

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 21st November, 1967/the 30th Kartika, 1889 (.Saka)

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

TALKS WITH THE UNDERGROUND NAGAS

- 31. SHRI ARJUN ARORA : † SHRI KRISHAN KANT:
DR. (MRS.) MANGLADEVI TAL-
WAR : SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA:
SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: PROF.
SHANTILAL KOTHARI: SHRI
BHUPINDER SINGH:
SARDAR NARINDER SINGH
BRAR:
SHRIR. P. KHAITAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) Whether there has been another round of talks with the leaders of the underground Nagas in October this year ;

(b) if so, whether any concrete proposals were discussed ;

(c) whether the talks proceeded on the basis of Nagaland continuing as a part of the Indian Union ; and

(d) the circumstances in which the talks ended abruptly and when it is proposed to have the next round of talks ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Madam. The Underground Naga leaders met the Prime Minister on the 5th October, 1967. Meetings were scheduled

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Arjun Arora.

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originally to be held on 4th and 5th October but owing to illness of Mr. Kughato Sukhai no meeting was held on 4th October.

(b) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

During the talks no concrete proposals could be discussed as the Underground Nagas maintained their extremist stand of 'sovereignty and independence' for Nagaland which they have publicly taken.

As indicated on earlier occasions there is no change in the Government's stand, viz., Nagaland is an integral part of the Indian Union. Our stand has been repeatedly made clear to the Underground Naga representatives during their talks with the Prime Minister from time to time.

On the morning of 6th October, the Nagas who were staying at the Government Guest House asked for their return passages (nine) to be booked for the 9th. This change was immediately made with the Airlines which held provisional bookings for 6th and 7th in accordance with earlier requests. At about 3 P.M., the Underground asked that their booking for the 7th evening should be retained as they may leave on that day. As the programme had been changed a number of times already, the Naga guests were requested to take a firm decision about their stay, as the (Government Guest House) Hyderabad House had been booked from 10th October for other Government guests. They were assured, however, that as they were Government guests, the Government of India would be responsible for making alternative arrangements if those became necessary.

Between noon and 1-30 P.M. on 6th October, 1967, the Nagas held informal discussions with the two Ministers deputed for the purpose by the Prime Minister. Immediately thereafter the Nagas demanded to see the Prime Minister on that day. They were told that the Prime Minister had set aside

4th and 5th October for them but illness of their own leaders had prevented a meeting on the 4th; that the Prime Minister was leaving India on the 8th morning and she was therefore extremely busy on that day, i.e., on the 6th and it would not be possible to arrange a meeting on that very day but that after checking Prime Minister's convenience a meeting may be possible on the 7th, i.e., on the next day. The Nagas remained adamant and insisted on meeting the Prime Minister on that very day although they were staying on till 9th October.

It appears that they then consulted among themselves and around 8-30 P.M. summoned a Press Conference and are reported to have said that "the talks have broken off". They initially gave the excuse of having been shown discourtesy which clearly had no basis but subsequently reiterated their extremist demand and said, "Talks have ended in a deadlock as there is no common ground to continue the negotiations. Negotiations could be held only on the basis of the Naga demand for an independent sovereign Nagaland outside India."

Government of India sincerely hope that the extremists amongst the Underground will see the advantage of peace and would not stand in the way of the talks which would have to continue to find an amicable and peaceful settlement.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: Madam, may I make a request ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; thfe is Question Hour.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Madam, may I know why the talks held in October ended so abruptly and may I know if there is any truth in the Press reports that though the date for the talks was fixed by the Government of India when actually the time arrived the people responsible for holding the talks had no time to see the Naga leaders?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: That is not true, Madam. There was a meeting. As I said in the reply on the 4th the talks

could not be held because the leader of the Naga Delegation was ill and the talks were held on the 5th. Later on the Naga leaders decided not to continue the talks and they went away.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Krishan Kant.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: My second question, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have called him.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: May I know if what has happened in the Naga talks led to the starting of the Naga trouble? As reported in some of the papers in the autobiography of John Smith the CIA. Agent it was given out that this Naga trouble started with the help of the C.I.A. agents and the Military Attache who went to Nagaland, gave them arms and ammunition and millions of dollars and promised them further help. Secondly recently even the Chief Minister of Nagaland has admitted that the Republican Party of U.S.A. has promised help to the Nagas. Because of the involvement of the C.I.A. on the one side and the Chinese on the other side, is the breaking of the talks the result of international confabulations of various Powers and what action are we taking so that other Powers do not interfere in our dealings with Nagas?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: This is too large a question on this, but I can ...

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: The Minister is not audible.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: This is too large a question on this matter but since it has been raised I can assure the hon. Member and the House that to the best of our capacity we will prevent outside Powers from interfering in this matter. As for the particular matter about what John Smith has said and those activities, well, we are looking into all those things.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr, Tal-war.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Madam, I rise on a point of order. The point of order is that the Chairman of this House has given a ruling that the Member whose name appears first can ask...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I do not think any number of questions can be asked. Do you want to block others?

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: I want to put my point of order. Please hear it and then impute motives if you think it proper.

The ruling given by the Chairnn of this House is that the Member whose name appears first for a particular question will be allowed opportunity to put two supplementaries at least. My submission is that the ruling should be followed. By not following that ruling . . .

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. How do you know that I was not going to come back to you? Shri M. P. Bhargava.

DR. (MRS.) MANGLADEVI TAL-WAR: I am here, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You did not get up when I called you.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know from the hon. Minister whether he has seen Press commentaries where it has been pointed out that the responsibility for the breakdown of the talks rests on the shoulders of the Commerce Minister and if that Press report has been seen, what steps have been taken by the Government to contradict that Press report because if it is not contradicted the feeling in the country will be that the Commerce Minister was responsible for the breakdown of the talks?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: The statement that has been laid explains the position fully. It also denies that the Commerce Minister or anybody else from the Government of India side was responsible for the breakdown of the talks.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Please come near the mike. We cannot hear at all.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think you better move to the mike since you are not audible to them.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD : Since the talks may I know how many times the Nagas have attacked Indians, how many have been killed and how many kidnapped and may I also know whether the Nagas consider themselves as Indian nationals?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: So far as the first part of the question is concerned, I want notice because it asks for details. As far as the second part is concerned we consider the Nagas as Indian nationals.

श्री आर० पी० खैतान : क्या मैं मंत्री जी से पूछ सकता हूँ कि मणिपुर में जो नागा लोग गोलमाल कर रहे हैं उसके विषय में हम क्या एक्शन ले रहे हैं ?

श्री बी० आर० भगत : मणिपुर में अभी कुछ हुआ था, मगर जैसा मैंने कहा हम उसको रोकने की पूरी तैयारी कर रहे हैं !

DR (MRS.) MANGLADEVI TAL-WAR: Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister if there is any truth that some junior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs were responsible in creating misunderstanding in the minds of the Nagas that the Prime Minister was not keen to see them?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Madam, this matter has been fully clarified in the statement laid on the Table by the Minister. May I also just repeat that there is no truth in this allegation?

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know what is responsible for the fact that the talks have been going on for more than three years without any settlement? May I know who is responsible for this leisurely manner of the talks? Talks are held; lunches are also held and then the talks are postponed for three months. After three months a convenient date is not found and another postponement for two months takes

place This has been going on for three years. May I know whether the Government has evaluated the responsibility for the prolongation of the talks for the prolongation of the cease-fire and for the fact that during this period when the talks have been going on Pakistan and China had a hand in this and a number of Naga rebels have been trained by these two countries? Those people who are responsible for the prolongation of the talks are in fact responsible for the Chinese stepping in. May I know if the attention of the Government has been drawn to this and if so what action does the Government propose to take in the matter?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Madam the question is not how long the talks have been going on; the question is whether we want peace in Nagaland and a peaceful solution or not. That is the question. It is true that in our opinion—and it is the opinion of the people who have studied the question on the spot and from outside—since the talks have begun there is by and large peace in Nagaland and the desire for peace is growing in the minds of the Naga people. This does not mean that there is not a small group which is active and which would like to make mischief. This small group has not been in favour of peace talks at any time and is attempting in every possible way not only to see that the talks may not be successful but also to create all the trouble. I think that there is considerable division amongst the Nagas themselves, even amongst those who have come to talk with us and apart of the reason for the delay is this divided opinion amongst themselves. But it should be our endeavour to try and convert as many of them as possible to our way of thinking.

SHRI C. D. PANDE : May I know whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the statement, specific and unequivocal statement of the president of the Naga Republic, so-called republic, that they do not believe in any negotiations except on the basis of complete independence? In view of this categorical statement may I know whether

the Government thinks it worthwhile to continue the talks?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: This matter has also been mentioned here on various occasions. As I said, there is a group amongst them who hold strong opinions. Now, we have from the beginning stated our opinion and our views equally clearly to them. The very fact that in spite of that, talks have continued shows that there was some realisation of realities on their part also, but as I said, because there is this divided opinion amongst them, it is not easy for them to express anything like this at that stage.

SHRI M. VERO: I can understand that the hon. Prime Minister could not make another round of talks with the Underground people last time, but I cannot understand why the Prime Minister herself had not explained the difficulties personally to the Underground delegation in their round table conference but sent an official message to the Underground delegation that she wanted them to leave Delhi as soon as possible. I want to know whether the Government or the delegation are responsible for the breakdown of the talks.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: As I have already mentioned, this morning, several times, what happened is explained step by step in the statement laid on the Table of the House by the Minister. No message was sent to the Nagas about their leaving. On the contrary, when I heard that they wanted to meet me, I immediately sent a message that I would be very willing to meet them. Earlier in front of me they themselves had expressed the view that they would first like to have a preliminary meeting with other people. Therefore, we thought that these talks would continue and that I would meet them the next day.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: On a point of order..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Arora, this is not the way really. This is Question Hour.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Madam, the statement has not been supplied to us.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It has been laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: The practice is that the statement is supplied to the Members whose names appear here. In this case it has not been done.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I do not think the practice is that the statement is supplied to each Member.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरडिया :
उदाहरण के लिए इसके आगे क्वेश्चन नं०
34 है, इसमें मेरा नाम आखीर में है और
मुझे स्टेटमेंट मिला है ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Those who are interested in the question should come early.

SHRI G. MURAHARI: Not a single Member from the Opposition has been called.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have just been informed by Secretary that the statement was received late. Mr. Bhagat has to be very careful and see that statements come at least one hour before the House begins its proceedings.

Mr. Bhargava.

SHRI G. MURAHARI: I would like to say that not a single Member from the Opposition has been called.

COVERAGE OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS BY A.I.R.

*32. SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

<a) whether any complaints have recently been received regarding coverage of Parliamentary proceedings by the All India Radio;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the coverage more time and emphasis is given to the members of the opposition parties; and

(c) if reply to part (b) above be in the affirmative, whether it is proposed to allocate time between the opposition and the ruling parties?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. K. SHAH): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) No, Madam.

(c) Does not arise. I

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: The hon. Minister has said "Yes" in reply to part (a) of my question. May I know what types of complaints have been received by him and what steps has he taken to see that these complaints are removed?

SHRI K. K. SHAH: Numerous complaints are received. One type of complaint I am mentioning, because it is difficult to cover all of them. Some of them I would mention. Some friends from the Congress Party have complained that their names were not taken. The second complaint is that their speeches were not covered on the first day but were covered on the next day. The third complaint is that enough material was not given so far as their speeches are concerned. As an example, I want to read out what was said about what Mr. Bhargava said and what Mr. Sinha said in one complaint: —

"From the Congress Benches Mr. M. P. Bhargava dilated on the working of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. He stressed the need for economy in expenditure and said there should be no recruitment to Government service until this economy passed the present bad patch.

Another Congress Member. Mr. Awadheshwar Prasad Sinha, treated the House to an entertaining speech. The veteran Member from Bihar has apparently a rich repertoire of anecdotes and experiences. He quoted Jesus Christ in support of his plea for stringent action against anti-social elements in the field of business and trade. They know not what they do, he chanted. Mr. Sinha also raised his voice against the proposal to manufacture a small car costing about seven