

Tuesday, 7th August, 1956

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Ganga Bridge Project

*784. **Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad :** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to give preference in recruitment to local men whose lands had been acquired for Ganga Bridge Project without in any way sacrificing the question of merit and past experience ; and

(b) the percentage of local and outside persons employed as unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labourers at present ?

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

(b) A statement giving the information is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix V, annexure No. 1.]

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : From the statement it is evident that the proportion between locals and outsiders is very great not only in the skilled and semi-skilled categories, but even in the unskilled category there is a great difference. May I know what are the reasons for this—whether persons are not available or it is the monopoly of some other section ?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : I might inform the hon. Member that although there is a lot of difference in the numbers as between the locals and the outsiders with regard to unskilled labour, the majority of the unskilled outsiders do not come from other States ; they come either from Patna or other districts of Bihar.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : May I know whether it is a fact that in the unskilled labour, not only employed by the project authorities but also by the contractors, large numbers are not from Patna or Mokameh but from outside the State ; is it a fact or not ?

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Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : As far as the Railways are concerned, most of the unskilled labour that we employ comes from the other parts of Bihar. About the labour employed by the contractors we do not have any particular information.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : I want to know the reasons why they are from outside the State.

Mr. Speaker : Order, order. My predecessor, Shri Mavalanbar, refused to allow such questions in the original—as to what are the States, what are the communities and so on. Now, is it the contention of the hon. Member that with respect to the Centrally administered subjects they ought to be only from one State ? Now, this is a matter of Railways, it is not Bihar State.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : May I know from the Chair if it is the ruling that we are not entitled to ask whether in such projects which are in a particular State, where people have sacrificed their lands and orchards and everything, they should have no right to get employment ? It is the general concern of the Government of India, not mine.

Mr. Speaker : That is not the question put. In view of unemployment etc., why not provide employment to the local people ? that is another matter. But to say with respect to Centrally administered things that it should be only from one particular area, is too big a proposition. If the question had been put I would not have allowed it, in accordance with the rules already laid down by the previous Speaker. Of course, unemployment is a problem which has to be relieved whether in a State or in the whole of India. But to pursue it as if the Centrally administered matters must be confined to a particular State or States, does not seem to be proper.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : Should there be none from the local place ?

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member is swinging the pendulum to the other side too much.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : May I know whether any facilities have been provided so far for giving work to all those who have voluntarily given their lands and many other things for for project ?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : The authorities, the local officers who do this recruitment, have been asked to bear this in mind that those whose lands have been taken away—"taken away" means not for nothing, they have been paid ample compensation—even so, they should be considered for employment provided they are suitable.

Shri Shree Narayan Das : May I know what was the procedure adopted and the organisation set up to recruit all these categories of labour there ?

Shri Alagesan : A committee of officers attached to the project makes this recruitment.

Pandit D. N. Tiwary : May I know how many persons drawing more than Rs. 500 are from the State of Bihar and from other States ?

Shri Alagesan : I should like to have notice.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : May I know what is the percentage and relationship of such officers who are drawing above Rs. 300 and above Rs. 500 ?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri) : Sir, may I say a word ? As you have rightly said, under the Constitution it is not possible for us to make any discrimination, in the matter of recruitment, between one State and another. But this matter was referred to me by some hon. Members of Bihar. And we took special care to instruct our General Manager, who is in charge of that project, to see to it that as many local men as possible should be recruited and should be absorbed. And the result has been quite satisfactory. In the statement placed on the Table of the House it has been said with regard to the unskilled category that the percentage of the local men is 39 per cent and that of the outsiders 61 per cent. Out of this 61 per cent of outsiders, I might inform the hon. Member that the majority are from Bihar. They may not be belonging to the area round about the Mokamehghat Bridge, but they come from Bihar, and their percentage is about ninety. So hon. Members will see that local people have been given preference.

As regards officers, of course it depends; the Railways have to transfer officers from one place to another for the respective projects. It is not possible for us to confine ourselves to the Bihar State only. There is nothing like Bihar Railway. There is the Eastern Railway or the North-Eastern Railway, and those Railways are spread over a number of States. Therefore, it is not possible for us to confine ourselves to the selection of officers from the Bihar State only.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad : Does it apply all over the country the same way ?

Mr. Speaker : It must apply.

Shri Jaipal Singh : While under the Constitution there can be no embargo on the movement of labour, do Government accept the principle that generally they would employ local labour ?

Mr. Speaker : They have employed 90 per cent.

Shri Jaipal Singh : I said local labour.

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members must once again look into the rules. The Question Hour ought not to be used for the purpose of eliciting a policy from the Minister. The hon. Member asked : is it the rule or policy ?

So far as this matter is concerned, it has already been said that though not within the radius of five miles or so, 90 per cent of the people have been taken from the State of Bihar. We will stop at that stage.

Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., Alwaye

*786. **Shri A. K. Gopalan :** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state :

(a) the nature of demands raised by the employees of Messrs Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., Alwaye, Travancore-Cochin State in their Memorandum to the management; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to meet these demands ?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) : (a) According to the information received from the State Government the demands of the workers are as follows—

- (1) Bonus for the years 1954 and 1955.
 - (2) Gratuity.
 - (3) Revision of pay scales.
 - (4) Increased dearness allowance.
 - (5) Abolition of contract system.
 - (6) Confirmation of certain grades of employees.
 - (7) Creation of additional posts etc.
- (b) Attempts at conciliation by State Government Officers having failed, the dispute was referred for adjudication on 19-4-56.

Shri A. K. Gopalan : May I know whether one of the demands is as far as the contract system is concerned, and may I know whether Government have proposals to abolish the contract system and take up the work departmentally ?

Shri Abid Ali : This matter has been referred to adjudication. It is one of the items there.

Shri V. P. Nayar : I want to know how the dearness allowance of the workers at Alwaye compares with that of workers in