

# RAJYA SABHA

Friday, 8th May, 1959

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

## SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

### INDUSTRIAL SCHEMES FORWARDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

2. SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the Minister of REHABILITATION AND MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Shri Tarun Kanti Ghosh, Minister of State for Rehabilitation, Government of West Bengal, made a statement in the State Assembly towards the end of February, 1959, that he had sent industrial schemes involving an expenditure of Rs. 5 crores to the Government of India;

(b) whether a statement was made subsequently on behalf of the Government of West Bengal that the above mentioned schemes had been sent to the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the inaugural meeting of the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation was held in Delhi on April 6, 1959?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF REHABILITATION (SHRI P. S. NASIKAR): (a) Yes. According to newspaper reports, Shri Tarun Kanti Ghosh, Minister of State for Rehabilitation, stated in the West Bengal Assembly on the 28th of February 1959, that "some more schemes involving a total expenditure of Rs. 5 crores and having total employment potential of 27,000 persons had been sent to the Government of India for sanction".

(b) Yes. On the 17th of March 1959 Shri P. C. Sen, Minister for Rehabilitation, stated in the West Bengal Assembly that "what Tarun Babu has said is that schemes worth Rs. 5 crores with employment potential of 27,000 displaced persons have been sent by Rehabilitation Department to the Industries Board".

(c) Yes. The meeting, however, was informal as the Corporation was registered at Calcutta only on the 13th of April 1959.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It appears from the reply that the Corporation was registered on the 13th of April and the inaugural meeting informally held was on the 6th April. May I know, Sir, whether the Government has made enquiries as to how in that case, Shri Prafulla Sen could have possibly sent his schemes to the Corporation in the middle of March?

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: It is a matter for the State Government to look into.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know, Sir—since this matter had been raised in this House last session also—whether the hon. Minister had made enquiries from Shri Prafulla Sen, the State Minister, about this particular statement regarding schemes?

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: There has been some correspondence, Sir, between me and the State Rehabilitation Minister in the matter.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is the hon. Minister aware that after the hon. Minister here had stated that he did not receive any scheme from Shri Tarun Kanti Ghosh in February, the matter was taken up in the West Bengal Assembly by Mr. Jyoti Basu in the middle of March and that in reply to a question by him Shri Prafulla Sen said that the scheme had been sent to the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation and not to the Union Government?

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: This is what has been stated, Sir, in the replies to parts (a) and (b) of the question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know, Sir, in that case what is the position? Neither we in Parliament nor they in the Assembly know as to where these requests went and it

seems we are absolutely in the dark in that case. Now, Sir, why did not Government consider the advisability of straightening out the matter by making proper enquiries from the State Minister concerned in this respect?

MR. CHAIRMAN: When he continues in the dark, he throws so much light. Let him continue in the dark for some time more.

#### REFERENCE TO PAPERS CONNECTED WITH THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SHRI M. O. MATHAI

DR. R. B. GOUR (Andhra Pradesh): Before we go to the regular business, may I tell you, Sir, that yesterday also I had raised the point that from the list of papers laid on the Table by the Secretary it did not appear that the report of Shri Vishnu Sahay himself was to be placed on the Table of the House, and after having received those papers, Sir, our apprehensions came true, and the original report of Shri Vishnu Sahay himself was not made available to us. You know, Sir, that the demand was made for a judicial enquiry. It was not even a departmental enquiry and now even this report of Shri Vishnu Sahay has not been given to us. We therefore, request, Sir, that this report also be made available to us, and also now that we are on the last day of the session, we hope you would agree that the discussion be allowed next session.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, before I ask Mr. Morarji Desai to say anything, it is quite true that all sorts of demands were made, but the commitment of the Government in the words of the Prime Minister in the other House was:

"Therefore, I decided that it was better for this matter to be considered in all its fullness by someone who could prepare a report on it to be considered, and at that time it will be for us to decide what, if any, further steps should be taken

in this matter. So I asked our Cabinet Secretary to ascertain all the facts that he could in this matter from the various allegations and charges made, whether in any question in this House or in the press, if it was available, and report to me so that I would be in a better position to submit such a report or my own report on it to you, Sir. I have done that. And because these matters involve—these charges involve—financial matters, it is my intention, the Cabinet Secretary sends his report or note to me on those subjects, to send it to my colleague the Finance Minister, and separately to the Comptroller and Auditor-General so that they may judge the financial proprieties and improprieties of any action that had been taken."

So in response to the different demands made in this House and the other House the Prime Minister said that he would ask the Cabinet Secretary to look into this matter and when his report is submitted, he would refer it to the Finance Minister and also the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and he would himself make a report. That is the commitment of the Government thus far. Would you like to say anything?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI): Yes, Sir; that commitment has been completely carried out, and as it was said, this was not even a departmental enquiry. It was a confidential enquiry got made by the Prime Minister to ascertain facts for himself so that he could report to you.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): It was whitewashing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Whatever the adjectives . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't prejudge the issue.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Therefore, what he had promised has