

LOK SABHA

Thursday, August 18, 1966/Sravana 27,
1888 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Threat of Resignation by Honorary
Doctors

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- *509. Shri Yash Pal Singh :
Shri N. C. Chatterjee:
Shri Priya Gupta :
Shri Bagri :
Dr. Ranen Sen :
Shri H. N. Mukerjee :
Shri A. K. Gopalan :
Shri H. P. Chatterjee :
Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:
Shri U. M. Trivedi :
Shri Hem Barua :
Shri Kishen Pattnayak :
Shri Dinen Bhattacharya :
Shri N. Sreekantan Nair :
Shri Madhu Limaye :
Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri:
Shri S. M. Banerjee :
Dr. P. Srinivasan :
Dr. Chandrabhan Singh :
Shri Kolla Venkaiah :
Shri Umanath :
Shri M. N. Swamy :

Will the Minister of Health and Family
Planning be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Honorary Physicians, Surgeons and Professors attached to the Maulana Azad Medical College and Irwin Hospital have tendered their resignations and others are contemplating doing so, as result of the differences with the Principal and Director of the College and associate hospitals with

regard to the terms and conditions of the honorary services rendered by them; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to see that hospital services and teaching do not suffer dislocation as a result of these resignations ?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Health and Family Planning (Shri B. S. Murthy) : (a) and (b), Only one honorary medical officer has resigned. There is no dislocation of hospital services and teaching.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : वे लोग जो आनरेरी बर्क कर रहे हैं ये हिन्दुस्तान की मानी हुई हस्तियां हैं। ये टापमोस्ट फिजिशियन हैं। इनके साथ जो सलूक किया जाता है वह ऐसा नहीं है जो कि माने हुए रत्नों के साथ होना चाहिये। डा० सेन को राष्ट्रपति ने खुद पद्म भूषण का खिताब दिया है। डा० सेन की जब इतनी इज्जत हमारे राष्ट्रपति और स्वर्गीय राजेन्द्र प्रसाद ने की है तो उनके साथ जो व्यवहार किया जा रहा है वह क्या इस समय युक्तिसंगत है ?

स्वास्थ्य तथा परिवार नियोजन मंत्री (डा० सुशीला नायर) : आनरेरीज के साथ भी अच्छा और सम्मान का व्यवहार किया जा रहा है। किसी के साथ खराब व्यवहार नहीं किया गया है।

श्री यशपाल सिंह : इनको मजबूर किया जा रहा है कि ये इस्तीफे दे दें। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि किस लिए इन से इस्तीफे लिये जा रहे हैं ? अगर अच्छा सलूक किया जा रहा है तो क्या जरूरत महसूस हुई कि ये इस्तीफे दें ?

डा० मुशोला नायर : माननीय उपमंत्री जी ने कहा है कि एक व्यक्ति ने इस्तीफा दिया था। अस्पताल का बहुत जमाने से रूल है कि तीन घंटे कम से कम अस्पताल को दिये जायें। जब उनसे कहा गया कि इस नियम का पालन करो तो उन्होंने इस्तीफा दिया। उसके अलावा किसी ने इस्तीफा नहीं दिया।

Shri Priya Gupta : In a country with a developing economy like India, especially when the hospitals and medical colleges cannot afford to appoint physicians, doctors and professors of high eminence who are few and far between in India, by this process of appointing the visiting, honorary surgeons, honorary physicians and honorary professor, they should not be pinned down with timings. Is not it a fact that not only three hours, there are cases which can be cited where a professor or a doctor, a physician or a surgeon, has given more than 18 hours also in the hospitals? In the circumstances, how is it that the Principal, who has been appointed not at all legally, outside the UPSC, is taking on himself to harm the country and the people and the students by victimising the honorary surgeons only because they cannot toe his desires?

Mr. Speaker : He should not assume so many things.

Shri Priya Gupta : It is a fact.

Dr. Sushila Nayar : May I say that the Principal has been appointed according to the UPSC's recommendations and their directives? Nobody has gone outside the UPSC.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy : Has he been allowed private practice?

Dr. Sushila Nayar : We advertised the post of the Director/Principal and the present Principal's name was sent to the UPSC as a contact candidate by the Delhi Administration. The UPSC put him at the top of the list after the interview and

directed the Health Ministry to negotiate the terms with him because the terms that were offered by us were not acceptable to him. We first resisted but then we were advised to follow the advice of the Union Public Service Commission and the desires of the Delhi Administration and talks were held with Dr. Dhanda.

Shri Priya Gupta : You advertised the post again.

Mr. Speaker : Order, order. He cannot continue in this manner.

Dr. Sushila Nayar : May I say that Dr. Dhanda's point was that he was prepared to give a few years to serve the institution and put it on the right lines, but if he dissociated his connection with his practice completely, to which he will have to return after three years or four years or five years, whatever the period may be, it will be very difficult for him, because he is not a permanent Government servant and has no pension or other benefits to his advantage. After considerable discussions with all concerned, the post was given to him as desired by the Union Public Service Commission.

So far as the honorary system is concerned, it is in vogue in a few institutions: in one institution in Delhi, in a few institutions in Bombay and Madras and may be in some other places.

Shri Priya Gupta : In all institutions in Calcutta.

Dr. Sushila Nayar : In Calcutta also. So far as Delhi is concerned, the percentage is not more than 10 to 15. But we are associating these men for their experience and for the advantage that the people can gain from their experience. Nobody has done anything which can be taken offence to. If the Director/Principal has insisted on the observance of the rules, it is not a matter which can be complained about. If necessary, the rules can be amended, but so long as the rules are there—and they have not been framed today, they are

there right from the beginning, from the early days—they should be observed and he has only asked for the observance of these rules.

Shri Priya Gupta : She has given wrong information.

Mr. Speaker : He can take recourse to a separate remedy.

Shri Priya Gupta : I want a clarification. She is wrong.

Mr. Speaker : Order, order. There is a separate remedy.

Shri Priya Gupta : She is giving a wrong interpretation. The post was advertised again.

Mr. Speaker : Order, order. Again and again, I have told him that there is a separate remedy for these things.

Shri Priya Gupta : Let me clarify one thing.

Mr. Speaker : I am not allowing it.

Shri Priya Gupta : She has not replied to that point.

Mr. Speaker : Order, order. I have told him so many times not to proceed like that.

Shri Priya Gupta : The Minister is protecting the Principal unnecessarily (*Interruption*).

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri : It seems that the honorary physicians and surgeons, etc. who have been associated with this institution for more than two decades are not very happy over the present state of things. May be the Principal is all right according to the rules, but these gentlemen have been working there and doing signal service to this institution which has been recognised by the Government even by giving awards to some of them. Mr. N. S. Jain, who has resigned, is one of the leading ophthalmic surgeons in the whole country, and Dr. Sen's name has been mentioned. He is also one of the eminent surgeons, of the country. So, has the hon. Minister

considered what is the trouble there and whether the good offices of the Health Ministry can be availed of in arriving at a satisfactory solution?

Dr. Sushila Nayar : The Health Ministry is not in a position to direct the Delhi Administration to have rules to suit individuals. Rules can be made only for a whole group of people. May I say further that one of the things that was objected to by the honoraries was that they were expected to sign their names in the register whenever they went in and then came out. This applied to honoraries as well as full-time officers. In deference to their wishes and their feeling, that rule has been revised.

Dr. Ranam Sen : Elsewhere in India, in all the big cities and in all the big hospitals as far as we know, this system of honorary physicians, surgeons and professors prevails and it has been proved in practice that it has been to the advantage of the students as well of the patients and the institutions, and that this honorary system should continue.

May I know why the Delhi Administration or the Principal or the Health Ministry is so keen on abolishing this system of honorary physicians? What is the reason on behind it?

Shri Priya Gupta : Inferiority complex of the Principal.

Dr. Sushila Nayar : I have explained that neither the Delhi Administration nor the Principal nor the Health Ministry has done anything new to which anybody could take offence, except that certain rules which were not being observed are enforced by the Director Principal. So far as the utility of the honorary system is concerned, there are two opinions. We have thought it wise to continue the system to the extent it is prevailing. That is where the position rests.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : May I know whether this institution is only helpful for the hospital and the students or is

it equally helpful to the Doctors who get much boosting in their practice? If so is there a minimum rule for the honorary doctors in Delhi hospitals and elsewhere, or they are free to act as they like, including Dr. Sen who has attacked the Minister personally? Can't they come in and put in a minimum time and their signature?

Dr. Sushila Nayar : I would admit that the honorary system benefits the doctor, as much or even more than it helps anybody else. I would also say that because there has been a clear case that certain things were not attended to as carefully as they should have been the institution of full-time units had to be instituted. As I have said at the present moment, the honorary staff is only 10 to 15 per cent in the hospital and college and full-time staff have been put in position in most of the units. It does cause a considerable amount of dislocation and discontent amongst the full-time staff because they are not allowed private practice, whereas honorary people can have private practice and earn large sums of money. In view of this, there is a powerful opinion among experts that those who wish to go for research and teaching, i.e. academic pursuits, may be made full-time people and those who wish to earn money may go in for private practice.

Shri Hem Barua : Is it not a fact that in the original advertisement by the UPSC the condition was laid down that an honorary surgeon or physician must not have private practice? This gentleman put in his application and laid down the condition that he must be allowed to have private practice. In his particular case, that condition originally imposed by the UPSC was waived. If so, why is it that the UPSC did not re-advertise the post, because in that case many more people like Dr. Dhanda who had the knowledge and experience and who would have liked to work under the same condition if they are allowed private practice, would have put in their application?

Dr. Sushila Nayar : The condition of practice it was, was relaxed at the instance of the UPSC. I admit that while we were hesitating and trying to make up our mind, I did get a message from my colleague, Mr. Humayun Kabir and others that Dr. Sen was willing to offer his services for this post and give up private practice. But we were not in a position to offer the post to Dr. Sen, in view of the fact that the Delhi Administration had sent Dr. Dhanda's name to the UPSC and the UPSC had recommended Dr. Dhanda's name.

Shri Hem Barua : Sir, my question has not been answered. You will agree with me, Sir, if I say that my question was point-blank. The UPSC laid down a particular condition. That condition was waived in the case of a particular gentleman who offered his own conditions. My submission is this. Why is it that the UPSC did not re-advertise so that many more people like Dr. Dhanda with similar conditions would have applied and we could have certainly made a choice from a bigger circle?

Dr. Sushila Nayar : Here the feeling was that we were not likely to get any better people by re-advertising (*Interruptions*).

Shri Hem Barua : Sir, you should come to our rescue. You should protect us. Should the Minister act on her feelings? We have our feelings also.

Mr. Speaker : I cannot help in this respect because

Shri Priya Gupta : How can the Minister's feelings supersede the UPSC rules?

Mr. Speaker : Order, order.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : Sir, this running commentary should be stopped now.

Shri Priya Gupta : He should stop the running commentary.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I really make strong exception to this. I have asked him again and again. I cannot tolerate it any further.

Shri Priya Gupta: Sir, how can the Minister. . . .

Mr. Speaker: Again he continues. I will now ask him to go out.

Shri Priya Gupta: I will, if you so desire. When senior Members do the same thing as I do, how do you consider their case sympathetically? Is it due to their personality and weightage in this Parliament: I am only seeking your protection in this.

Mr. Speaker: He may go out now.

(Shri Priya Gupta then left the House).

श्री हुकम चन्द कछराय : अध्यक्ष महोदय, आप हनेशा हम को ही डांटते हैं । क्या आप कभो मंत्रियों को भी कहते हैं कि व ठीक उत्तर दें ?

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty : Now that is quite clear that there is no altruistic motive associated with this particular gentleman having the right of private practice as well as having full-time pay, I would like to know whether it is not a fact that in almost all the big cities and all big hospitals the honorary physicians and honorary surgeons are people of great eminence, and whether it is right to insist on pinpricks like making them sign as soon as they come and when they go out. May I also know whether it is not a fact that, it is not only necessary, but the work much more than two hours. If that is so, why is this being insisted upon with the result that we are going to lose the services of eminent people of great diagnostic experience.

Dr. Sushila Nayar: I have said that there are honoraries of great eminence, but I would not say that every honorary all over the country is so. However, Sir,

a certain minimum time is considered necessary. I remember, Dr. Gilder, when he was the Health Minister of Bombay, gave a ruling that unless the honoraries spent a minimum of three hours it was not possible to keep to the routine or do justice to the work, to the students as well as the patients, and the system of signing-in and signing-out was introduced by him. Dr. Jivaraj Mehta, who became the Director General of Health Services soon after independence, introduced here also the rules that they were following in Bombay. There is no question of pinpricks, but anybody who comes to serve an institution has to abide by certain minimum requirements, and three hours is not a very big requirement. Otherwise, it happened in Bombay that people came by one door and went out by another door and they did not give enough time.

Shri S. M. Banerjee : It seems the trouble that started from the honorary physicians has also crept in among the doctors of CHS. I want to know whether it is a fact that the honorary doctors and all doctors working under the CHS scheme are so much dissatisfied that they have decided to launch an all-India struggle, specially from Delhi, including strike and hunger-strike; if so, I would also like to know whether the hon. Minister has intervened in the matter and what concrete steps have been taken to avoid dislocation of work?

Dr. Sushila Nayar: CHS has got nothing to do with this question. So far as honoraries are concerned, I am not aware of any all-India agitation

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar: From the answers to the supplementaries one gets the impression that the hon. Minister of Health is against the institution of honorary doctors in the Delhi Administration. Am I right in coming to that conclusion?

Dr. Sushila Nayar: If the hon. Member has not listened at all to my answers, what can I do about it?

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar:
Sir, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker. She has already answered it.

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar:
Sir, I am rising on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: There ought not to be any point of order during the Question Hour.

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar :
Sir, could we not raise a point of order?

Mr. Speaker: It is only an obstruction.

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar: I am sorry. If you think it is an obstruction, I will sit down.

Mr. Speaker: I am referring to the points of orders that are generally raised during the question hour.

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar: I never raise a point of order which is frivolous or not valid. But since you remark that it is an obstruction I think I should obey the Chair and resume my seat.

Dr. Sushila Nayar : May I inform the hon. Member that when I took over as Health Minister in the Delhi State in 1952 the then Chief Commissioner, Shri Shankar Prasad, in the very first meeting, told me: "the honorary system has been a source of great abuse in a large number of cases and, therefore, it should be abolished. But I wanted to wait till the popular Ministry came into power." I said "No, we will not do it, because the success or failure of any system will depend upon the individuals as to how they behave and how they act." So the honorary system has continued. But we had to introduce certain full-term units to take care of all those cases where the honoraries could not find time or could not attend to. To say that I am against the system of honoraries is a figment of imagination.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: It is clear from the answers of the hon. Minister that she has some prejudice against

some honorary surgeons. Since she herself admits that this system is prevailing in big cities for quite a number of years and the rules were already there, why is it that they were suddenly changed? Is it after receiving complaints that the honorary surgeons are not working properly and the patients and others are not satisfied that the particular rules are being enforced? While enforcing those rules, was the convenience of the honorary surgeons, whose services are necessary for these institutions, taken into consideration?

Dr. Sushila Nayar: How is the Ministry expected to know the details of the day-to-day working of the hospitals? There must have been some reason for the enforcement of this rule. Further, may I say that in hospitals—I hope the hon. Members will agree with me—it is the convenience of the patients that has to be considered foremost and not of the doctors?

Aid from Abroad

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*510. **Shri Hem Barua:**

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy
Shri Hari Vishnu Kothari:
Shri Nath Pai:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are in a position to tell whether they have got any firm commitments by now from aid-giving countries; and

(b) if not, whether it is a fact that he proposes to meet payment obligations on account of imports and past debts out of whatever foreign exchange resources are available in the country?

The Minister of Finance (Shri Sachindra Chaudhuri) : (a) As regards Consortium countries, the President of the World Bank, on the basis of commitments already made and intentions expressed by Consortium Members, has expressed his complete confidence that the entire amount of dollars nine-hundred million of non-project aid which