now the India Government is sitting tight on it. I am rather afraid what the fate will be of this issue. For the development of the country it is highly essential to get minerals. The Minister gave an assurance before this hon. House that these things will be taken care of. Especially the Kerala State is industrially backward and these things must be taken care of there. Some industries can be developed taking into account the availability of iron ore and other minerals. My humble submission is that the hon. Minister must assure this hon. House

that such a kind of sitting tight on the things of Kerala will be stopped.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: Sir, it is not proper on the part of the hon'ble Member to draw this conclusion that the Central Government is sitting tight and some kind of indifference is being shown to Kerala. All possible steps are being taken. So far as this particular portion is concerned, the hon'ble Member will see that the Geological Survey Report is already completed. Now after completion of the Geological Survey Report, it was found that deep drilling was necessary to estimate the reserve of the limestone and also the cost.

Therefore, the Kerala Government last September entered into an agreement with MEC. Now MEC have started work only last November, and in spite of the difficult terrain and thick forests and wild animals in that area, 40 per cent of the work has been done. The work is in progress. Till now, whatever results have been shown they are encouraging and we feel that there is a possibility that on the basis of limestone discovery in that area, a cement factory can be set up.

So far as iron ore is concerned, I have already replied in this House that the reserve is very small, about 59 million tonnes, and the firm reserve is about 25 million tonnes. When I last visited Calicut district, I called my officers there and I have issued orders that after the first geological report, if deep drilling is necessary, MEC should take care that deep drilling will be done and all possible efforts will be made, not only Kerala but in any part of the country. After all, we have to explore these minerals; they are the wealth of the country. Therefore, I want to tell the hon'ble Member that there should be no impression on the part of the people of Kerala, or any people, that the Government is sitting tight. All possible efforts are being made.

SHRI VISHWANATHA MENON: Sir, I am not questioning his *bona fides*.

MR CHAIRMAN: He has explained. You put supplementaries.

SHRI VISHWANATHA MENON: The only supplementary is: Can the hon'ble Minister say in the House when the work is expected to be completed—at least some speculation?

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: Sir, so far as this particular portion is concerned, I want to tell the hon'ble Member that the work is likely to be completed by next September—September, 1975.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN: Sir, I am not particularly satisfied with the hon'ble Minister's reply because the Geological Survey of India had made detailed surveys of various mineral deposits of Kerala, including monozite, rutile, and so on. Kerala is now accepted to be a State where mineral resources are abundant, but they are used to the very minimum. I would like to know whether the Minister is aware that recently there was a big agitation in the Calicut area against the Government of India's negligence in taking up this question of iron ore deposits. It is true that the people in the Calicut area in particular and Kerala in general have this impression and they have gone on agitation, particularly in Calicut because of the statements by certain officers denying the fact that Kerala has these deposits and earnest attempts have not been made to explore them. Would the hon'ble Minister assure us that he will give special instructions to the officers of the Geological Survey of India to complete the work in Calicut and ensure that whatever deposit is available is made use of for starting at least a mini steel plant in Calicut so that Kerala which is industrially backward can be helped?

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: Sir, I have made a very categorical statement. So far as this question is concerned, I cannot make any more categorical statement than this, that by September, 1975 the work will be completed. The work is already in progress. GSI has completed its work.

The deep drilling work given to MEC according to the agreement of the Kerala Government is progressing. And so far as the iron ore is concerned, there were some people who were interested in agitation and they were launching agitation that Kerala should get an integrated steel plant. On the basis of agitation, the steel plants are not launched. The question is whatever iron ore is available in Kerala, no integrated steel plant can be built up there. We are looking into all possibilities. New technology is developing. We are testing the iron ore to see whether it is possible to have sponge iron plant there or a pellet plant there, or how best we can make use of the iron ore available in Kerala. Therefore, I want to assure the hon. Member—and I also want to remove the impression in the minds of those people who are interested in agitation more than anything else—that every possible step is being taken. There is no question of any discrimination against Kerala State or the people of Kerala.

श्री इयंगलल यादव : माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि देश के कुछ हिस्सों में जहाँ इस तरह का खानें हैं उनका अच्छी तरह से विकास किया जाए गा। मैं इस सम्बन्ध में यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उत्तर प्रदेश में जहाँ सिमेंट के कारखाने लगाने की संभावना है उसको दृष्टि में रखते हुए चूने के पत्थर की खानों के सम्बन्ध में क्या कोई सर्वे किया गया है ? अगर किया गया है तो उसकी क्या संभावना है ?

श्री चन्द्रजीत यादव : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य को स्वयं मालूम है क्योंकि उस पड़ोसी देश से आते हैं उत्तर प्रदेश में जहाँ कि लाईमस्टोन के बारे में पूरा सर्वेक्षण हो चुका

है। एक कारखाना वहाँ काम कर रहा है और दूसरा कारखाना लगने की संभावना है उसकी भी तैयारी हो रही है। देश के जिन भागों में इस तरह के लाईम स्टोन की संभावना जहाँ कहीं भी है उसका अधिकांश सर्वे किया जा चुका है और इन सर्वे के आधार पर जो संभव कदम उठाए जाएंगे।

बिदेश तेल कम्पनियों द्वारा बंगाल की खाड़ी में तेल के लिए अप्रतटीय खोज

* 501. **श्री इम प्रकाश त्यागी :**
श्री दत्तोपन्त ठाड़ी :
श्री बीरेन्द्र कुमार सखलेचा :
श्री सुब्रमण्यम् स्वामी : †

क्या बिदेश मंत्री यह बनाने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि बंगला देश ने बंगाल की खाड़ी की अपनी समुद्री सीमा के भीतर तेल की खोज करने के लिए कनाडा तथा अमेरिका की तेल कम्पनियों को अधिकार दे दिए हैं ;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि बंगाल की खाड़ी, हिन्द महासागर और अरब सागर के पड़ोसी तटवर्ती देशों के साथ समुद्र जन सीमा के सम्बन्ध में भारत ने अभी तक कोई समझौता नहीं किया है ; और

(ग) यदि हाँ, तो सरकार द्वारा इस सम्बन्ध में क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं या उठाए जाने का विचार है ?

‡ [Off shore exploration for oil in Bay of Bengal by foreign oil companies

*501. **SHRI O. P. TYAGI:**

SHRI D. THENGARI:

SHRI V. K. SAKHLECHA:

**SHRI SUBRAMANIAN
 SWAMY:**

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Subramanian Swamy.

‡ [] English translation.