

amount paid in each claim is strictly what is due. So I want to further go into this question. My friend Mr. Tamta raised the question that only on account of technical difficulties or technical grounds, there should not be rejection of claims. As a matter of fact, instructions have already been issued to the Railway administrations that the claims should not be rejected if otherwise justifiable, on technical grounds. We are also considering the question of revising sections 77 and 80 of the Indian Railways Act in connection with the recommendations of the Freight Structure Enquiry Committee.

About the representation of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the Railway Board is alive to it and we are trying to see that the vacancies meant for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are filled by the candidates belonging to these communities. We have taken certain steps and we propose to take certain action.

As regards the utilisation of the land of Railways in various States, it was raised by Mr. Patil, what we do normally is to hand over the surplus lands to the State Governments and it is for the State Governments to make settlements for cultivation purposes. We indicated that preference should be shown to the landless people to whatever community they belong to. But it is entirely for the States or the State Governments concerned to settle the land. Last year there were certain difficulties due to the tenancy legislations of certain States and where the State Governments did not want to take this responsibility, certain areas of the surplus railway lands remained uncultivated but I think from this year that contingency will not arise.

श्री पां० ना० राजभोज : चौथी श्रेणी के कर्मचारियों के लिये तापसे कमैटी की रिक्मेंडेशन का क्या हुआ ?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1958-59 for the purposes of Railways, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2, 3 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be returned."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be returned."

The motion was adopted.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

(Arising out of Starred Question No. 29 answered on 12th February, 1958)

REHABILITATION OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN DANDAKARANYA

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now we have the Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): I want to raise this discussion, . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I give fifteen minutes to you and fifteen minutes to the Minister.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I want to raise a discussion on the Dandakaranya Project, as it is called. The purpose of my discussion is to draw the attention of the House to certain aspects of the matter and also to the fact that the refugees in West Bengal, backed by all the opposition parties are opposed to the refugees being sent to Dandakaranya under the present situation.

I would also seek clarification from the hon. Minister about the details of this scheme. I do not know exactly what this scheme is like, except that we have got certain materials, though they are not very enlightening. So, Sir, we are all in the dark, and I do not know whether the hon. Minister knows very much about it, but we would hear when he replies to my points.

It was in the beginning of last year that we heard of the Dandakaranya scheme or the Dandakaranya Project. At that time it was suggested that by spending Rs. 100 crores, the border areas of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra, comprising about 80,000 sq. miles, can be reclaimed and developed for human habitation. It was also suggested that refugees in large numbers could be sent there. How it came up we do not know. Who formulated this scheme is not very clear to us. As far as the Planning Commission is concerned, in the Second Five Year Plan, in the chapter on Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons, we find no reference to this scheme. I assume, therefore, that the Department hit upon this idea after the Second Five Year Plan had been settled and had been worked out. This is very important for my purpose, because, when we discussed the Second Five Year Plan, nobody placed before us this scheme or anything about this scheme. The Plan documents themselves contained no reference whatsoever to this scheme.

Then I come to the next document—the speech of the hon. Minister at the Ministers' Conference at Darjeeling on 30th October, 1957. Here he said:

“Dandakaranya has considerable potential; but it is still in the exploratory stage.”

That was in October, 1957.

Then, Sir, I came across an article by Mr. Mehr Chand Khanna in the Economic Review, published by the All India Congress Committee. That is on January, 15th, 1958. In the concluding para of this article he says about the Dandakaranya scheme that it will “however be some time before the area would be fit to receive permanent settlers”. That is what I find in 1958, coming from the official quarter.

Then I looked up the Budget, and on page 33 of the Explanatory Memorandum on the Budget 1958, there is this said about the Dandakaranya scheme:

“After development, it is expected to absorb a large number of new inhabitants. The expenditure on the scheme during the first three years beginning from 1957-58 is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 10 crores. A provision of Rs. 3 crores has been made in the Budget for 1958-59.”

Sir, these are the statements that I have got with me, that is to say, for the next three years, Rs. 10 crores have been allocated, and if the development goes on at this rate, then it will take, according to my computation, assuming that this area can be developed at all, to spend Rs. 100 crores, some thirty years. Now, this is about all. So we are all in the dark about this scheme.

Then I found out from other information that in May of last year, a high-power committee went and visited that Dandakaranya area and made a report or recommendation to

the Government. Thus their scheme was taking shape, and who do you think, Sir, was leading that high-power committee? Do you know who was leading it last year? It was Mr. H. M. Patel, the former Principal Secretary to the Finance Ministry.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE (Bombay): Why former? Still he is.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Of the high-power committee, he was the leader or chairman. He visited, Sir, only two places. He did not visit all the places and he made certain reports about the possibilities of this scheme. Well, it is for the hon. Members of this House to attach whatever importance they like to the recommendations made by a committee led by such a personality as Mr. H. M. Patel; but I think, Sir, the country will not attach much importance to it, after the country had seen how he could manage the simple affair of the L.I.C.

That is all. Then we did not hear very much about it. What is all this? The name is Dandakaranya, you see. I enquired of the Orissa people and other people also, but they are not quite clear whether this area corresponds to the Dandakaranya of the Ramayana, but there may be some attraction, some purpose, some religious attraction attached to the area so that the refugees might go to that sacred area. Sir, I do not know whether Rama of the Ramayana lived there or not, but tigers live there today and bears too.

THE MINISTER OF REHABILITATION AND MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA): I will not take you there.

AN HON. MEMBER: We refuse to go there.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Anyway, the hon. Minister tells me that there are no tigers there. I don't know, probably all the man-eaters come to Delhi.

This is the position. This area is jungle area. In the whole area there are no means of communication. The hon. Minister himself disclosed that within 100 miles there are no means of communication. The area is infested, with malarial fever. Anti-malaria squads are operating there, according to him. In this House it was also said that black-water fever is there. It is such a dangerous area. Sir, an hon. Minister was asked on February 12th whether he knew about the black-water fever in that area and he said that the matter would be looked into. Yet they have taken a decision to whisk away a hundred families to this area.

Now, they have chosen a particular area from the Orissa side—Parsa-gaon, with an area of 2,000 acres and these families will be taken there, one hundred refugee families. What is that area like? This area is in the Kalahandi district . . .

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH (Orissa): No, it is in Madhya Pradesh, in Bastar district.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Then there is an area in Orissa—Kalahandi and there is another in Koraput. Sir, these areas were, when under the British, called agency areas and the Orissa Government, when they wanted to punish certain officers, used to send them to these areas, and I am told that other officers who do not go there under punishment, they are still drawing extra allowance for working there, when they are sent there in the ordinary course. Such is the area. In olden times of the Ramayana it was the Dandakaranya; under the British it was the agency area where officers used to be sent under punishment, and if not, they were given special allowances. And now again we revert to Dandakaranya and Mr. Mehr Chand Khanna has decided to whisk away to this area the refugees from East Bengal who are now in West Bengal. Yet, how long it will take to develop this area, nobody knows. It is a malarial area, a

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]
black-water fever area, I am told that tigers are not there now. I am not sure about bears. So the climate of the place is absolutely bad; it is malarial and communications are not there. It is all forests. Still, under such circumstances, the East Bengal refugees are to be sent there.

SHRI B. B. SHARMA (Uttar Pradesh): The area . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Please do not get up. My time is short and I beg of you, really I beg of you not to interrupt me.

Now, it is sought to send these people there and you know, there is resistance to this proposal. No organisation for the refugees of East Bengal supports this proposal. They are all opposed to it. On the 10th of July last year, a Resolution was passed in the West Bengal Legislature. The Congress Government sponsored a Resolution in support of it, this Dandakaranya Scheme, but our public pressure was so great that they withdrew this Resolution in favour of an opposition Resolution which said that the West Bengal Government should consult the Opposition parties and should 5 P.M. get more facts. So far no consultation whatsoever has taken place as far as the Opposition parties are concerned. I take it that the scheme does not have the sanction of the West Bengal legislature, does not have the sanction of the refugees of West Bengal, that the scheme, at any rate, is opposed by the entire section of the refugees and by all the Opposition parties and, I believe, even by many in the Congress. It is such a scheme that is sought to be implemented. Well, how is it by consent you are doing that big thing? This morning we heard very great speeches about doing big things by consent. By whose consent it is being done, I would ask the hon. Minister to state.

Sir, as far as development is concerned, they do not talk about Rs.

100 crores any more. After all, we are not so foolish as to think that this Government can develop 80,000 sq. mile area by spending Rs. 100 crores within a foreseeable future. They cannot manage even very small things, I have seen. Therefore the whole thing stands on that. The people are opposed to going there. They have got their fears; they have got their apprehensions. It is not merely a question of parochial resistance to going there. If the necessary conditions obtain and if the situation is favourable and inviting, I do not think the refugees will be opposed as such to going out provided the possibilities in Bengal for rehabilitation have been on the one hand explored fully and good conditions on the other hand are placed at their disposal. Therefore this is the position; today they are opposed to it and a situation is developing in Bengal. I would ask the protection of the House and of the Members of this House on behalf of these refugees so that they are not coerced. Coercion is not just sending them at the point of the bayonet. But doles are being stopped; they are not being given other amenities in Bengal so that they have no other alternative but to go into the jungles of the Dandakaranya. That is the position.

Now, Sir, the question will arise whether there is any alternative possibility. What will the Government do? It is a legitimate question to ask. Refugees have to be settled. They say that West Bengal has reached saturation point. Sir, here is a Report of the Committee of the Ministers on Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons and these were the signatories: The hon. Finance Minister, Mr. Deshmukh was there; the Bengal Chief Minister was there. I will just give you the names, lest it should be called Communist propaganda. Mr. Deshmukh was there; Dr. Roy was there; Shri Ajit Prasad Jain was there. And in this Report they clearly said: "Experience has shown that large-scale rehabilitation of East Bengal refugees in these States . . ." They are referring to neighbouring States.

... is not possible and we do not think the question should be further pursued." This is what they say and in that connection; they have also made some reference to desertion. "Desertions from these States have, however, been very heavy mainly because of the marked reluctance on the part of the displaced persons to be rehabilitated in the States outside Bengal where conditions are different from what they have been used to. A greater effort is necessary to make it a success."

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: What is the date of that Report?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You know that Report.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Date of that Report.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Page? I can give you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He wants the date of the Report.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is 1954; I know it by heart. So that is the position. (*Time bell rings.*) Let me finish, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your fifteen minutes are over. You must give the Minister fifteen minutes.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Give me two or three minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But he has to reply to you.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will you concede two to three minutes? Sir, they say that saturation point has been reached in Bengal but we consider that saturation point in Bengal has not been reached. The Expert Committee of the West Bengal Government has said that in four districts two lakh acres of land are available and in this land refugees and others could be resettled, lands which are not utilised at this moment. They consider that other areas could be

reclaimed. The Sunderbans area could be reclaimed and thus a lot of land could be found there. Certain areas could be reclaimed from the sea; water-logged areas could be reclaimed and fallow lands could also be brought in. So it is possible; industries, cottage industries could be encouraged. The hon. Minister would say perhaps that there are three lakhs refugees in the camp. Here I would only tell him that out of that 60,000 are permanent liabilities. They are not going to be sent, even according to them. With regard to others they are either agriculturists or non-agriculturists. Many of them have entered into benami transactions and secured land but the Government have not issued proper orders; they have not allowed them to finalise this thing. If that were allowed many of them would have been by now settled. Many of these people in the camp by their own effort and initiative have found land by entering into benami registration and all that and if the Government had expedited this matter, many of them would have, by now, been settled. Therefore it is possible to resettle the camp refugees in Bengal on land and in other ways. You need not at all be worried about that and you need not have to send them to Dandakaranya and other areas.

Now, about this development. The hon. Minister said that they have provided for eight or nine spinning mills. But they are not being started. You could start such things; you can start cottage industries. If the schemes that are there under the second Five Year Plan are implemented, a number of families can be resettled there. Therefore, Sir, we do not accept the Government suggestion that Bengal has reached the saturation point and that the refugees have got no other alternative but to be sent outside. The possibilities are there for resettling them; let us explore those possibilities fully; let us utilise them fully. Even if it is not agreeable, we can sit together and discuss

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.] and I think that in such a situation, provided that other conditions outside are inviting and good, the refugees will not refuse to go. (*Time bell rings.*) Sir, I am not making any political capital out of it. I have placed this thing before the House and I hope the Dandakaranya scheme would be cancelled for the present and the funds diverted for the development of West Bengal. We can undertake various schemes with those Rs. 30 crores for resettling those refugees there.

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: Sir, may I . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can ask a question later if you are not satisfied with his reply. That is the rule.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: Sir, I am grateful to Shri Bhupesh Gupta for having raised this matter in the House this afternoon but it would have been more appropriate, Sir, if it had been discussed when the Budget was under consideration. Shri Bhupesh Gupta himself delivered a very long speech. No mention was then made about Dandakaranya at all. Then I could have got the opportunity of speaking about this scheme at length.

Sir, the observations made by him, I am sorry to say, are not borne out by facts. The position is this that we have at the moment nearly 42 lakhs of displaced persons who have come from East Pakistan into India. Of them as many as 32 lakhs are in West Bengal and the balance is scattered over the States of Assam, Tripura, Bihar, Orissa, U.P. etc. Sir, the position was reviewed in 1954 when that Report was written and signed by my predecessor and some other Ministers of the Central Government and the State Government. I only wanted the House to know that the Report to which Mr. Bhupesh Gupta just made a reference was signed in the year 1955 and 1956? We are today in the year 1958. In those two years the

exodus was the heaviest; the average was about 25,000 a month and as many as six lakhs displaced persons came out of East Pakistan and a major portion of them or most of them came into West Bengal. The result was that the refugee population in the camp shot up by roughly 300 per cent. It was about a lakh—I am open to correction—in the year 1954; it went up to over 3 lakhs. Bengal has done extremely well all these years. They have taken a very heavy burden of the refugee exodus in that State. Sir, it must not be forgotten that Bengal is a truncated State; two-thirds of it had already gone to East Pakistan, and then there is no vacuum in that state because there has been no corresponding exodus. And whatever little exodus there had been, we invited them back under the Nehru-Liaquat Pact and most of the Muslim nationals of India who had left India and gone to Pakistan in the heat of the moment came back. The result was that in spite of the heroic efforts made by the Government of West Bengal—and I would like to pay my tribute to Dr. Roy and his Administration—they came to the conclusion—rather a sad and unfortunate conclusion—that they cannot take any more persons for rehabilitation in that State. That is the position with which I was faced when I shifted my headquarters from Delhi and went to Calcutta. Sir, what are we to do if there are no lands available in West Bengal? The people are living in camps—numbering over three lakhs. Then the only obvious course open to us was this, because the majority of the camp population are agriculturists. I am prepared to say without any fear of contradiction that as many as 70 to 80 per cent. of them are agriculturists. They had to be settled on land; land had to be found. We went to the neighbouring States. Bihar, Orissa, U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan. Sir, in spite of the difficulties with which the State Governments are faced—they have their own local problems, their own land problems—as many as

40,000 persons have been taken by the States of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh during one year. That is not a small number, Sir, and my friends from West Bengal have moved there freely and cheerfully. There has been no coercion; there has been no victimisation. But, Sir, I have to take into consideration not only the three lakhs of displaced persons in camps in West Bengal, but also those who are outside the camps in the State. If you take the total as 32 lakhs taking away the three lakhs in camps, the balance would be 29 lakhs. A substantial number of them—according to the State Government as many as 50 per cent. of them—in spite of the huge sums of money that we have spent on their rehabilitation, have not been fully rehabilitated. So we started looking round and the State Governments that I have named and others too, like Mysore and Bombay, have volunteered to offer lands, but, Sir, the problem is so colossal; the problem is so big. Even if you take, say, 60,000 or 70,000 families into consideration and you give each family six to seven acres, it means four lakhs of acres. So I approached the Planning Commission. It is not correct for my friend to say that their advice was never taken. Sir, two Advisers of the Planning Commission—if it is not improper I can name them; one is Mr. Hejmadi, who is now the Chairman, of the Union Public Service Commission and the other Adviser is Mr. Ramamurthy, a very senior officer, I believe, he also officiated as Governor of Madras. They advised us about this Dandakaranya scheme.

The Dandakaranya scheme has passed through three stages up till now. The first stage was a preliminary reference; the second stage was the appointment of the Ampo Committee. It is not fair on our part to go on mentioning officers and calling them names till the whole question has been examined when only we would be in a position to pass judgment. As far as I and my Ministry are concern-

ed, the Chairman of that Committee and the members of that Committee did valuable work; they did a tremendous amount of spade work. That takes me to the date, 1st November 1957. On the first November 1957 we appointed a very senior, a very experienced officer, an officer who has been associated with the rehabilitation problem in Punjab for a number of years. When I selected him and put him on this job, there were both protests and appeals from Punjab from my refuge brethren there saying, 'please do not take him away'. I appointed him, I gave him a very difficult assignment. This officer, during the last four months, has travelled all over that area and he has given me a scheme. To say that there is no scheme may have been correct a few months ago but it is no longer correct to say that today.

Sir, I may mention here that the Dandakaranya covers an area of about 8,000 sq. miles which is about three times the size of West Bengal. I have no intention of tackling the entire scheme all at once. This scheme is going to be phased out. We are going to take up only the first phase of the scheme and the first phase of the scheme covers a fairly vast area. It is bounded, Sir, by Pharasgaon, Narayanpur, Malkanjeri, Govindapally and Umarnkot. It might not convey much to Mr. Bhupesh Gupta or my hon. friends in the House but I propose in the very near future . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Supply us with a map.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: . . . to circulate a detailed note about this scheme, giving the allocations and all that. Now, in this scheme what do we propose to do? The first phase would cover about three years and during these three years I am hoping to take about a lakh of persons there, agriculturists, non-agriculturists and those who can be absorbed in the subsidiary trades.

The main features of the scheme are going to be firstly, balanced utilisation of the available land; afforestation where land is suited only for forest development, whether for timber or for fuel; prevention of further erosion of soil; cultivation of crops appropriate to the quality of land and availability of water; pisciculture—large and small tanks have to be provided for various purposes and those are to be stocked with suitable species of fish to provide valuable supplementary food; establishment of industries, large or small scale, or on a cottage basis having regard to the availability of raw materials, transport and marketing facilities; establishment of adequate educational, technical and vocational training facilities; provision of transport and communications; simultaneously exploration and development of mineral resources—this area is reported to be very rich in mineral resources.

Sir, I am not going to forget the human aspect of the problem, to keep people protected from diseases. Malaria he has mentioned. He has mentioned it today. We started taking action more than six months ago. Black water fever, I do not know whether it is a bogey or a fact. I am, however, having it examined . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: People are living there.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: Communications I am looking into. As my friend has very rightly remarked people are living there. Tribals have been living there since generations. And I want to make a categorical statement in the House today that this scheme will not be implemented to the detriment of the tribals there. They will be partners in that scheme. I want to see that the tribals there who have been living since generations, their economic power is also developed and they rise equally with my friends whom I take from West Bengal.

Now, Sir, one or two things more I might mention. I am going to see that elaborate arrangements are made for the welfare of the people whom I take there. I will have hospitals . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Who are you to take?

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: I will have schools, I will have Bengali doctors, I will have Bengali teachers, and I will have Bengali social workers . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: And now Bengali Rehabilitation Deputy Minister also.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: It is all right sitting round about Willingdon Crescent in Delhi and talk. There is not a single colony where I have taken people and have not seen things for myself. I have been to Charbatia, I have been to Bettiah, I have been to Dharamjaigarh, I have been to Ambikapur and I propose to go also to this Dandakaranya very soon. I do not want to take a single refugee from West Bengal unless I am personally satisfied, I am taking him on my responsibility and I will see that he is properly rehabilitated.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will you take the Opposition people also?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is time, Mr. Khanna.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: I will come to the opposition people too in a minute. Give two minutes more. I hope my friend will not take exception to a name that I am going to mention, the name of a gentleman who occupies a very high and responsible position in West Bengal today. His name is Shri Sankar Das Banerji. He referred to the proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly. I am going to refer to the remarks of the Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The passed a unanimous resolution . . .

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: Please keep quiet, bear with me for only two minutes. Shri Sankar Das Banerji, on his own, visited this area only last month. He spent eleven days in this area. He travelled 987 miles and what he has told me about the Dandakaranya project is this. He said: I do not only like it but I wish to bless it. He has further told me that for the consumption of Shri Bhupesh Gupta and his friends in West Bengal he proposes to issue a pamphlet very soon giving his reactions to the scheme. Sir, we are accused of taking people there by force, oppression, suppression, victimisation—good slogans he has learnt. He has used them and very often. Unfortunately he is the kind of a doctor who has got one recipe for every ailment. But I only want to tell him—he may contradict me, it will surprise him if I were to tell him—that we have already received applications from at least a thousand families now living in West Bengal who want to go to Dandakaranya.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will he publish the names?

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: My time is up. But there are two things that I want to tell him. One is this that he along with other Members of this House will soon get a summary of the report, summary of the scheme. I might even give you a map along with it. So that I want everybody to know what the scheme is. But at the same time I want to tell you that we are determined that this problem of rehabilitation is resolved. I said that yesterday and I said that two days ago. Two things I will not allow to happen. One is this that I shall not allow the scheme to be scuttled, this Dandakaranya scheme. And secondly I shall also see that the free dispersal of the refugee population from West Bengal—those

who want to go to Dandakaranya—their free dispersal is not obstructed. Sir, one thing more.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: What about the question of the Assembly Resolution?

(Interruptions)

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: May I tell Mr. Bhupesh Gupta once for all that I am the Minister in charge of Rehabilitation. I have to look after the migrants who have come from East Pakistan. They are my charge today. He goes on talking in terms of Bengali, Bihari, all the time. I may tell him as Rehabilitation Minister that my charge today is 92 lakhs of displaced persons both from West and East Pakistan, whether Bengalis, Baluchis, Frontier men, Punjabis or Sindhis. We have to see that they are rehabilitated. Sir, he made a reference towards the end and the reference was this that there are a large number of people in the camps in West Bengal who are prepared to buy lands on their own and get settled with their own initiative and effort. (Interruption.) May I tell him that as far as I am concerned and the Government of West Bengal is concerned, if there is any displaced person in the camps who wants to purchase land, the land is suitable, the title is sound, the price is fair and reasonable, I will see that he is given the highest priority in the matter of the purchase of that land and in the grant of the loans. Why should I, who is spending Rs. 8 crores every year on their relief, like to keep those people in tents and talk about others? My highest priority is the liquidation of camps.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: For three years applications are pending.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is time.

(Time bell rings.)

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA:

The only thing I want to repeat again is that I want to give the highest priority to the camp population. If there are people in the camps in West Bengal who on their own initiative can find land, can help themselves in business, can go for training, and they come under my policy and scheme, the money is there and I would be willing to give them the highest priority.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you still questions to ask?

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: I want to know from the hon. Minister, when land hungry original inhabitants have been haunting their respective Governments for land—till today these demands are ignored—what would be the discontent and sentiment of these people when they see that their neighbours, outsiders, are given treated land and pucca houses?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He told you that they will also be partners in the scheme.

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: The thing is I had a talk with one . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Will there be any disappointment among the local inhabitants—he asks.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: I do not know what exactly he asked. I did not follow his question . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO (Andhra Pradesh): May I know exactly what are the steps that are taken to rehabilitate the aborigines or Adibasis, Koas and Goans, who mostly live there in those areas where the Dandakaranya scheme is supposed to be implemented? I want to know what special steps are taken first to rehabilitate those who live in that area.

SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA: This area is thinly populated and I have made a categorical statement that the scheme is not being implemented to their exclusion. All the benefits which will accrue from the scheme will go to them also equally. That is number one.

As regards the point raised by my friend there, we are acquiring two kinds of lands: firstly, those which were owned by big zemindars, which were in their own possession. They wish to sell them. There is no question of any dispossession of any existing tenants there. So we are taking them. Then, we are also taking marginal or sub-marginal land or virgin land. There too there is no question of dislocation of the existing population.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned *sine die*.

The House then adjourned *sine die* at thirty-one minutes past five of the clock.