

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA : We have learnt from the Minister that one sitting candidate lost his seat. May I know how many posts we did not contest which we held in the previous election ? We lost one sitting seat. How many sitting seats did we not contest ?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I want notice for that question because I will have to engage myself in a statistical exercise.

DESALINATION OF SEA-WATER

*664. SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the progress so far made by the Atomic Energy Commission in programmes like desalination of sea-water ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER [DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI] : A feasibility study on a combined nuclear power station and desalination plant has been made. A preliminary study on the practicability of an agro-industrial complex combining a nuclear power station, a desalination plant, a fertilizer plant and an aluminium plant in the Kutch-Saurashtra region has also been completed recently. It is proposed to get first hand experience of the latest technology for desalination and also to explore the economic use of high cost water for agriculture in arid zones.

SHRI N. SRI RAMAREDDY : May I know whether any experiments have been done or is it still in the stage of starting the experiment so far as this is concerned ?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : A Committee was appointed in November, 1967 which submitted its Report in June, 1968. A preliminary survey has been made and an experiment is still to be conducted.

SHRI K. P. MALLIKARJUNUDU : It is learnt that Israel is one of the countries which embarked upon a programme of desalination. May I know what success attended their efforts and whether it has been found economically and commercially feasible ?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Experiments as these on nuclear power programme combined with an agro-industrial complex are being conducted in the Oakridge National Laboratory and our scientists are participating in them and we will get all the advantage of research experiments conducted in other countries.

SHRI SURESH J. DESAI : May I know if it is a fact that the technique of desalination has already been developed in some countries like Israel—the only question is about the cost—and whether any progress has been made in order to reduce the cost of desalination ?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, as I said in my reply to the previous question the benefit of all the experiments carried on in different parts of the world they have got in the Oakridge National Laboratory and our scientists are participating there. The greater the capacity of the nuclear plant the cheaper will be the cost. If it is a 1000 megawatts or 1200 megawatts the cost may come down to something like 2.61 Paise per unit of electricity and Rs. 2.35 for 1000 gallons of water.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA : May I know from the hon. Deputy Minister whether any representative from India has been deputed to go to Israel to study the working of desalination in that country ?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : We practise untouchability; how can we do it ?

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : Sir, I want notice for this.

SHRI S. D. MISHRA : Is it a fact that in France and Holland desalinated sea water has been made economical not only for drinking purposes but also for irrigation purposes and has any study been made of this question ? We have a long coastal area and in these coastal areas if we can purify the sea water we can make use of it not only for drinking but also for irrigation purposes.

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI : It is not so much for water as for energy. A Committee was constituted by the power research centre and that has gone into all these details. Desalinated water can be utilised in the arid zones. Where subsoil water is not available, where water from the conventional sources is not available, there only this desalinated water can be utilised for irrigation.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Since the question on this point by Mr. Bhargava had not been answered, I would like to know if the Government has any taboo against receiving any technical aid or help from Israel because even in those areas where they have made some remarkable progress if they offer aid it is said that our Government is not agreeable

to accepting that aid. I would like to know if there is any such taboo or if not, if there are any other reasons for not accepting such assistance.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : I think what the Minister said just now was that we did not have the information whether somebody went from here to Israel or not. There is no question of a taboo we believe that in scientific activity wherever information is available it should be taken but we have to see—we are in touch with various laboratories and so on—whether it helps us to go to particular places or whether the same information is available already. So all these matters have to be taken into consideration.

*665. [The questioner (Shri Sitaram Jnipuria) was absent. For answer, vide col. 4793 *infra*.]

ABOLITION OF CLASS, CASTE AND RELIGION DISTINCTIONS IN ARMY

*666. **SHRI Z. A. AHMED :**
SHRI JAGAT NARAIN† :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to abolish class, caste and religions distinctions in the various formations of the army at the regimental level;

(b) if the reply to part (a) above be in the affirmative, whether any representations have been received against the proposal;

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) whether any steps are being taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) : (a) The policy of reorganising the Army unit so as to remove the uncalled for distinctions which had been prevalent prior to Independence has been in force now for quite some time and gradual reorganisation has been going on for many years.

(b) to (d) Although one representation against the abolition of class composition in fighting units has been received by Government, no action has been taken thereon since the Government policy already adopted is in the larger interests

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Jagat Narayan.

of the country and has been adopted after taking into account all the factors involved.

श्री जगत नारायण : मैं वजीरसाहब से यह बात पूछना चाहता हूँ कि जैसे आजकल आर्मी में राजपूत रेजीमेंट है, जाट रेजीमेंट है, तो क्या ये नाम कायम रहेंगे या फिर आहिस्ते आहिस्ते ये नाम भी खत्म कर दिये जायेंगे ? उनकी जो पालिसी है वह बहुत अच्छी है और अगर ये नाम भी खत्म कर दिये जाय तो अच्छा होगा ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Some of the names do continue for historical reasons. In the case of new raisings the names are not connected with any community or any State or any particular class. But the old names are being retained for historical reasons. In some of them however recruitment is not restricted either to the State or even to that community or class.

श्री राजनारायण : क्या रक्षा मंत्री जी को मालूम है कि जाट रेजीमेंट, राजपूत रेजीमेंट चूकी ये नाम अब तक चले आ रहे हैं इसमें कुछ श्रेणी के लोगों को विक्षोभ है ? अभी सारे देश के यादव लोगों की एक सभा हुई थी जिसमें उन लोगों ने मांग की है—शायद रक्षा मंत्री जी को उसकी एक प्रतिलिपि भी भेजी गई होगी, हमारे पास परसों ही उसकी एक प्रतिलिपि आई है—कि अगर जाट और राजपूत रेजीमेंट का नाम सेना से नहीं हटाया जाता है तो यादव रेजीमेंट का नाम भी रखा जाना चाहिये क्योंकि हम किसी से कम लड़ाकू नहीं हैं और हम सब से ज्यादा लड़ाकू हैं । इस तरह की उनकी मांग आई है । तो इस चीज को मद्दे नजर रखते हुए क्या रक्षा मंत्री जी इस बात पर पुनः विचार करेंगे कि चूकि और भी मांग बढ़ती चली जा रही है, इसलिए जाट और राजपूत का भी नाम सेना से हटा दिया जायेगा ?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : I am not aware of the particular representation or request about which the hon. Member has made mention. In these matters we should approach the problem in a gradual manner and I do not think that there is any necessity for immediate abolition or change of the names that have