

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 8th August, 1967 [the 11th
Srawana, 1889 (SaJca).

The House met at eleven of the clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

INDIANS IN BURMESE JAIL

*322. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian nationals who are under detention in Burma at present for economic offences as a result of commercial nationalisation;

(b) whether it is fact that these persons have not been tried so far;

(c) whether the Government of India has approached the Government of Burma in the matter and if so, with what results;

(d) whether our Embassy in Burma is looking after the families of these persons; and

(e) if so, what facilities are being provided to these families?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA): (a) There are at present 34 Indian nationals under detention in Burma for alleged economic offences.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. Forty-six Indians have been released so far. The Embassy is pursuing with the Burmese authorities the question of the release of the remaining 34 Indians.

(d) and (e) The Embassy is providing normal consular facilities to the families affected.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: May I know from the hon. Minister as to what are the specific charges against those persons and why trial has not taken place so far?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: In the case of economic offences there is no
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question of trial; there is detention. In the case of other types of offences there is trial. That is why we have been pressing upon the Burmese Government that those who have been detained for offences under the economic law should be sent back to India. As the answer indicates, a large number of them have already been sent and we are negotiating with them with regard to the rest.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: In view of the fact that we would like to maintain friendly relations with Burma and we do not like to have animosity with them,—may I know whether it is not the moral responsibility at least of the Government of India—it may not be its legal responsibility—to ensure that the Indians in Burma are not maltreated? What steps have been taken by the Government of India to ensure that the Government of Burma acts in a manner which is in keeping with the international rules and regulations?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: May I tell this House that the Burmese Government have been most friendly and most co-operative and they have been trying to do their best to see that they meet our point of view? A large number of them have already been released and we are carrying on negotiations with regard to releasing the other detainees and I hope very soon those who are detained under economic laws will be repatriated to India.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: As this issue is connected with the nationalisation of commercial assets also, may I know from the hon. Minister as to whether any settlement has been made with regard to the question of compensation and what is the exact amount of compensation that is expected to be paid and by what time it will be finalised?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: This question does not directly arise from this but I might tell the House that the matter of compensation is under negotiation between our Government and

the Burmese Government and we expect that a settlement will be reached very soon.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Sir, may I ask the Minister to give us some details with regard to these economic offences? I suppose, Sir, they relate to profiteering or smuggling or currency. I do not know exactly what these economic offences are. Also may I know whether any legal assistance is being given to those persons who are in trouble on this account?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: Sir, economic offences comprise profiteering, smuggling and currency offences. But with regard to the assistance given, after negotiating, Sir, we have now got the Burmese Government to agree that consular assistance is given to the Indians who are detained and also the members of their families are allowed to see them from time to time.

SHRI A. D. MANI: I do not know what is meant by 'consular assistance.'

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: That is from our Embassy somebody could meet them and find out what their problems and difficulties are and so on. So far our consular officers had no access to the detenus but now access has been permitted.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरड़िया :
क्या श्रीमान यह बतलायेंगे कि इनको नजरबन्द
हुये लगभग डेढ़ दो साल हो गये और हमारे
और ब्रह्म देश के संबंध अच्छे भी हैं ऐसा आपका
कहना है और हम भी इसको मानना चाहते
हैं, तो क्या कारण है कि ट्रायल तो हो नहीं
सकता किन्तु उनको अभी तक न छोड़वा सके
और न कुछ करवा सके ? आप यह कहते
हैं कि बहुत जल्दी हो गया, तो मैं यह जानना
चाहता हूँ कि कितनी अवधि तक यह होना
संभव है कि वह हमारे देश में वापस आ सकें या
जेलों से छूट सकें ?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: Now, Sir, the first question that we took up with them was that all those who had

been arrested prior to the 27th of May, 1964 should be repatriated. Now as far as that is concerned, the position is that 36 Indian, nationals, are in detention in Burma for alleged economic offences of whom 8 were detained before the 27th of May, 1964. So we have got all released except 8. With regard to those who committed economic offences after the 27th May, 1964 we have taken up the matter recently and the Burmese Government has agreed that it will sympathetically consider their cases.

श्री जगतनारायण : क्या सरकार इस बात
की जानकारी करायेगी कि जो 32 लोगों का,
वाणिज्यों का राष्ट्रीयकरण हुआ है उसमें
कितनी पूंजी है ।

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: I am sorry. this does not arise now. If the hon Member gives notice, I will try and find out.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, the economic offences alleged against those Indians do not seem to be very laudable. May I know whether the Government of India is of opinion that they have tarnished the fair name of India in a foreign country? May I also know whether the nationalisation scheme of Burma provides for compensation to be paid or they have taken over foreign concerns without paying compensation and whether the question of paying compensation to Indians is being considered as a special case?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: I can only mention about the detenus to whom the question relates. As far as the detenus are concerned the Burmese Government insists that they must sign an agreement agreeing to hand over all their assets in Burma to the Burmese Government. I think barring one all have agreed. They have signed the declaration "If we are sent back to India, we will surrender whatever assets we have in Burma to the Burmese Government." So, as far as our part is concerned, it has been carried out.

Now with regard to tarnishing the image of India, I am not in a position to judge whether those people were guilty and, if so, the enormity of the offence. It is an internal matter for the Burmese Government and it would not be right for us to sit in judgment with regard to what the Burmese Government has done.

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJA-GOPALAN): Sir, besides those who are in detention in Burma, I would like to know how many Indian nationals are there in Burma who have expressed a desire to come back to India and whether they are allowed to bring along with them their belongings.

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: Well, Sir, I am not in a position to give the figures. We are only dealing with those who are detained. With regard to those who are free, I do not think there is any restriction on their coming back to India, if they so desire.

SHRI SHANTILAL KOTHARI: May I know from the Minister whether the Ministry has found out if there was any discriminatory treatment meted out to Indian nationals *vis-a-vis* other nationals in Burma?

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA: No, Sir, As far as I am aware, there was no discrimination. Certain economic laws were passed by Burma and all people had to submit to those laws. As far as I am aware, no attempt was made to discriminate between Indians and people of other nationalities.

♦323. [The questioner (Shri Babubhai M. Chinai) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2695 infra.]

*324. [Transferred to the 17th August, 1967.]

MANUFACTURE OF SUBMARINES

*325. SHRI JAGAT NARAIN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to manufacture submarines in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

श्री जगत नारायण : मैं वजीर साहब से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि हर रोज हमारे डिफेंस मिनिस्टर साहब, फारेन मिनिस्टर और प्राइम मिनिस्टर यह कहते हैं कि चीन और पाकिस्तान किसी वक्त भी भारतवर्ष पर हमला कर सकता है, तो इन हालात में हमारी सरकार सबमैरींस खरीद करने के लिये क्या कोशिश कर रही है? हमारा एक मिलिटरी डेपुटेशन रूस में सबमैरीन खरीदने के लिये गया था, उसका क्या नतीजा निकला है। और गवर्नमेंट क्या कर रही है, हमारा इतना बड़ा वास्तु कंट्री है जो ओशन के साथ मिला हुआ है और हर वक्त खतरा रहता है, तो हिन्दुस्तान के समुद्र के रास्ते से बचाव के लिये गवर्नमेंट क्या कर रही है?

श्री बी० आर० भगत : सवाल तो है सबमैरींस बनाने का, पनडुब्बी जहाजों के निर्माण का। जहाँ तक सबमैरीन और दूसरे नौसेना के जहाजों को इस लायक बनाना है कि हमारी नौसेना ताकतवर हो, तो उसकी देख-भाल हम कर रहे हैं, और सबमैरींस का प्रबंध किया जा रहा है।

श्री जगत नारायण : अभी वजीर साहब ने कहा था कि सवाल सबमैरीन बढ़ाने का ही है। मैं यह पूछ रहा था कि रूस से जो सबमैरीन खरीद करने के लिये गए थे, हिन्दुस्तान के डिफेंस के वास्ते, उसके मुताल्लिक आपने कोई जवाब नहीं दिया कि डेलीगेशन गया, खरीद करके लाया कि नहीं लाया। उन्होंने कहा यह सवाल सिर्फ बनाने के मुताल्लिक है और बनाने का मतलब यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान की डिफेंस मजबूत हो। तो उस के संबंध में जब कि आपको पता है, इसी हाउस में सावल हुआ था कि बरतानिया यहाँ पर इंडियन ओशन में नेवल बेस बना रहा है,