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LOK SABHA

Thursday, July 25 1968/Sravana 3, 1890 (SAKA)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair.]

ORAL ANSWERS 'TO QUESTIONS

क्या **संचार** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि डाक को दरों में हाल में की गई वृदि में समाचारपत्नों को, विगेत रूप से ६० ग्रत्म अथवा इसमें कम वजन वाले समाचारपत्नों को, काफी नकसान हम्रा है;

(ख) क्या छोटे समाचारपत्रों को डाक की दरों में विश्वंग रियायत देने का सरकार का विचार है: ब्रॉर

(ग) यदि हाँ, तो उसका व्यौरा क्या है ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIA-MENTARY AFFAIRS AND COM-MUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Government have no specific information.

(b) No further concessions are contemplated. The present rates for regd. newspapers are already concessional.

(c) Does not arise.

भी मोंकार सिंहः ग्राज जो छोटे समाचारे पत्न हैं उनके ढारा ही गौवों में लोकतंत्र की भावनायें ग्राती हैं, तो क्या मंत्री महोदय यह बतलाने की छुपा करेंगे कि वह उनको कोई विशेष सुविधायें देंगे ?

भी इ० कु० गुजराल : छोटे समाचार-पत गांवों ग्रौर छोटे शहरों में जाते हैं ग्रौर बड़ा प्रच्छा काम करते हैं। इसके लिये मैं उनको बघाई देता हूं। लेकिन इस महकमे की मुश्किल यह है कि पोस्टल सर्विस में रजिस्टर्ड न्यूजपेपर्स को फ्रेजने में महकमे को काफी नुकमान उठाना पड़ता हैं। रेट बढ़ाने के बाद भी हम उसको 50 फीसदी मव्मिडी देते हैं। शायद ग्रापको मालम होगा कि

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: Plaase give the figures.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Yes. The average cost per packet transmission is 14.76 p.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: That is an old figure.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: No. The cost of transmission is same. Now, the revenue is 6.05 p. In this, the element of subsidy is about 59 per cent. Therefore, even with the increased rate, our total loss on this type of service will be Rs. 195 lakhs. So, the Department really finds it difficult, much as it would wish to help small newspapers, to give more concessions.

बी मॉकार सिंह : क्या मंत्री र य बतलाने की क्रुपा करेंगे कि जब से डाक दर बढ़ गई है तब में छोटे समाचार-पत्रां की संख्या किननी घट गई है ?

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भी इ० **कु० गुजराल**ः यह मेरी नोटिस में नहीं क्योंकि इस महकमे का इससे सम्बन्ध नहीं है ।

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL: I am very much pained to hear from the hon. Minister that already concessions have been given to newspapers. Before I put my question, you may kindly allow me to explain the position as to what has happened after the increase in postal rates.

MR. SPEAKER: You want to educate the Minister.

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL: Before the introduction of the decimal coinage, in one rupee, 64 copies could be sent by post whereas now hardly 10 copies can be sent by post. After this increase the newspapers are hard hit, specially the small district newspapers and the medium-sized provincial newspapers because they are largely dependent for their circulation on postal subscribers. The Finance Minister, last year, allowed concessions and kept 2 p. per copy upto 60 This promise was kept but grams. his generosity lasted only for months. This year, he increased the rate by 5 p. upto 50 grams. Under these conditions, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what made the Finance Minister to change his mind and to increase the postage for which he says he has already given concessions. My second question will be as to whether the Government wants the small newspapers to die and the big papers to grow more because the newspapers which have got more weight

MB. SPEAKER: You have asked the question.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: So far as his second question is concerned....

SHRI RAJARAM: He did not complete it. How are you replying?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is for the Speaker to gay.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: For the information of the hon.. Member, his second question was whether the Government wishes the small newspapers to die....

SHRI RAJARAM: He did not complete the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. order.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: So far as the first part of the question is concerned, while I repeat my sympathy with the small newspapers and I very much appreciate the role they are playing in the national life, what I would like to submit to the hon. Member's consideration is that the hon. Finance Minister here was basically motivated by the recommendations of the Tariff Committee. The Tariff Enguiry Enquiry Committee went into the details of the subsidy element and felt that, although the various other services could bear their cost, in the give case of newspapers we could subsidy to a maximum of 66-2,3 per The subsidy that we cent. are giving is about 59 per cent even now. While I do appreciate the difficulty, the hon. Member may kindly appreciate that for transmission of 224 million newspaper packets, we are subsidising even this year to the tune of Rs. 195 lakhs. This is not a small subsidy. particularly because our total income from this service is estimated to be 135.2 lakhs against costs of 330.62 lakhs.

श्री नारायण स्वरूप शर्मा : डाक दर बढ़ने के पहले एक छोटा समाचार-पत 2 से में जाता बा ग्रीर ग्रव 5 पैसे में जाता है वर्यात डाईगनी बढ़ोतरी हो गई है । जहाँ तक मंत्री महोदय का प्रम्न है ऐपा मालूम होता है कि उन्होंने तय कर लिया है कि डाक विभाम के स्वर यो हर तिशाग सेल्फ रिलायेंट होना चालिये । जहीं तो व्ययर छोटे पैकेट पर नुक्सान भी हता है तो बड़े पैकेट पर फायदा हो मगल्य होना, यौर ग्रयर पूरी पासंज सविस पर कराता होता है तो किसी ग्रीर मविस में Oral Answers

फॉयदा होता होगा, झौर झगर किसी सर्विस में फायदा नहा होता तो पोस्टल सर्विस तो एक यूटिलिटी डिपार्टमेंट है । मंत्री महोदय समाजवाद का नारा लगाते हैं तो क्या वह इसके लिये तैया है कि दो चार मेम्बर पालियामेंट की एक कमेटी बना दी जाय जो झौर भी दष्टिकोणों से इस पर विचार करे?

भी इ॰ कु॰ गुकरालः हम सिर्फ नारा ही नहीं लगाते हैं, हम सोशलिज्म लाना भी चाहते हैं। सिर्फ इस बात का मवाल नहीं है...

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA: I shall request the Minister to repeat it.

MR. SPEAKER: Not necessary; it is as good as having said hundred times.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: For the bencfit of my hon. friend, Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta, who has neither contributed to, nor understood, socialism, I would say this. I would like him to understand that we contribute to socialism.

Therefore, the basic thing that I would like to say is that socialism does not mean this that services should run at a loss. Where there is a service rendered, it is for the Parliament to decide how they would like to meet the expenditure. Our eXpenditure in postal services last year was to the tune of Rs. 88.43 crores. and our revenue was about Rs. 72.46 crores. So, there was a net loss in the postal services to the tune of Rs. 16 crores, last year necessitating an increase in tariffs so that the postal branch breaks even this year. It is for this august body to decide like us to whether they would raise some funds from the services that we run or they would give us Naturally this from other things. has to be made up.

So far as newspapers are concerned, I repeat it is a highly subsidied service. It is for the mainbers of this august body to decide what should be gione. The Budget was passed here and we are only carrying out what the Parliament has decided.

भी नारायण स्वरूप झर्माः कमेटी के बारे में उन्होंने कोई उत्तर नहीं दिया ?

भी ग्रॉकार लाल बोहरा : समाचार-पत डिमाकेसी में बहत बडा रोल रखते हैं ग्रीर चौथी स्टेट माने जाते हैं। हमारी प्रधान मंती जब इन्फार्मेशन ग्रौर बाडकास्टिंग मितिस्टर थीं तब उन्होंने वडी हिम्मत के साथ कहा था कि छोटे समाचार-पत्नों ग्रीर भारतीय माषायों के पत्नों को हर प्रकार से प्रोत्साहन दिया जायेगा । लेकिन बड प्रफसोस की बात है कि भारतीय भाषात्रों त्रौर छोटे समाचार-पत्नों के ऊपर पिछले दिनों बजट में जो कठाराघात किया गया है उसके बारे में मंत्रालय ने कुछ नहीं किया है । मेरा प्रश्न केन्द्रीय सरकार मे संचार मंत्रालय के द्वारा है । यह प्रश्न सुचना मंत्रालय, संचार मंत्रालय और फाइनेन्स मिनिस्टी से सम्बन्ध रखता है । बडे बडे पत्नों के लिये अगर आप पोस्टल रेटस बढा दें तो वे तो एफोर्ड भी कर सकते हैं लेकिन छोटे जो समाचार-पत्न हैं वे इस कारण से एकदम सभाप्त हो गये हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हं कि क्या ग्राप जैसे पहले था कि माठ ग्राम पर दो पैसे लगते थे, वैसे घब भी इन छोटे समाचारपत्नों के लिये नहीं कर सकते हैं ?

भी इ० कु० गुंजरास : इम वक्त हम रिवाइज करने को स्थिति में नहीं हैं । बजट यहाँ पास किया गया था और जब कभी पालिमेंट रिवाइज करना चाहेगी, कर सकती है । यह सुप्रीम बाडी है भौर यह प्रगर चाह तो इसको भी कर सकती है ।

भी कंषर लाल युप्तः भाप प्रोपोजल लाइये, हम पास कर देंगे ।

भी सिंग्य रे : ऐसे बहुत से पेपर हैं जिनकी कीमत पाँच छ: पैसे होती है मौर उनका जो सक्युलिशन है वह ज्वावातर बाई पोस्ट ही होता है, बाहर ही उनको मेजा जाता है । मब पाँच पैसे उस मखवार को मेजने में खबं करने पढ़ जाते हैं । यह तो उसी कहावत 1249

को बरितायं करता है कि मियां बिसा मर, दाढ़ो हाथ भर । पाँच पैसे का पेपर ग्रीर पाँच पैसे उसको भेजने का खर्च । इसका परिणाम यह होता है कि ये जो छोटे पेपर हैं यं लास में चलते हैं । इस वास्ते मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि जो छोटे पेपर हैं उनको कोई सुविधा देने की सरकार रूपा करेगी ताकि वे भी जारी रह सकें, वे भी प्रपने सर्क्युलेशन को बढ़ा सकें ग्रीर जो उनको धक्का पहुंचा है, उससे उनको बचाया जा सके ? गोग्रा में हमने देखा है कि बहुत सं डेली हैं जिनकी सर्क्युलेशन पोस्ट से होती है । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि ऐसे जो पेपर हैं उनको कोई सुविधा प्रदान करने के लिये क्या सरकार तैयार है ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: It is a suggestion for action.

MR. SPEAKER: Every suggestion is in the form of a speech.

SHRI LOBO FRABHU: The hon. Minister has stated that he has no information about the decrease in the number of small newspapers. As publisher of two papers, I may inform him that one paper has decreased 50 per cent, and instead of being weekly it is now a fortnightly. Another paper which was a monthly has become a six-weekly. The point that I wish to make is that instead of the revenues of Government benefiting by this higher rate, they are likely to lose, because no paper can afford to pay these rates, considering that the readers are poor and these are mostly vernacular papers meant for them.

My second question is this. . .

MR. SPEAKER: He has not put any question at all but only given information.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: I supplied information because the hon. Minister had said that he had no information.

My first question is this. Can the hon. Minister deny that a committee appointed by Government themselves, namely the committee on small newspapers had recommended that the rate of postage for all papers weighing less than 50 gm. should be one paisa? Government has ignored that recommendation and that concession to be made by this Finance Minister? Why have they ignored it?

Oral Answers

My second question is this, how do Government claim that it costs them 14.5 paise per transmission? Have they related it to the weight of the papers or only to the total number of newspapers? How is this calcu-If their calculations lation made? are as good as that, are they willling to put them on the Table of the House? I am asking for this because I dispute their calculation.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Taking the dispute part of the hon. Meinber's question first, I would say that аll this analysis has been made in the Tariff Committee's report, and if the hon. Member will see it with care he will see the analysis made there. So far as our calculating the cost is concerned, it is calculated on the basis of the average number of packets that are transmitted and the total cost that we incur on them. The hon. Member will also appreciate that we have got a huge volume of traffic, namely 224 million packets a year, and it is very difficult for us to break it קוי. because the cost of breaking it up would be considerably higher. So far as the information given by the hon. Member regarding closing down ٦f the paper is concerned I have noted it with regret, but I would also suggest to him that if he starts selling or distributing his paper freely, he will make some loss.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: I have not asked for help from him . This is no reply to my question.

SHRI SRADHAKAR SUPAKAR: The hon. Minister has quoted certain statistics about the loss. May I know whether he has got any statistics of

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the total volume of the news packets received, and whether it is a fact that on account of the increase in the tariff, the volume of the newspaper packets has been reduced considerably and that accounts for the loss in the revenues of Government?

SHRI I K. GUJRAL: My hon. friends may note that the postal service is one such service where the more we transmit the more we lose. As the traffic expands, the losses go up. It is not as if when the traffic goes up the profit goes up. For, this is a labour-intensive activity. Therefore, the more the number of packets transmitted, the greater is the amount of losses and the losses mount up.

SHRI ANIRUDHAN: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that most of the newspapers, especially the language newspapers and the small, smaller and even medium newspapers, have ceased publication within the last decade because of difficulties. financial their For example, even our Law Minister Shri Govinda Menon was having a paper called Deenabandhu, and some of the other Chief Ministers in our State having their influence. published their newspapers there, I think that not less than one thousand papers have ceased publication there recently. As a publisher myself, I can understand the difficulties of a publication. I used to affix only some 2 nP. stamp on an ordinary paper which may have only four pages, but now I have to affix 6 nP stamp on the same paper. In view of the fact that small newspapers have only four pages and they are being published regularly and they used to affix only 2 nP stamps on them some months back be-fore the renewal, and thereby they have to affix 300 per cent more than what they used to do before, will Government consider this question of reducing the rates? In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the House to what Gladstone said once in the British Parliament, when they introduced tax on paper,

Do not tax knowledge'. In the same way, I may also say that let not Government try to tax knowledge and try to suppress the small newspapers and the smaller newspapers. So, Government may kindly reconsider the position.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rane.

SHRI ANIRUDHAN: My question has not been answered.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a suggestion which he has made. So, no answer is needed. The hon. Member has made an appeal to the Government to reconsider the position. That is not a question.

SHRI RANE: May I know whether the Ministry has received representations from various States from associations of the small newspapers and if so how many?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Some representations have been received.

श्री ग्रटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : हिन्दी में एक पुरानी कहावत है श्रंधेर नगरी बेबूझ राजा, टके सेर भाजी टके सेर खाजा । छोटे ग्रीर बड़े श्रखबारों को एक ही तराजू में रख कर सरकार इस कहावत को चरितार्थ करती हुई मालूम होती है । मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि ग्रगर छोटे पत्नां पर जो बजट के प्रन्दर भार डाला गया है उसको एकदम कम करना सम्भव न हो तो क्या मंत्री महांदय कोई ऐसा रास्ता निकालेंगे जिससे छोटे पत्नों को राहत मिल सके ग्रीर क्या इस बारे में गम्भीरता में विचार करने का ग्राग्वासन देंगे ?

श्वी इ.० कु.० गुजरालः गम्भीरता से विचार करने का मैं ग्राप्त्वासन दे सकता हं।

श्री रएषर्थ. सिंह : मैं मैम्बर्ज माफ पालिमेंट के मफाद की बात पूछना जाहता हूं। बेचारे बहुत से मेम्बर पालियामेन्ट ऐसे हैं जो मपने छोटे छोटे मखबारात घलाते हैं, बहुत से बलेटिन चलाते हैं, बहुत सी कारेसपोर्बेस करते हैं, खेतीकिताबत करंते हैं। यह सब पब्सिक के इंस्टरेस्ट को महेनजार रख कर करते हैं। बीवेश्रूद कम तनख्वाह होने के ये दुगुना श्रीर तिगृना एक्सरेंस पोस्टल रेट्स पर लगाते हैं। क्या कोई ऐसी प्रोपोजल सरकार के दिमाग में है कि ऐसे जो पब्लिक की संविस के काम हैं, जनता की सर्विस के काम हैं, देश की सर्विस के काम हैं श्रीर जो पालिमेंट के मेम्बर करते हैं उनसे उनकी जो खतोकिताबत होती है, उनके जो ग्रखबार होते हैं, उनके जो बुलेटिन होते हैं, उस पर यह रिड्यूस रेट्स लागू किये जायें?

श्री इ० कु गुजराल : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जो मुश्किल ग्रानरेवल मेम्बर ने बयान की है उसको देखने के लिये ग्रापने भी एक कमेटी बनाई है ग्रीर मेरा खयाल है कि वह कमेटी ग्रापके सामने ग्रपनी सिफारिणें रखेगी।

SHRI SEZHIYAN: The hon. Minister gave the figures of 225 million packages and Rs. 195 lakhs loss. Nobody wants to increase the loss on this when they increase the rates, thev should see that it does not affect the small newspapers. I would like to tell him that if small newspapers selling at 10P or 7P have to affix 5P stamp, it comes to 50 per cent of the price. If a newspaper is sold at 30 or 40 P, this increase will not amount too much. So will the Minister consider the matter and see that there is some relation between the postage rate and the selling price of the newspaper?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I have already promised that we will give due consideration to the matter.

भी प्रेम चन्द वर्मा: मिनिस्टर साहब ने प्रभी जो भांकड़ें दिये हैं, मैं उनको टोटली ब्रतत करार देता हूं न्यीकि मुझे छोटे और बड़े घड़वारी का सजुबी है और मैं उनकी ऐसोडिवेबीन का भविकारी भी हूं। जो ठुछ उन्होंने कहा है उसके बारे में मैं इतना ही कह संकेता हूं कि वह प्रख़वारों का ख़र्च नहीं है बल्कि वह पैकटों ग्रौर दूसरी बड़ी-चड़ी चीचो पर घाटा है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या वह इस सिलसिले में पालियामेंट के मेम्बरों की एक कमेटी बनायेंगे, ताकि इस सारे मामले को उसके सामने रख कर उस पर दोबारा गौर किया जाये।

श्री इ० **कु० गुजराल**ः सवाल यह नहीं है कि हम रेट फिक्स कर रहे हैं। मैं बताना चाहता हूं कि 100 ग्राम के न्यूज़पेपर के हम 5 पैसे लेते हैं ग्रीर बुक पैकेट के 35 पैसे लेते हैं। इसलिये कनफ्यूजन हमारे ग्रांकड़ों में नहीं है ग्रानरेबल सेम्बर के इनको समझने में है।

SHRI RANGA: Should newspapers be turned into book packets?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: That is more expensive.

SHRI HEM BARUA: Is it a fact that the Small Newspapers' Association has submitted a memorandum to Government requesting them to revise the postal rates so that the small newspapers might exist and live? Since the revenue receipt is not going to be of a large order due to the increased rates, what is the response of Government to this memorandum?

SHRI RANGA: All the members are now submitting a memorandum.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: We examined it at that time and then when the present formulation came before you, this difficulty was pointed out. As I have said, we have sensed the feeling of the House and we will examine it.

भी झित नररायण : मंत्री महोदय यह जानते ही हैं कि छोटे-छोटे प्रख्यार गांवो में जाते हैं । मैं उनसे यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जो लोग प्रख्यार पढ़ते हैं, क्या सरकार ने उंगर्स भी धूछां है । अख्यारीं का दाम कितना बढ़ गया है। जब दो पैसे जगते ये तब प्रख्यारों का क्या दाम वा भौर मांज क्या दाम है ?

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MR. SPEAKER: Next question. Before that, I would like to say that every supplementary is tending to become a small speech. Once in a way in order to elucidate a point, it may perhaps be necessary to do so. But not in the case of every supplementary. We have already spent 25 minutes on this question alone.

SHRI HEM BARUA: Not every supplementary is long.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Every supplementary is becoming a speech and every answer is becoming silence.

Delhi State Co-operative Bank

*92. SHRI MAHANT DIGVIJAI NATH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a former employee of the Delhi State Cooperative Bank has been arrested on the 15th June, 1968 for alleged cheating of the Bank;

(b) if so, whether some more arrests have been made in this case and if so, the number of officials involved therein; and

(c) the progress so far made in the investigation of the case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRI-CULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOP-MENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Yes, one.

(c) As a result of the arrests and investigation, the greater part of the amount involved has been recovered.

भी महण्म दिल्मियेय नाथ : वह प्रपत्तर देखा गया है कि की-मापरेटिव बैफ्स में ऐसे बहुत से गं।ल-माल हो रहे हैं। क्या मंत्री महोदय यह बतावेंगे कि क्या गवर्ननेंट इस बारे में विचार करमे के लिये कोई कमेटी बिठाने की सोच रही है ताकि इस किस्म

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: We take steps to see that such things do not happen, and when they do happen, we take immediate measures.

की बातें म्राईन्दान हो सकें ?

श्री सहन्त दिग्विजय नाथ : प्रक्सर यह देखा गया है कि ये को-ग्रापरेटिव सोसायटीज ऐसे बिजिमेस करती हैं, जिन में घाटा ही घाटा होता है ग्रौर उसमें डायरेक्टर्ज का भी हिस्सा होता है । इसलिये ग्रावश्यकता यह जान पड़ती है कि गवर्नमेंट जल्द से जल्द एक ऐसी योजना बनाये, जिसके द्वारा ग्राईन्दा ऐसी बातों को रोका जा सके । क्या गवर्नमेंट इस पर भी विचार करेगी ?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: In this particular case there was no loss. The co-operative bank has made profit. It is one of defalcation, and this defalcation has been found out and the person has been apprehended.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय: मैं नंती महोदय से बह जानना चाहता हूं कि दिल्ली में इस प्रकार के कितने को-प्रापरेटिव बैंक हैं जिनके बारे में उनको घोटाले को कुचना मिली है। उनके सम्बन्ध में कितने व्यक्तियों को ऐरेस्ट किया गया ग्रीर कितने व्यक्तियों पर मुकदमे चलाये गये। उन्होंने कहा है कि कुछ घनराझि बसूल को गई है। मैं यह जानमा चाहता हूं कि कितनी घनराशि बसूल की गई है।

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: The defalcation was to the extent of Rs. 1,09,200. We have recovered so far Rs. 1,07,311. So, only a small amount has to be recovered. The person has been apprehended.

भी देवि रोवे: उस व्यक्ति का नाम क्या है ?