

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, June 21, 1977/Jyaistha 31,
1899 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Expenditure on Lok Sabha Elections

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*126. SHRI S. G. MURUGAIYAN:
SHRI D. B. CHANDRA
GOWDA:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state the expenditure incurred by Central Government on the recent election to the Lok Sabha?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: It is more than three months since the Lok Sabha elections are over. Does it require such a long time to collect the figures and supply the information?

SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN: Evidently, it requires more time than it looks to collect the information.

डा० बापू कालदत्ते : कितने समय में यह रिपोर्ट सदन को पेश करेंगे ?

श्री शान्ति भूषण : जितनी जल्दी उपलब्ध हो जायेगी, उतनी जल्दी पेश कर दी जायेगी ।

MR. SPEAKER: I think we should not spend any more time on this question. Let us go to the next question.

United Trade Union on Railways

*127. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with Government to bring in an unified trade union on railways; and

(b) whether both the recognised unions have agreed with the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANAVATE): (a) and (b). The Government is in favour of broad unification of Trade Unions in Railways.

The Tripartite Committee appointed at the Indian Labour Conference held in May, 1977 is considering the question of norms for recognition of Unions and the *modus operandi* to evolve one Union in one industry.

The report is expected within two months. The Government will await the report and will then consult the various Unions in Railways to evolve a *modus operandi* for the formation of one Union in Railways.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: I want to know whether the Minister is confident that it is workable to have one union in the railways.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE: Confidence is a part of my nature. Therefore, I have always felt that it is possible to have one union in one industry. As far as the various railway unions are concerned, at least theoretically they are committed to the principle of one union in one industry. Only some practical prob-

lems have crept up. It will be our constant endeavour to see that all the difficulties are eliminated.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NADIU:
Is the Minister not aware that many of the unions are against this?

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE:
No, it is not correct. As far as the All India Railwaymen's Federation is concerned, through its various resolutions it is committed to the principle of one union in the railways. In fact, on the eve of the budget session they submitted a memorandum in which they have demanded that an early decision on one union should be taken. I have discussed it with the NFIR, another recognised federation. They have clearly stated that they are not against the principle of one union in the railways as such, and only the *modus operandi* should be worked out in consultation with the unions concerned.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:
I really appreciate the confidence of the Railway Minister, but is he aware that such great men as Shri Jaya Prakash Narain and Shri Hariharnath Shastri tried to unify and failed.

MR. SPEAKER: That is past history.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:
Is he aware that there are more workers in unrecognised unions than in the recognised trade unions, and will he be willing to consult those unrecognised unions also before evolving the principle of recognition?

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE:
To put the record straight regarding his earlier statement regarding Shri Jaya Prakash Narain....

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:
That is history.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE:
Even history is misquoted very often, and that is why I must correct it. I want to correct that impression. There was a time when Shri Jaya Prakash

Narain was leading the All India Railwaymen's Federation. Afterwards a split came about. Therefore, it is not correct to say that he did not lead a unified federation.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM:
Your facts are wrong.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE:
There was a split, but also at one time he did lead a unified federation.

Anyway, the second part of his question is more important, and in that he has asked whether it is true that the membership of the unions which have not been recognised is more. Our records indicate that it is a fact that a membership of 5.56 lakhs is shown by the All India Railwaymen's Federation and about 4.5 lakhs by NFIR. The other membership which is there is spread over a number of categories, and it is not membership belonging to a single national federation. Therefore, you cannot compare that membership, which is an aggregate membership of the various categories of unions, with the membership of the federations, but if you take the total and cumulative effect into account, I may say that the other membership has been spread over a number of categories.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Is the hon. Minister aware that I am the President of the Southern Railway Karmik Sangh and the Vice-President of the Bharatiya Rail Mazdoor Sangh? I can say with full authority that it is extremely difficult to have a unified trade union unless certain basic pre-conditions are met. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether, before he gets into this unified trade union system, he would first put the position of the unions in proper perspective. After all, this recognition is based on the count of membership which has gone out of date and some unions like the Bharatiya Rail Mazdoor Sangh today are the chief unions and they should be accorded recognition first. Would he care to accord recognition first to the most important unions on the

basis of a recent count and then go about this unification?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: As far as the first part of the question is concerned, I am very much conscious and very pleasantly conscious of the fact that he is the President of the organisation mentioned.

As far as the second part of the question is concerned, we have set certain norms regarding recognition. If these norms need revision, we would like to do it in consultation with the Labour Ministry and the various unions including the union which he leads, and I am sure we will be able to arrive at some suitable formula which will satisfy all.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: At present which are the federations which are recognised, and how many unions are there which are not recognised but which represent a large number of railwaymen? Regarding these unrecognised unions, what is the attitude of the Government in the case of disputes which they bring to Government, and how do they get a fair deal from the Ministry?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: As far as recognition is concerned, so far the accepted criteria are: it must consist of a distinct class of Government employees; all Government employees of the same class must be eligible for membership; it must be registered under the Indian Trade Unions Act; its membership should not be less than 15 per cent of the total number of non-gazetted staff employed on the railways, and it should not be sectional. Unions composed of one category or limited categories of workers should not be recognised. In the opinion of the railway administration, the union should be one which is not likely to engage itself in subversive activities. Of course, the last question does not arise at all because the unions do not indulge in subversive activities. This being the criteria, the categorywise

unions are not recognised on the basis of this. On the basis of the said rules, at present the category-wise unions cannot be recognised. But I am in touch with a number of category-wise unions. We have already started a dialogue as to what *modus operandi* could be adopted to set up one union.

श्री बन्ना सिंह गुलशन: क्या यह सच है कि पहले रेलवे कर्मचारियों की भिन्न-भिन्न श्रेणियों की यूनियनें थीं, लेकिन आपातकाल में के द्रीय सरकार ने उनमें फूट पैदा कर दी और उनके मुकाबले में और यूनियनें खड़ी कर दीं ? इस स्थिति में क्या मंत्री महोदय यही जोर देंगे कि एक श्रेणी की एक ही यूनियन हो ?

प्रो० मधु दंडवते : जहां तक सरकार की राय का सम्बन्ध है, हम तो चाहते हैं कि सारी रेलवे में एक ही यूनियन और एक ही फंडेशन रहे। हमारी ओर से ऐसी कोई कार्यवाही नहीं होगी, जिससे लोगों को टूट्ट यूनियन का विभाजन करने का मौका मिले। इसलिए हमारी सारी कोशिश एकत्रीकरण की तरफ होगी।

SHRI R. K. MHOLGI: May I know when the contemplated report is likely to be submitted?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: It is expected that the tripartite committee will submit its report within two months.

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY: While welcoming one union for the Railways, I would like to raise my doubts: (1) after recognition of one union in the Railways, what is the guarantee that other unions will not function in the railways? (2) Forming of association is a fundamental right of an individual. Will it not go against that principle?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: After consultation with the various unions, once we evolve *modus*

operandi for forming of one union, then at least the major unions with whom we had consultations, will be the part of one union. After that if some other unions are there, they will exist only on paper and we will not take much cognisance of the paper union at all.

श्री मृत्युंजय प्रसाद वर्मा : आज हालत यह है कि पोलिटिकल पार्टियों के हाथों में यूनियनें हैं। अगर एक ही यूनियन रहे, तो फिर दूसरी छोटी यूनियनों के सदस्यों की क्या हालत होगी ? अपनी राजनैतिक विचारधारा के विरुद्ध होने पर भी उन्हें उसमें शामिल होना ही पड़ेगा।

प्रो० मधु इण्डवते : माननीय सदस्य ने जो दलील पेश की है, मैं समझता हूँ कि जो सवाल उन्होंने बाद में पूछा है, वह उसके खिलाफ जाती है। उन्होंने कहा कि विभिन्न राजनैतिक दलों के मानने वालों की अलग अलग यूनियनें हैं। अगर सिर्फ एक यूनियन हो जाती है, तो फिर किसी एक पार्टी का हित उस यूनियन में नहीं चलने वाला है।

Proposal for Off-shore Oil Survey in Kerala

*129. SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to take up off-shore oil survey in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR
(RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is proposed to deploy the O.N.G.C. Seismic Survey vessel "Anveshak" to survey this area after the current monsoon season is over.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: In 1968, there was the seismic survey conducted for

off-shore oil in Kerala. The Kerala Government, after making a representation to the Central Government had promised to conduct the survey along with the west coast from February, 1977. My only request to the hon. Minister is to expedite it as early as possible.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA: I would like to inform the hon. Member that after the Russian survey was over in 1964, there was another reconnaissance survey of our continental shelf in the Arabian sea including portions of the Kerala coast in 1973 by a seismic vessel "Lady Clorita" belonging to Shell International Petroleum Company. The result of the survey made by this vessel did not indicate good sedimentary thickness except in the deeper portions of the continental shelf where the depth is so great that perhaps exploration and exploitation may be rather difficult. The O.N.G.C., however, also did its part of the work and carried out a small volume of seismic survey of the off-shore coast line of Kerala.

The hon. Member has suggested that the work should be expedited. He knows very well that during the monsoon season, much work cannot be done in that area. As soon as the monsoon season is over, the work will be undertaken by the "Anveshak".

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: As regards off-shore drilling on the sea coast Kerala, we got an assurance from the former Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals that it would be expedited. He gave a hint to the House that there was a chance to get more oil in the off-shore coast of Kerala. The hon. Minister just now said that it is rather difficult, this and that. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he will give a serious consideration to this and see that all ways and means at the disposal of the Government will be utilised to find out the oil by exploring the off-shore sea coast of Kerala and also make a feasible proposal for its commercial exploitation.