

LOK SABHA

Monday, July 31, 1967/Sravana . 9,
1889 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Indian settlers in African countries

+

*1471. Shri A. B. Vajpayee:

Shri N. S. Sharma:

Shri Shri Gopal Saboo:

Shri Brij Bhushan Lal:

Shri Sharda Nand:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not seriously considered the question of the Indian settlers in the African countries;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in certain African countries, Indians are treated as second class citizens and they live in humiliating conditions; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in the matter?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Surendra Pal Singh): (a) It would not be correct to state that the Government of India has not given serious consideration to matter relating to Indian settlers in African countries.

(b) It is also not correct to say that Indians in certain African countries are treated as Second Class citizens. Those who have taken up local citizenship of these countries

enjoy full rights and privileges of citizenship. Those who have not adopted the citizenship of the countries in which they live are still permitted to live and work there in conformity with conditions and requirements prescribed in respect of alien residents.

(c) The Government of India and our Missions in these countries have always worked towards the maintenance of good and harmonious relations between the Asian community in these countries and the indigenous populations. Whenever possible and appropriate, we have also interceded on behalf of persons of Indian origin with the Government of the countries concerned, when difficulties have arisen. Government have also accorded liberal customs and other concessions to persons of Indian origin wishing to return to India for permanent resettlement.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : क्या यह सच है कि पूर्वी अफ्रीका के अनेक देशों में जिन भारतीयों ने उन देशों की नागरिकता स्वीकार कर ली है उन के साथ भी नौकरियों में भेदभाव होता है और अफ्रीकीनाइजेशन (अफ्रीकीकरण) के नाम पर जिन्होंने नागरिकता स्वीकार कर ली है, उन भारतीयों को भी नौकरी से निकाला जा रहा है ?

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: Sir, as far as our knowledge goes, there is no discrimination meted out to those who have taken up the local citizenship of any East African country.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मुझे इस जवाब पर बड़ा ताज्जुब है। दो साल पहले संसद् सदस्यों का एक प्रतिनिधि मंडल पूर्वी अफ्रीका के देशों में

गया था और वहाँ हमें इस आशय की शिकायत मिली थी कि जिन भारतीयों ने उन देशों की नागरिकता स्वीकार कर ली है उन के साथ भी भेदभाव हो रहा है। प्रतिनिधि मंडल ने इस आशय को एक रिपोर्ट प्रचलन मंत्रा को दी थी। क्या मैं यह समझूँ कि विदेश मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री को इस के बारे में कुछ पता नहीं है ?

श्री सुरेन्द्रपाल सिंह : मेरे इत्मी में यही है कि किसी किसी का कोई डिस्ट्रिक्मिनेशन उन के साथ नहीं किया जा रहा है। पहले कुछ शिकायतें जरूर थीं कि कुछ सिविल सर्वेंट्स को निकाल दिया गया था और उनका जगह अफ़रिकनों को लगाया गया था। लेकिन यह पहले की बात है, वे लोग वहाँ के नागरिक नहीं थे। लेकिन इस समय मेरे पास यही रिपोर्ट है कि जिन लोगों ने वहाँ की नागरिकता स्वीकार कर ली है उन के साथ कोई डिस्ट्रिक्मिनेशन नहीं किया जाता है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या विदेश मंत्रालय विदेशों में बसे हुए भारतीयों की स्थिति के बारे में जांच करने के लिये संसद सदस्यों की एक कमेटी बनाने का विचार कर रहा है, जो इन देशों में जा कर भारतीयों से मिल कर वहाँ की स्थिति का पता लगाये और इस के बारे में सही रिपोर्ट सरकार को और सदन को दे ?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): Sir, may I clarify the situation? The people of Indian origin fall into three categories: firstly those who have accepted the citizenship of the country in which they reside; the second is those who hold British passports and are British citizens and the third is those who still retain or who are of Indian citizenship, and the question has got to be looked at from different points of view with regard to all these categories. With regard to those who

have accepted the citizenship of that country, our advice to them is that they must get involved in the country which they have adopted; they must give their loyalty and support to that country and they should not look to us: of course, India being their mother country, they should have cultural ties, but politically they should get themselves assimilated with the people of that country. With regard to those who hold British passports, the liability and responsibility is of the United Kingdom; they have British passports. With regard to those who are still Indians, we tell them, "If you want to leave, we shall be happy to receive you; all facilities will be given to you when you return to India." This is the position.

Shri A. B. Vajpayee: Sir, my question has not been answered. The hon. Minister has explained the position. I am aware of the position. I entirely agree with him. Those Indians who have adopted citizenship in the country that they have chosen should entirely identify themselves with those countries, with the interest of those countries. But is it not a fact that even those Indians who have accepted the citizenship of these particular countries are being discriminated against in matters of service, trade and industry?

Shri M. C. Chagla: As my colleague has pointed out, our information is that there is no discrimination as far as those who have accepted local citizenship are concerned. Of course, if there is discrimination against those who have not accepted their citizenship that is a different matter. I think my hon. friend is making a mistake. There may be a discrimination against those who have not accepted the citizenship there or who still hold British passports. But as far as our knowledge goes there is no discrimination against those who have accepted citizenship and have become African citizens, Kenyan citizens or Tanzanian citizens. We have received no reports to that effect.

श्री राजमूषण लाल : क्या मंत्री महोदय यह बताने को तैयार करेंगे कि कितने इन्डियनज को अफ्रीका से बेबस और प्रेशर को वजह से, वहाँ पर उन के राइट्स प्रोटेक्टड न होने की वजह से वहाँ से आना पड़ा है तथा सरकार उन के बारे में क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है ?

श्री सुरेन्द्रपाल सिंह : अब तक करीब करीब 6 हजार से 7 हजार तक इन्डियनज आपस आ चुके हैं। उन के सामने किसी किसिम की कोई दिक्कत नहीं आई है। जो कुछ सामान वे लाता चाहते थे, वह आ सजा है तथा जो फैमिलिटोज हम देते हैं, वह उन को दी गई है।

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय, पूर्वी अफ्रीका के हिन्दुस्तानियों की जो दुर्गति हुई है उस को गंभीर रखते हुए हमारे हाई कमिशन ने वहाँ पर जो व्यापारी थे उन लोगों से कहा था कि अगर वे विशिष्ट सोमा के अन्दर या तो निश्चित तारीख के पहले अगर अपना व्यापारिक सामान ले आये तो उसके ऊपर उन को आयात कर नहीं देना पड़ेगा। लेकिन बात ऐसी हुई है कि पुराने व्यापार मंत्री मनुमाई शाह और स्टेट ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन के कारनामों की वजह से इन आशवासनों को भंग कर के माल को रोक दिया गया है। इसी तरह का एक केस श्री आर० डी० भीमजी के सब कागज और दस्तावेज समेत मीने भूतपूर्व व्यापार मंत्री के पास भेजा था। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि चूँकि विदेश मंत्रालय के द्वारा यह आशवासन दिया गया था, क्या विदेश मंत्री या प्रवाण मंत्री इस के बारे में स्वयं जाँच कर के न्याय दिलाने की कोशिश करेंगे ?

Shri M. C. Chagla: If my hon. friend will give me any instance where there is any discrimination against anybody returning to India or.....

श्री मधु लिमये : मैं हिन्दुस्तानियों के साथ हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार जो डिस्क्रिमिनेशन कर रहा है, उसकी चर्चा कर रहा हूँ। खुद आप ऐसा कर रहे हैं तो दूसरों के बारे में क्या कहें ?

श्री मु० क० चागला : मैं भी उसकी ही बात कर रहा हूँ।

If we have violated any assurance given by us the hon. Member will let me know the instance and we will look into it.

श्री मधु लिमये : नवम्बर महीने से पत्र व्यवहार कर रहा हूँ।

श्री मु० क० चागला : हमारी मिनिस्ट्री के साथ ?

श्री मधु लिमये : सरकार तो एक ही है। प्रधान मंत्री को लिखा है, व्यापार मंत्री को लिखा है। अब चाहते हैं तो आपको भी लिखूँगा।

श्री मु० क० चागला : आप मुझे लिखिये, मैं देखूँगा और जो कुछ करना है, वह करूँगा।

Shri Krishna Kumar Chatterji: Sir, in spite of the answer given by the hon. Member, if the reports by friends who have visited those countries indicate that even those who have accepted the citizenship of African countries are not treated on the same equal footing as our hon. Minister just now said, then a thorough investigation is necessary. In view of the fact that reports have come from a person whose authenticity cannot be challenged, I would ask the hon. Minister to make specific enquiries about the charge that they are not being treated on the same footing and the same rights are not given to them. I want a categorical answer from the hon. Minister whether he is prepared to do it?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I am certainly prepared to make any more enquiry if necessary. As I have already told the House at present our information is that there is no discrimination. If the House feels, if some hon. Members feel that there is discrimination, I would certainly make enquiries from our missions again.

Shri Swell: Is it a fact that some time ago the Government of Tanzania threw an invitation to the people of Indian origin or the Indian citizens residing there to take up the citizenship of that country, that there was very little response to that invitation of the Government of Tanzania and that it was only then that the attitude of the Government of Tanzania began to stiffen towards the Indians? May I know whether it is a fact that this kind of pattern of events is typical of almost every other African country, leading to a considerable amount of strain in the relationship between our people and the governments of the African countries?

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: It is true that all the African countries that became independent gave a period of two years during which they asked the people of Asian origin to take up the local citizenship. But the response was very poor. I think only 15 per cent of the entire population of Asian origin took up the local citizenship. What was the second part of the question?

Shri Swell: The Deputy Minister has confirmed my statement. The second part of my question was whether it was only then, after the scanty response to the open invitation of African countries that the attitude of these African countries began to stiffen towards the Indians.

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: It is a fact that the poor response of the people of Indian origin to take up the local citizenship was rather disappointing for the African countries and that they have not taken it very kindly. The people of Asian origin go there,

carry on trade and commerce and make a lot of money and yet it is rather unfortunate that they repatriate their money to the foreign countries instead of investing it in those countries, and retain foreign passports instead of taking up the citizenship of the countries where they are residing, even when they are offered local citizenship; this is the gravamen of the charge of the African countries.

Shri D. N. Tiwary: Will the Government let us know what was contained in the report of the Members of Parliament who visited the East African countries and submitted a report to the Government? What specific grievances have they mentioned of the people of Indian origin living in Africa?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I am sorry. I have not received the report. I will look into it and let my hon. friend know about it.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: As far as the Government is aware or has information, may I know how much truth there is in the reports which we have seen sometimes, emanating of course from African sources, that many of the Indian settlers there—not all, of course, but some of them—particularly those who were there for many years and doing trade, commerce and so on, took up an unsympathetic or hostile attitude towards the national independence movement of those African countries and that has created some air or atmosphere of suspicion or mutual intolerance? Is there any truth in those reports; as far as the government knows?

Shri M. C. Chagla: It is partly true in the case of African countries. As my colleague has pointed out, the Indians who have stayed there for years and earned a lot of money, instead of investing it in those countries.....

Shri Indrajit Gupta: I was referring to their part in the national liberation movement.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I was coming to that. In the political field, what my hon. friend says is partly correct.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shrimati Indira Gandhi): Although this may be true of some Indians, there have been others who have taken part in the national liberation movements of those countries and have encouraged the local people in their liberation struggle.

Shri Manubhai Patel: May I know whether instances have come to the notice of Government where the Negroes have threatened the Indian families with murder unless they give their daughters in marriage to the Africans and in such cases the local government is not giving any protection to the Indians?

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: No such instance has come to our notice. If the hon. Member brings such instances to our notice, we will look into them.

Mr. Speaker: Next question. Shri Samanta—He is not here. Next question. Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri—He is not here. Shri Samanta—He is not here. Shri Gadlingana Gowd—He is not here. Shri Manibhai Patel.

Shri Abdul Ghaani Dar rose—

Mr. Speaker: I know, you are not Manibhai Patel.

श्री अब्दुल गनी दार : स्पीकर साहब, मैं यहाँ का मੈम्बर तो हूँ इस लिए मैं इस सवाल को चाहता हूँ।

[श्री عبدالغنى دار : اسهيو]

صاحب - ميں يهاں کا ممبر تو ہوں اس لئے ميں اس سوال کو چاہتا ہوں۔

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप को बैठना चाहिए।

श्री अब्दुल गनी दार : मैं तीन दफे बड़ा हुआ।

[شری عبدالغنى دار : : ميں تين

دفعہ بڑا ہوا -

अध्यक्ष महोदय : माननीय सदस्य का नाम नहीं है। तीन दफे बड़े हुए, तो क्या किया जाय ?
Not only you but 30 people got up.

श्री अब्दुल गनी दार : सवाल बड़ी इम्पोर्टेंट था उस पर आप को हमें इजाजत देनी चाहिए। यह ठीक है कि नाम मेरा नहीं है लेकिन बतौर एक मੈम्बर होने के क्या मुझे यह हक हासिल नहीं है कि मैं इस पर सप्लीमेंटरी पूछ सकूँ ? ऐसा बेइसाफो नहीं होना चाहिए। दिस इज नोट केयर।

[श्री عبدالغنى دار : سوال بڑا

اهميت تھا اس پر آپ کو ہيں اجازت دینی چاہیئے - یہ تھیک ہے کہ نام میرا نہیں ہے لیکن بطور ایک ممبر ہونے کے کیا مجھے یہ حق حاصل نہیں ہے کہ ميں اس پر سہوليتری پوچھ سکوں - ایسی بے انصافی نہیں ہونی چاہیئے۔ دس [ز ناٹ فیر]

Citizen's Intelligence Forums and Students' Clubs

+

*1472. Shri Ram Kishan Gupta:
Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri Gadlingana Gowd:
Shri Manibhai J. Patel:
Shri Siddheshwar Prasad:

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to organise Citizens' Intelligence Forums and Students' Clubs throughout the country to gather the reactions of citizens and students on various problems;