

LOK SABHA

Thursday, 22nd March, 1956

The Lok Sabha met at Half Past Ten of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CATERING ON RAILWAYS

*857. **Shri Jhulan Sinha** : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a great disparity in the rate of meals varying from Rs. 2-4-0 in the dining car attached to the Frontier Mail to annas thirteen per meal in the Grand Trunk Express ; and

(b) if so, the reason therefor?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan) : (a) The rate of Rs. 2/4/- relates to vegetarian meals served in Thalís in Restaurant Car of the Frontier Mail.

The rate of Rs. -/13/- is applicable to standard vegetarian meals served on the Grand Trunk Express from Refreshment Rooms on its route from Madras to Balharshah.

The rate for meals served from Dining Car of the Grant Trunk Express from Balharshah to Delhi is Rs. 1/4/-.

(b) The disparity between the prices is due to higher standard of service maintained in the Restaurant Cars, which normally cater in Western style, as compared to that in the Dining Cars and/or Refreshment

Rooms, which normally cater in Indian style, as well as to difference in menu. The question of reduction is, however, under consideration.

Shri Jhulan Sinha : May I know whether the feasibility of fixing a uniform standard rate and a uniform standard menu throughout the country has been examined and whether any steps have been taken in that behalf?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan : That has been gone into in great detail, but the difference between the service in restaurant cars and dining cars will remain. The meals served in restaurant cars contain more items, and the standard of service and other things is much higher than that in dining cars.

Shri Dabhi : Is it not a fact that the charge of Rs. 2-4-0 in the Frontier Mail trains is very much, considering the quality of food that is served therein, and that several complaints have been made with regard to this?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : Yes, Sir. It is true that we have received complaints against this, and perhaps it would be noted that in the answer to part (b) it has been stated that the question of reduction is under consideration. More than that, the quality also has to be ensured.

Shri A. M. Thomas : There may be difference in tastes, but I am afraid we cannot agree with the conclusion arrived at by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary with regard to the rate of Rs. 2-4-0 charged, that the service is better. Our experience is otherwise. It has been the experience of all those people who have been travelling by the Grand Trunk Express, that the thirteen annas meal is the best that

we get on the railways. I do not understand why there is so much disparity in the rates. Will Government consider it immediately?

Sardar Hukam Singh : There may be also difference in tastes.

Shri Alagesan : I may inform the hon. Member and the House that the Southern Railway will be taking over the dining car service on the Grand Trunk Express departmentally from the 1st of April.

Shri Shree Narayan Das : As regards the complaints that are received by Government, may I know whether any departmental surprise check is made by the Government on the supplies in those trains?

Shri Alagesan : Yes, Sir. Such checks are being carried out; they can be intensified also.

श्रीमती मणिबेन पटेल : क्या मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान फ्रंटियर मेल में कैंटरिंग सर्विस में जो गिरावट आयी है उसकी ओर गया है ? बर्तन भी गंदे होते हैं, कपड़े भी गंदे होते हैं और खाना भी पहले जैसा नहीं मिलता है ?

Shri Alagesan : We will take those things also into consideration.

सेठ गोबिंद बास : क्या यह बात सही नहीं है कि जिस भोजन का दाम अधिक लिया जाता है, वह और जो सस्ता दिया जाता है, वह दोनों करीब करीब एक से ही रहते हैं और क्या इस बात का कुछ प्रयत्न किया जा रहा है कि भोजन अच्छा होते हुए भी दाम सब जगह करीब करीब एक से कर दिये जाय ?

श्री शाहनवाज खान : जैसा कि अभी आनरेबल डिप्टी मिनिस्टर कह चुके हैं, यह मसला जैर गौर है ।

MISUSE OF ALARM CHAIN ON RAILWAYS

*859. **Shri Dabhi :** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) whether a record is kept of the incidence of stoppage of passenger trains by pulling alarm chains;

(b) if so, the position with regard to each Railway in 1955; and

(c) the extent of the misuse of alarm chains ?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan) : (a) Yes.

(b) A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha. [See Appendix V, annexure No. 38].

(c) 87%.

Shri Dabhi : Out of these cases, may I know how many persons were prosecuted and how many were convicted?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan : Out of a total of 43,295 cases of chain-pullings, 600 people were prosecuted.

Shri Dabhi : May I know as to why, out of so many cases, only a very small number of persons were prosecuted?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan : In a majority of cases, in fact, in a very great majority of cases, the culprits could not be detected.

श्री भक्त ब्रह्मण : क्या यह सत्य है कि यह जो जंजीर खींचने की घटनाएँ हैं, यह बिहार में ही अधिक संख्या में हो रही हैं और क्या इस के कारण का पता लगाने की कोशिश की गई है ?

श्री शाहनवाज खान : ऐसा तो नहीं है कि इस पुकार की घटनाएँ सिर्फ बिहार में ही होती हैं, दूसरी जगहों पर भी होती हैं ।

Shri A. M. Thomas : May I know whether the Ministry is in a position to say what exactly is the percentage of the genuine use of chain-pulling?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan : It is a very small percentage.

Shri G. P. Sinha : May I know whether the chain-pulling is on the increase or decrease in certain parts of Bihar?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan : Recently we have taken steps to combat this evil and we have noticed a downward trend.