

RAJYA SABHA

Monday, 30th August 1954

The House met at a quarter past eight of the clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN

Shri B. P. Singh (Madhya Pradesh).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONTROL OF OCCURRENCE OF FLOODS IN NORTH BENGAL, ASSAM AND NORTH BIHAR

*38. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Governments of West Bengal, Assam and Bihar have submitted any proposal to the Planning Commission in connection with the occurrence of floods in North Bengal, Assam and North Bihar; and

(b) if so, what action is proposed to be taken thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI J. S. L. HATHI): (a) and (b). Apart from proposals for financial assistance, no other detailed proposals have been received so far from the Governments of West Bengal, Assam and Bihar. The Minister of Irrigation and Power, however, recently made an aerial inspection of flood affected areas in West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and discussed the matter with the Chief Ministers of those States. A statement will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as it has been finalised.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: In the meantime, is it not possible to give an idea of the nature of these discussions

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or the suggestions which were brought out in that discussion regarding the taking of some measures for flood control? Apart from the question of long term measures, what is essential is to take some immediate short term measures to control and mitigate the devastating effects of the floods, and what we are interested to know just now is whether any such measures have been discussed or not.

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: Yes, Sir; the statement itself is not going to take very long and I believe on the 3rd of September the statement will be laid on the Table of this House and in the Lok Sabha also. The measures that have been so far discussed with the Chief Ministers and the officials of the various State Governments relate chiefly to such measures as can be taken on a short term basis.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is my hon. friend aware that already, during this monsoon, floods have taken place twice and there is likelihood of floods taking place again once or twice before the monsoon ends? Unless some immediate measures are taken, the devastation will again recur on a large scale.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is what he said.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: I would like to have an answer.

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: Such immediate measures as can be taken in hand when the floods are on are being considered on the spot. When I went to Assam, for example, certain things occurred to us and we started taking action on them; but even immediate action, in any effective sense, can only be taken after the flood has subsided.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know, Sir, whether such measures as construction of dykes and deepening of the beds of the rivers have been discussed and whether any concrete step is being taken about this?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: Yes, Sir, those measures were discussed and some tentative conclusions were arrived at. They are now being discussed further and some definite conclusions will emerge shortly.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: May I know whether the Five Year Plan provides any money for flood and famine relief at all?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: Sir, in this volume, "Development Schemes of the first Five Year Plan", some schemes—not many—have been included; and in connection with the adjustments, that is, the revision of the Five Year Plan, some more money was provided, particularly in the case of Bihar, for purposes of flood control.

DR. P. C. MITRA: Did the three States mentioned approach the Planning Commission jointly or individually?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: They have not approached the Planning Commission in that sense.

DR. P. C. MITRA: If it is individually, what proposals did the Government of Bihar submit and what action is proposed to be taken on them?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: They relate to financial assistance but not to the kind of measures that the hon. Member has in mind.

SHRI R. P. N. SINHA: Are Government contemplating the constitution of an expert committee to find out why the floods have been so severe this year?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: Our experts are already working on this problem.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Has the Government considered, in this connection, the report of the team of engineers who were sent to China to study flood control measures?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: They are the people who are handling this problem here.

INTERNATIONAL TIN AGREEMENT

*81. SHRI B. GUPTA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government have joined the international tin agreement; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India's requirements of tin are mostly met by imports. India stands to gain by joining the International Tin Agreement, as the principal objectives of the Agreement are the prevention of excessive price fluctuations, the ensuring of the availability of tin at reasonable prices and the taking of measures for the promotion of more economic production of this commodity.

REALISATION OF SUMS DUE FROM PONDICHERRY ADMINISTRATION TO CHANDERNAGORE

*82. SHRI S. MAHANTY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sums of Rs. 8,00,000 from the Reserve Fund and Rs. 5,43,000 from the Pension Fund which were due to Chandernagore from the Pondicherry Administration have since been realised from the latter; and

(b) if not, what steps Government propose to take to realise the said amounts from that Administration?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) Not yet.

(b) The matter was taken up with the French Government through normal diplomatic channels in February 1951. In December 1953, the French