

RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 11th May, 1973 Vaisakha,
1895 {Saka}

The House met at eleven of the clock, MR.
CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

INDO-PAK OFFICIAL LEVEL MEETING

♦239. SHRI LOKANATH MISRA :
SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : SHRI M. K.
MOHTA : SHRI K. C. PANDA : SHRI
SUNDAR MANI PATEL : SHRI
DEBANANDA AMAT : t
SHRIDAHYABHAIV. PATEL :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to
renew their efforts for an Indo-Pak meeting
at the official level; and

(b) if so, by when such a meeting is
likely to take place ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) :
(a) Pakistan did not respond to India's earlier
initiative for official level talks on further
implementation of the Simla Agreement on
the plea that the POW issue should be settled
first. Now that the India-Bangla desh Joint
Declaration has been made suggesting a
practical solution to all humanitarian issues
arising out of the December 1971 conflict, it
is hoped that Pakistan would respond
positively;

(b) No date has yet been fixed for a
meeting.

SHRI DEBANANDA AMAT : Sir,
Pakistan gave the impression that it was not
interested in the Simla Agreement and
Islamabad has scorned all the efforts regard-
ing normalisation of relations between India
and Pakistan. So I would like to know from
the honourable Minister if any new formula
is thought of in case a meeting of Pakistani
and Indian officials is held to normalise
conditions in the sub-continent. SARDAR
SWARAN SINGH : It will not be correct to
say that Pakistan succeeded in creating an
impression of the type that the honourable
Member mentioned. As a matter of fact
everyone knows that India

The question was actually asked on the
floor of the House by Shri Debananda
Amat.

took the initiative first to declare a unilateral
ceasefire. Later on we took initiative to
convene the Simla Conference. Again when
there were difficulties we again got in touch
with Pakistan and subsequent meetings took
place and an important provision of the Simla
Agreement relating to the delineation of the
line of control in Jammu and Kashmir and
withdrawal of troops has been implemented.
We have consistently taken the stand that we
are in favour of meeting at any level, but we
have been from the beginning taking the
stand that for such meetings at the highest
level to succeed they must be preceded by
official level meetings. And we are always
willing to do that. Even with regard to the
latest proposal, latest suggested solution in the
joint Indo-Bangla Desh Declaration, we did
receive an indication from Pakistan and on
receipt of that, the House is no doubt aware,
we got in touch with the Government of
Bangla Desh and we have sent a reply to that
communication to the Government of
Pakistan. And in this respect there is a joint
stand between India and Bangla Desh. As
was mentioned by my colleague the other day
while answering certain other queries in this
House, the basic thing is that Pakistan should
accept, at any rate, in principle, the essentials
of the Joint Declaration that was issued by
India and Bangla Desh.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : May I know
from the honourable Minister whether it has
been made clear to Pakistan that the three
issues in the package offer are interrelated
and cannot be separated at all and if
clarifications are required, they should be
rather done in Delhi and not in Islamabad
because it is a joint communique and till
Pakistan recognises Bangla Desh, the dis-
cussions have to be at a place where Bangla
Desh representatives can also be present and
be easily available ? May I know what is the
Government's assessment ? It has appeared in
many papers and many assessments by
political commentators on international
affairs have said that Mr. Bhutto does not
seem to be interested in the return of pris-
oners-of-war now. Rather he wants to play
into the hands of China and America. May I
know whether the Government has sent any
of its representatives to foreign countries, as
Bangladesh has done, to explain our position
to the countries of the world and how we are
standing, so that the propaganda being done
by Pakistan is nullified ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is enough.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : May I know what are the Government's views about it.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : The joint declaration contains a very clear provision that the persons in the three categories mentioned in it will have to be repatriated simultaneously. This answers his first question. About the venue of talks, the position of the Government of Bangladesh is that they will not participate in any discussion with Pakistan unless it is on a footing of sovereign equality and we fully accept the position of Bangladesh. So, whether the discussions take place in Delhi or in Islamabad, Bangladesh will not be a party to them in the sense that they will not sit at a meeting in which Pakistan representatives are present. So, in that respect the venue, whether it is Delhi or Islamabad, depending, of course, on convenience, is not very material. Then, his third question is what is our assessment as to whether President Bhutto is interested in getting the prisoners-of-war back. Whether Mr. Bhutto is interested or not, to my mind, it is not very relevant. The prisoners-of-war are in the joint custody of India and Bangladesh and they have to go back to Pakistan. We have made a proposal. The basic principle of that proposal is that persons who are either in custody or stranded in countries other than their own must go back to their countries. It is a fair proposal and it covers the three categories. We would continue to press that it should be implemented. Then, the last question that has been asked is whether we have sent any representatives abroad to explain the essentials of the joint declaration to other countries. We have explained the provision of the joint declaration by getting in touch with the representatives of the countries which have got their Missions in Delhi. We have also asked our Missions abroad to explain the joint declaration issued by India and Bangladesh to the Governments to which they are accredited. It is not necessary to send any special representatives. I would like to say that the Pakistan propaganda, to which the hon. Member has made a reference, is not succeeding in this respect at all. Everybody knows that the joint declaration contains proposals which show a way of solving the humanitarian aspects.

श्री नवल किशोर : श्रीमन्, माननीय मंत्री ने बताया कि हमने शिमला ऐग्रीमेंट के बाद जब कभी कोशिश की कि हमारे और पाकिस्तान के बीच में आफिशियल लेवल पर मीटिंग हो तो उसकी तरफ से कोई रिसपोस नहीं मिला। वह बात सही है कि हमेशा इनिशियेटिव हिन्दुस्तान ने लिया और मैं उसको ठीक भी मानता हूँ। लेकिन यह जो आपने इनिशियेटिव लिया कि बंगला देश और हिन्दुस्तान ने जो संयुक्त, ज्वाइंट डिक्लरेशन किया उसके तीन हिस्से हैं, एक तो प्रिजनर्स आफ वार वापस जाये, जो नान-बंगालीज और बिहारीज हैं उनको पाकिस्तान ले तथा जो बंगाली पाकिस्तान में हैं वह बंगला देश में आये। पाकिस्तान ने अपनी पोजीशन बिलकुल साफ कर दी है कि वह बिहारी और नान-बंगालीज को किसी भी तरीके से लेने को तैयार नहीं है।

पी० ओ० डब्लूज के बारे में उसकी कोई दिलचस्पी नहीं है और फिर जैसा बंगला देश के नेताओं ने कहा कि बंगला देश से तभी बात होगी जब यह सावरन एक्वैलिटी की बेसिस पर की जायेगी। जिसके माने हैं कि पाकिस्तान जब बंगला देश को मान्यता दे दे। बंगालीज के साथ जो उसने बर्ताव किया है उसकी रिसपॉन्सिबिलिटी हम पर न भी हो तो भी उसकी जवाबदेही है। इसके बाद भी आपने कम्युनिकेशन भेजा है। तो मैं जनाना चाहता हूँ कि क्या आज भी विदेश मंत्री इस विचार के हैं कि कोई फायदा या कोई परपज पाकिस्तान से इस तरह की बातचीत करने में निकलने वाला है जबकि पाकिस्तान का ऐटीट्यूड दिन प्रतिदिन खराब होता चला जाता है?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Sir, in the first place, I would like to say that Pakistan's spokesmen have raised certain objections or reservations with regard to the Pakistanis who are at present in Bangladesh. They have indicated some reluctance to take

them back. But I would not subscribe to the statement made by the hon. Member when he says that Pakistan has made it clear that they will not take back these Pakistanis into Pakistan at any cost. That is not their stand. Even the communication that we received from the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan did not contain any such categorical stand. It is well known that they are reluctant to take back their own citizens, but this is a reluctance which will not be sustainable because it is not a case, as is mentioned by certain commentators and the rest of Bangla Desh Government pushing out all non-Bangaiis. That is not correct. Even with regard to those so-called Biharis—they are at present in Bangladesh, the Government of Bangladesh have taken individual statements through Magistrates of all those persons and it is only one-third out of those who have said that they are Pakistani citizens and that they want to go to Pakistan. So, it is not that everyone is being pushed out by the Government of Bangladesh.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE : Only those who have opted.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : The Government of Pakistan cannot refuse to take those Pakistani citizens who are wanting to go back. I would like to add that even in Pakistan, in several newspapers, both Urdu and English, strong articles have been written supporting this idea contained in the declaration that the Pakistanis in Bangladesh must be taken into Pakistan. So, it is not that simple that anybody's statement will put a negative spoke in the Joint Declaration being implemented in the long run. Then the hon. Member said : In spite of all this attitude, is it proper that we should continue to insist that the Joint Declaration should be implemented ? I would say that we should, because it is a fair agreement, it solves the humanitarian problem. Our earlier experience also shows that there are sometimes objections, sometimes hesitations on the part of Pakistan, but we should not give up our effort to find a satisfactory solution of humanitarian problems.

श्री नवल किशोर : मैंने यह कहा कि जो बंगालीज के साथ आपके डिक्लेरेशन के बाद बरताव हुआ उनको बन्द किया गया,

उसके बाद क्या परपञ्च इससे आप का अचीव होने वाला है ?

श्री सभापति : मेरी समझ में जवाब आ गया उसका ।

श्री नवल किशोर : बंगालीज के साथ जो ट्रीटमेंट हुआ, उसका उन्होंने कोई जवाब नहीं दिया । श्रीमन्, आप खुद जानते हैं ...

श्री सभापति : उसका जवाब यह दिया गया कि यह सब होते हुए भी हम अपनी कोशिश आगे चलाये जायेंगे ।

श्री सीताराम केसरी : अध्यक्ष जी, मैं वित्त मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि अभी इंडो बंगला देश के द्वारा प्रस्तावित पैकेज आफर के बाद पाकिस्तान ने प्रतिक्रिया में जो रूप धारण किया वह यह है कि उन्होंने हमारे आफर को हमारी कमजोरी का प्रतीक समझा और उन्होंने अपना रिप्रेजेंट अधिक कर दिया और जो वहाँ बंगला देश के लोग थे, ज्यादातर, उनको कंसंट्रेशन कैम्प में डाल दिया जिसकी अखबारों में खबर आई है । दूसरी बात इसी के मध्य में है कि क्या यह सच है कि 30 हजार जो पुराने आर्मड फोर्स में बंगला देश के वहाँ पर और जो उस समय लड़ाई का काम नहीं कर रहे थे लेकिन सेना में थे उनको पाकिस्तान ने सोलजर के रूप में मान कर आपके सामने कंडीशन रखी है कि ये 30 हजार लोग जैसे हमारे प्रिजनर्स आफ वार आपके वहाँ हैं वैसे ही ये बंगला देश के प्रिजनर्स आफ वार हमारे देश में हैं और यह रखते हुए क्या उन्होंने आप के सामने यह इस तरह की बात पेश की है कि जब तक आप इसे एक्सेप्ट नहीं करेंगे तब तक जो आप को आफर है उस पर वह राजी होने को तैयार नहीं है । इसके अलावा, उन्होंने यह कहा कि बंगला देश के साथ भी वह बैठने को तैयार नहीं है ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Sir, the question of the Bangalis in Pakistan having been removed from their houses and having been moved to certain camps was the subject matter of a Call Attention notice. All these questions have been answered in great detail. Even at that time my colleague, the Minister of State had said that notwithstanding these happenings we would continue to make efforts to ensure that the Joint Indo-Bangla Desh Declaration is implemented.

It is true that members of the Armed Forces of Bengali origin have been kept in virtual camps in Pakistan and the Joint Declaration postulates that these will also return to Bangla Desh. Pakistan has not taken the stand that we should, India or Bangla Desh, accept that these Bengalis are prisoners of war. That is not the stand taken by the Government of Pakistan. Whatever stand they take is immaterial. The physical fact is that they are in Pakistan's custody virtually in camps and they must return to Bangla Desh.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN : In spite of the fact that Indo-Bangla Desh Government Declaration is a step forward after the Simla Agreement, the fact remains. Sir, that there is a stalemate so far as the implementation of the Simla Agreement is concerned. Even though the hon'ble Minister has taken some time to give answers, so far he has not been able to tell this House as to how the Government propose to resolve the stalemate and implement effectively the Simla Agreement. May I know from the hon'ble Minister whether he is aware or the Government has got information that the Simla Agreement is not being implemented on account of intervention from the United States of America and whether the Government is aware further of the fact that Pakistan is still toying with the idea of a further war with this country with the help of the United States?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I would like to say that we do not accept that there is any stalemate. One important provision of the Simla Agreement has been implemented and we have taken initiatives and opened up the possibility of resolving the humanitarian aspect, as I have already mentioned, by offering the solution contained in the Joint Indo-Bangla Desh

Declaration. And this is a step in the right direction and if this problem is resolved, then other matters mentioned in the Simla Agreement can be implemented. The second question that the honourable Member has asked is as to whether the lack of implementation is due to the instigation or intervention of the United States Government. If the public statements of the spokesmen of the US Government are any indication, the statements are clear that the United States is in favour of implementing the Simla Agreement....

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Not at all.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: Sir, I do not know why this hypothetical answer is given. What is the view of this Government? Does this Government accept those public statements?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Chandrasekharan, please sit down. Your question has been answered. Now, Mr. Tyagi.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI : Will the honourable Minister be pleased to give us an idea as to what the total number is of prisoners of war detained in India and what the approximate expenditure incurred on them is from month to month and also what the number is of Indian citizens detained in Pakistan as prisoners of war? Have you taken a list of Indian citizens there? Bengalis, I can understand. But has the Government cared to take a complete list of Indian citizens detained in Pakistan as prisoners of war? If so, what is their number?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : The number of prisoners of war, I think, has been stated by my colleague in the Defence Ministry on occasions more than one. Roughly the number, I think is 90,000. Pakistani prisoners of war who are in the joint custody of India and Bangla Desh are roughly 90,000. This number includes some civilian internees also. . .

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI : What is the expenditure incurred on them?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : I would not hazard an answer to this question unless I am quite exact. I would suggest that this may be addressed to the Defence Ministry.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI : Is Bangla Desh contributing anything?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Bangla Desh is not contributing to the expenditure.

There are no Indian prisoners of war in Pakistan because on the Western side we had exchanged the prisoners of war. We sent to Pakistan prisoners of war that came into our custody on the Western front and we took back our own prisoners of war, the Indian members of the Armed Forces that were taken prisoner by Pakistan. They were exchanged. There may be some persons in the Armed Forces who are still unaccounted for. But whatever were the persons known to the International Red Cross, they were transferred mutually between India and Pakistan.

SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SANYAL : After hearing what the honourable Minister has said all this time, may I ask him what the major and important directions are in which the implementation of the Simla Pact is not proceeding according to the direction that we would like and what the bottlenecks or difficulties are that are created on our side on account of such set back and not proceeding in the right direction ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : If I may say, two provisions of the Simla Agreement have been implemented, firstly, the agreement on the line of control delineated in Jammu and Kashmir, and, secondly, the withdrawal of troops from the Western front. There are several other provisions of the Simla Agreement and the honourable Member may look up the text, a copy of which is available in the Library and which was placed on the Table of the House. There are the provisions about restoration of overflights, restoration of communications, re-establishment of diplomatic relations, economic matters and several other matters. All those matters have still to be settled by mutual agreement by the two sides. Secondly he asks how are we suffering ? All problems created by the armed conflict between India and Pakistan should be settled and resolved because until they are resolved, the tensions will continue and we are desirous of lowering tensions and creating good neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : The hon. Minister has expressed the hope that Pakistan will respond positively. I would like to know whether it is only a wish that is father

to the thought or whether he has any positive basis to hold such a hope because Simla agreement itself was, to put it in the best light, an extreme step of magnanimity on our part. Since then step by step even in regard to Thako chak, we tried to go out of our way to appease Pakistan. Today they have both Chaamb and Chicken neck, though they have not even recognised Bangla Desh so far. On the other hand, while we are taking initiatives to accommodate Pakistan more and more, Pakistan is taking initiatives of the other type by buying more and more arms. Even today Mr. Bhutto is in Iran and the latest developments . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly put your question . . .

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : . . . putting Bengalis into concentration camps. In view of all those, I wish to know from the hon. Minister what basis he has for hoping that Pakistan will respond positively. The Minister also said that we are prepared to meet Pakistan at every level. There was a proposal for official level meeting. Are we prepared to accept that ? That is a clever way of by-passing Bangla Desh and talking about an issue in which Bangla Desh should be an essential party. Are we going to walk into Pakistan's trap by accepting that demand and sending a delegation to that meeting without Pakistan. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are rereating.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : . . . accepting the reality by recognising Bengla Desh ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : I have not expressed any wish, either father of thought or product of thought. If the hon. Member looks carefully into the record, what I have said is that we know that there is reluctance, there is hesitation on the part of Pakistan and on earlier occasions also this was there and therefore we are accustomed to these postures. Ultimately, the real position of Pakistan may not exactly be the same as they are saying in public. That is a matter which can be sorted out if there is a meeting.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : The Minister hoped that Pakistan will respond positively. I have noted down his words. What is the basis for such a hope ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : I think they will respond. That's my assessment.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Have you any basis for that hope or is it because you wish that Pakistan should respond therefore you hope so ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : We desire that they should respond because it is in their interests and it is in our interests. It is also our assessment that they will respond. If they do not respond, then we are where we were. We do not lose anything...

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : I have asked for the basis of that assessment.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has not completed his answer. Why are you standing and interrupting him ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Our basis is our assessment of the attendant circumstances, the pressures inside Pakistan and the strong desire expressed in international communities by spokesmen of Pakistan that they are extremely anxious to get their prisoners of war back. These form the basis of our assessment in this respect. Let us not forget that both sides have agreed that all questions thrown up by war have to be resolved by the two sides by mutual agreement including the question of the prisoners of war. So, it is in the interest of both and it is binding on both sides that they should meet together and resolve these outstanding differences in accordance with the agreement.

Then, Sir, the only other question that is asked is this : Are we likely to act in any manner which amounts to bypassing Bangla Desh ? My answer is an emphatic 'No'. Whatever is the decision that we will take, whether to attend the meeting or not to attend the meeting, that decision will be taken in full consultation with and agreement of Bangla Desh.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, that was not my question. My question was different.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. That was your question. Yes, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, this is not the way to protect the Minister when he gives a completely off-the-point answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. He gave you the answer.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : No, Sir. He did not give me the correct answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has given the answer.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : If the Chair protects the Minister like this, we will be helpless.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You put the question whether India will attend the meeting and bypass Bangladesh. He has said 'No'.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : I asked whether he will attend the meeting without Pakistan having recognised Bangla Desh.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, please. Yes, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : He has described the attendant circumstances. He does not realise the importance of arms supply to Pakistan and other things.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken 33 minutes.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, you should not be angry with me for that. I have not taken 33 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not angry with you.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : You are expressing your anger as though only I am guilty.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. I am telling the House that I am not calling others since we have taken 33 minutes over one question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, I am reverting to a reply given by the honourable Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly put a shorter question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Yes, I will put a question which is shorter than his question. I will make it shorter.

Now, Sir, on what basis did the Minister say that according to him America is in favour of the implementation of the Simla Agreement ? Is it not a fact that the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on more than one occasion in public meetings has pointed out that the resumption of arms aid by the USA to Pakistan is encouraging the elements in Pakistan which are opposed to the Simla Agreement and hence creating difficulties ? Is it also not a fact that following this statement Mr. Charles Sisco announced that the

aid would continue and that they would not make a compromise on this ? I should like to know how it is that when according to the Prime Minister the arms aid is encouraging the hostile elements in Pakistan, those who do not want the implementation of the Simla Agreement, the Government comes to the conclusion that they are in favour of the Simla Agreement. Have they discounted the fate of the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Pact which was negated and violated by Pakistan as a result of the U S arms aid and the same thing is being repeated now ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: About the supply of the US arms to Pakistan, being a negative factor in the process of the normalisation of the relations between India and Pakistan, we have made clear statements inside this House and outside that this is a factor which is likely to come in the way of normalisation of the relations between India and Pakistan. We have also said that it is all the more surprising that they should continue to make supplies although they have made statements, official statements, public statements that the US Government is in favour of the implementation of the Simla Agreement. In fact, they have made statements to the effect that they welcome the Simla Agreement. All these have been placed before the House

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : That is not the point. You say that you think that America is in favour of the Simla Agreement. But America is not in favour of the Simla Agreement and that is what is being proved by its reaction.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right. Please sit down.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : What is his reply ? You should tell him. Then I will sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has given the reply. Yes, next question. Mr. K. C. Panda.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, may I know one thing from you ? Suppose I say, I love you, not you, but somebody and then I kick him, how is to be taken ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : You will get something back. Please sit down.

240. [Transferred to the 15th May, 1973.]

POLICY OF MINING MANGANESE ORE

♦241. SHRI K. C. PANDA :
SHRI DEBANANDA AMAT : f
SHRI M. K. MOHTA :
SHRI CHANDRAMOULI JAGARLAMUDI : SHRJ DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO :
SHRI SUNDAR MANI PATEL :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether some senior scientists of the Jawaharlal Nehru University have publicly disapproved the policy of mining manganese ore simply for the purpose of export; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH CHANDRA HANSDA) : (a) In their study on the utilisation of manganese ore, Shri Nagesh N. Hegde and Shri B. V. Rangarao, scientists of the Jawahar Lal Nehru University have observed that exploitation of non-replenishable resources, particularly for export purposes, when the market and prices are not attractive, requires a comprehensive study and understanding.

(b) Government is aware of the situation, it has been decided to regulate the export of high grade manganese ore from the current year. Export of medium and low grade ore will also be reduced gradually. The position will be reviewed at the end of the current year.

SHRI DEBANANDA AMAT : Sir, in the year 1972 Orissa was leading in the production of manganese ore amounting to 5 lakhs and 7 thousand and odd tonnes. Maharashtra was second producing 4 lakhs and twentyfive thousand tonnes. Since then, the manganese ore registered a declining trend and there is a steep fall in the first grade manganese ore. There is a huge accumulation on the spot and even the buyers are prepared to come over to the consumption point and even to the port for exporting to foreign countries, but railway wagons are not there. My question is no doubt, manganese ore is an export oriented raw material in view of the increased steel production in the 5th Five Year Plan what are the steps the Government is going to take to

j-The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Debananda Amat.