

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

Secretary: Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary of Rajya Sabha :

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 125 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha, at its sitting held on the 21st May, 1956, agreed without any amendment to the Agricultural Produce (Development and Warehousing) Corporations Bill, 1956, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 11th May, 1956."

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

FIFTY-FOURTH REPORT

Sardar Hukam Singh (Kapurthala-Bhatinda) : I beg to present the fifty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

PETITION *re.* INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS ACT

Shri Viswanatha Reddy (Chittoor) : I beg to present a petition signed by a petitioner relating to the amendment of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Act and Rules framed thereunder.

CONSTITUTION (TENTH AMENDMENT) BILL

PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE

Shri Raghavachari (Penukonda) : I beg to present the Report of the Joint Committee on the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

EXODUS OF HINDUS FROM EAST PAKISTAN

The Minister of Law and Minority Affairs (Shri Biswas) : I would like to make a short statement on the question of the exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan to India, which has been causing great anxiety to the Government of

India. Arising out of the discussions between the Pakistan Foreign Minister and the Minister for Rehabilitation during his visit to Karachi for the Pakistan Republic Day celebrations, the Pakistan Prime Minister suggested a meeting at ministerial level at Dacca to discuss this problem. The Government of India accepted the suggestion.

The talks were held on the 5th and the 6th May, 1956. The Indian Delegation, led by the Minister for Law and Minority Affairs, comprised among others the Minister for Rehabilitation, the Deputy Minister for External Affairs, the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan and the Minister for Labour, West Bengal Government. The Pakistan Delegation, which was led by their Foreign Minister, included among others their Minister for Minority Affairs and the Chief Minister of East Pakistan and their High Commissioner in India.

There was a frank exchange of views between the two Delegations on the causes of migration and possible remedies for checking it. It was agreed that the minorities were the responsibility of the Government of the country to which they belonged and that they should look up to their own Government for the redress of their legitimate grievances. On their part, the Government should ensure conditions in which the minorities are enabled to live in happiness and security as equal citizens with members of the majority community.

The problem of the minority communities in East Pakistan was accordingly one to be solved by the East Pakistan Government, but the Government of India would be happy to extend all possible co-operation to the Government of Pakistan in solving it.

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan, their representatives reiterated the determination to safeguard fully and effectively the right of the minorities to live honourably as full citizens of Pakistan as guaranteed by the Pakistan Constitution. It was stated that the Government of East Pakistan had already taken certain measures with a view to restoring confidence among the minorities. An Advisory Board consisting of M.L.A.'s of all non-Muslim political parties had been appointed with the Chief Minister as President. This Board would supervise the implementation of measures considered necessary

to deal with factors encouraging migration. A Hindu Officer of the Civil Services of Pakistan has been appointed as Special Officer for Minority Affairs. He has been given powers to take up grievances of the minorities with the East Pakistan authorities and all Government departments. Measures had been taken to speed up recruitment of members of the minority communities in Government service. As a matter of general rule, relaxation of age-limit and educational qualifications has been ordered. The Special Officer for Minority Affairs has also been directed to examine all new recruitment figures to ensure adequate representation of the minorities. The Revenue Department has been instructed to employ members of the minority communities to the extent of 23 per cent. of the vacancies in the Estates Acquisition Department. The Minority Commission is going to be revived and Minority Boards to be established down to the Thana level. Orders have been issued derequisitioning Hindu houses. The East Pakistan Chief Minister said that more such houses would be derequisitioned if their owners wanted to come back and live in them. The Pakistan Delegation also said that, in case of complaints regarding abductions of women, officers have been directed to recover the girls immediately and send them to the Neutral Home in Dacca. Strict instructions have been issued to all officers of the Government that there should be no discrimination against members of the minority communities.

The Pakistan Delegation was of the view that these steps should ensure security and restore confidence among the minority community and that there should be no further cause for migration, provided the Government of India co-operated. It was suggested that the Government of India should stop issuing migration certificates—in other words, seal the border. The Indian Delegation was of the view that this could not be done since the Prime Ministers' Agreement of 1950 assured freedom of movement and protection in transit to migrants. The Pakistan Delegation also expressed the opinion that one of the causes encouraging migration was the comparative ease with which a migration certificate could be obtained. There was also the attraction of the rehabilitation benefits promised by India to migrants. It was pointed out by the Indian Delegation that the rehabilitation benefits given

by the Government of India were quite meagre and certainly not sufficient to tempt a person to give up his hearth and home. The Indian Delegation also explained that migration certificates were issued after proper examination. In view of the various steps that the Pakistan Government had already taken or intended to take to solve the problem, the Indian Delegation also agreed that the machinery for receiving and examining applications for migration certificates will be strengthened so as to prevent abuse or exploitation of migration facilities by anti-social elements.

After the Conference, two representatives from each Delegation were deputed to draft a joint communique. Apparently, through some misunderstanding the first draft which had not been approved by the Indian Delegation was released to sections of the local press and this created some confusion. Later, the draft was discussed by the two Delegations and a mutually agreed communique was released late at night on the 6th of May, 1956. A copy of the agreed communique is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix XIV, annexure No. 57].

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly): May I put one question, Sir, to the hon. Minister? Has there been any effect of this Dacca Conference on the position of the minority community in East Pakistan due to which the tempo of exodus has abated or is it due merely to the tightening of visa facilities? Has any concrete assurance been given that steps will be taken to implement the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement so far as Pakistan is concerned?

Shri Biswas: The number of migrants has definitely decreased. I cannot give you exactly the figures for the present month, but there has been an appreciable diminution in the number.

As regards the implementation of the provisions of the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement, we have now a definite assurance from them that they will do all they can and take all possible measures in order to implement the same.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: Their words are all.

Shri Biswas: My hon. friend says "their words are all". But the Indian Delegation noticed a sense of sincerity in them for the first time.

Shri Kamath (Hoshangabad): May I make one request, Sir? This method of making statements is good enough, though it does not go far. I do not know whether a copy of the statement has been supplied to you or placed on the Table of the House.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister gave me a copy and asked my permission. I read through the copy and then I gave permission to make a statement because I thought it is a matter which affected both the countries.

Shri Kamath: Sir, it is a matter of very great importance and there was confusion in Dacca after the communique was issued. I had sent in a Short Notice Question but it was disallowed on the ground that a statement was going to be made. But this method of making a statement deprives us of an opportunity of raising a brief discussion by way of supplementary questions. I would, therefore, earnestly request you that either a half-an-hour discussion may be fixed some day, as it is a matter of importance, or you may kindly allow a Short Notice Question to be put and that may be admitted perhaps on Tuesday.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty (Basirhat): May I know whether any machinery has been set up to examine from time to time how the agreed decisions are being implemented and also, whether the reduction in the number of people who have come from East Pakistan to West Bengal this month and last month is due only to the restrictions of migration certificates or not?

Shri Biswas: The question of the various causes which led to the exodus, especially the increase in the volume of exodus in recent months, has been fully gone into. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to give you all the facts, because, in order to ensure free and frank exchange of views the proceedings were held in camera and I cannot give you exactly what was said on either side. Therefore, all that I have attempted is to give you a general picture of what had happened, and I can assure you that we were satisfied, so far as it is possible for us to be satisfied about it, that they mean serious business. The present Chief Minister of East Pakistan is genuinely anxious to help the minorities. He has actually set

up a number of organisations for the purpose of getting into touch with the minorities and to dispel from them any sense of fear.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: May I point out one thing, Sir? The hon. Minister has not answered Shrimati Renu Chakravarty's question as to whether the lowering of migration figures was due to the Government of India's directive not to issue migration certificates and similar facilities or was it really due to an improvement in the situation there?

Shri Biswas: I had stated in my statement today that there was a suggestion that India should seal the border which we definitely turned down. We drew their attention to the fact that the Liaquat-Nehru agreement ensures to each migrant the right to go away if he so desired. As a matter of fact, the Prime Minister has explained more than once that we shall discourage people from coming away for nothing, but if they still insist on coming they shall not be refused migration certificates.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Chittor): I want to put one pertinent question. Has the Minister been assured—

Mr. Speaker: What I feel is that if the hon. Members want to have any more facts, and want to put any more questions, they can kindly read through the statement. Then they may table more questions and I shall allow them.

Shri Nand Lal Sharma (Sikar): Will the Government fix more time for discussing this subject?

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (Gurgaon): Either two hours must be allotted for discussing this subject or we should be allowed to put questions, so that the position may be made clear. It is not clear to us at all.

Sardar A. S. Saigal (Bilaspur): First, the statement must be circulated. Then, two hours' time must be devoted to discuss the matter.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: You are calling a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee today. I hope all sections of the House will endorse the suggestion that there should be an opportunity for discussion on this matter which is a vital one. You know more than 40 lakhs of people have come in, and this

involves the fate of 7 million people. Therefore, we are very much perturbed over it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister will also be invited. I would invite him to attend the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee.

Shri Biswas: I am in the hands of the House. I will abide by its directions and your directions.

Mr. Speaker: I am not deciding anything. We are having a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee at 4 o'clock. The hon. Minister, if he can kindly be present at the meeting, may take part in the meeting. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs will also be present. So, let us all look into the matter.

Shri Gidwani (Thana) *rose*—

Mr. Speaker: Sufficient number of copies of the statement may be given to the Members of the Business Advisory Committee.

Shri Gidwani: The hon. Minister said that they were very sincere. I would invite the attention of the hon. Minister to the statement made by Shri C. C. Desai, Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan, where he said that the feeling among the Pakistanis is that every abduction was a love affair. Is that the sincere feeling?

Shri Biswas: As a matter of fact, we were looking to the future, and therefore, we definitely decided that there need not be any recriminations as to what happened in the past. There have been failures on our side and failures on their side. Therefore, we were anxious to secure some improvement and we were anxious to see that in the future things would have very much improved. We were satisfied with the assurance given from the other side. But it all remains to be seen how the assurances are implemented.

Shri Jhumjhumwala (Bhagalpur Central): How many assurances you had in the past?

Sardar A. S. Saigal: They have not yet been fulfilled!

LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION BILL—*contd.*

Clause 43.—(*Application of the Insurance Act*).

Mr. Speaker: The House will now resume clause by clause consideration of the Life Insurance Corporation Bill. Clauses 2 to 4, 11, 12, 14, 19, 22 and 25 have been disposed of. Clause 43 has to be taken up now. We have taken 14 hours and 6 minutes already. We have extended the time from 15 to 18 hours. So, we have thus three hours more. Therefore, we must close the discussion at 3-30 p.m. today.

Shri Tulsidas (Mehsana West): How is it possible?

Mr. Speaker: I shall apply the guillotine. Already, we have extended the time from 15 to 18 hours. We have got the Second Five Year Plan to be discussed. Therefore, let us expedite this matter.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee (Hooghly): You were pleased to allocate 1½ hours for clause 43 and you allocated 2 hours for the Schedules, and the rest of the clauses were given 1½ hours.

Mr. Speaker: So much time has been taken yesterday. I hoped that within 18 hours, we could finish the rest of the clauses.

Shri N. C. Chatterjee: I do not think we have exceeded the time allocated by you.

Mr. Speaker: We should find ways and means to finish this within three hours from now. The Second Five Year Plan has to come up for discussion. The discussion on it has been pending for some time. We must allow a couple of days or so for that purpose. We are hard-pressed for time.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Chittor): How can we finish this Bill in three hours from now?

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to extend the time. Of course, if even a single minute is taken away for some other purpose and if there is anything wrong in the calculation, I will allow for it. We have extended the time from 15 to 18 hours. We shall proceed to clause 43.