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Title: Regarding the service conditions of 1.5 lakh licenced porters and more than 7 lakh catering workers in Indian Railways.

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (OTTAPALAM): Sir, the Central Government should take immediate steps to protect the services of 1.5 lakhs of licensed Railway porters and more than seven lakhs of catering service workers.

In 1999, the NDA Government imposed the policy of privatisation. Is this Government also going to continue and adopt the policy of the previous Government? If this happens, the poor workers will lose their jobs.

On the one side, the hon. Minister for Railways announces some benefits to the licensed porters, on the other, the Railway Board issues orders not only preventing the work by the licensed porters but also abolishing the parcel bookings in a number of stations. They have deputed the contract labourers for that job. This has resulted in loss of employment to licensed railway porters. In the same manner, the job of more than seven lakhs of workers is at stake in the catering industry

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Therefore, I am persistently pleading for a review of the existing policy of privatisation and contractisation in respect of Licensed Railway Porters and employees of Catering Service and for the setting up of a Joint-Parliamentary

Committee to look into these aspects. The Government should intervene in this important matter and take immediate favourable steps and withdraw this policy.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Sir, I also associate with him.

MR. SPEAKER: Those hon. Members, who have already raised one matter each this week, it has been agreed that their turns will come afterwards. Therefore, please have patience.