

14.56 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at fifty-six minutes past Fourteen of the Clock*

[Mr. Deputy-Speaker in the Chair]

INDIAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE (AMENDMENT) BILL  
— *contd.*

[English]

SHRI G. DEVARAYA NAIK (Kanara) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir I am very sorry to say that there had been no quorum so far in the House.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now the House enjoys the quorum. Thank you.

Now, the time allotted to this subject, the Indian Statistical Institute (Amendment) Bill, 1959 is one hour. So, I want the cooperation of the hon. Members to complete it within the stipulated time. Further, there are not many amendments to this Bill because it is already there in the Preamble and other things. However, we will discuss it. If there are any valuable suggestions, certainly you are at liberty to make.

Now, I call Shri Jagat Vir Singh Drona to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA (Kanpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has brought forward the Indian Statistical Institute (Amendment) Bill. I welcome an amendment made in section 4 of the Bill of 1959 which calls for expansion in its field of activity. People will be benefited by it but I think that there is no provision in the Bill of the intention with which they should have brought in the amendment. A perusal of the Bill will depict a mention made therein that there is no additional financial burden even after this expansion in its bounds, its area with regard to the present statistics, computer sciences, quantity economics, mathematics and related subjects. The present allocation of the institute is not adequate to conduct work in the statistics sector. You might be aware, you have an example of it before you. I would only like to give suggestions as I know that it is a good Bill. This should be passed but it should also make a provision for the intention with which it was brought. A provision for additional money.

I do not agree with the fact that there will be no need of the conditions imposed presently. I would like to underline some main reasons for that. Today, 75 per cent of the allocation is spent on the salaries and overtime of the officers and the staff. He may correct me in his reply if I am wrong. Had funds been adequate, there would not have been a short cut in the funds for the books and the journals etc. procured for the Library in the institution which enhance the domain of knowledge. The sub-section related to that has been withdrawn. If this is true, then, I do not agree with your contention that it does not add to the burden of the institute. The time is limited and I have to be brief. Hence, I urge that additional provision for funds should definitely be made; otherwise if the field of activity is expanded and arrangements for education to people are not made, then its level will fall as is the case at present.

15.00 hrs.

The level of primary education has fallen. The field of the subjects we select has contracted and instead of questions of importance, it is based on the local issues.

I am aware that Nirmal Da will speak after me. Therefore, I will give the example of West Bengal. I think that the literacy campaign launched by the West Bengal Government and the survey conducted by the institute for the purpose has been utilized in a very limited area. According to the information gathered, there is a large scale indiscipline among the employees there, particularly in the field of salary and work aptitude. Thefts are a common sight in the premises. This should be checked.

The hon. Minister is present. He agrees with it. The whole House and the country knows that for specialised education in the selection process, political interference works more than the talent due to which talented people who cannot exert any political pressure remain deprived of this knowledge. The criterion for appointment of officers at the highest level is influence and not the competence. This practice should be done away with. The present information is that there is political interference in it. We cannot achieve the desired objective due to selection of employees on the basis of influence. I suggest that there should be an end to it.

There is a great time lag in the data collection. The procedure is so protracted that by the time we collect the data, compile it and draft a report, its utility is lost. Such subjects should be included in the curricula as are favourable to our conditions. I remember that the institute has acquired an international reputation since the day it started functioning. But for the last days its level is continuously falling as is its reputation. Like there is a provision in the earlier Bill of 1959 that we should evaluate our work, analyse it and remove the shortcomings. We have not been utilising such committees properly.

In a nut shell, I would like to submit this much only that I welcome this Bill. I have given the suggestions in brief due to the paucity of time. If, without making arrangements for additional funds, political interference in appointments and selection of students is not stopped and if the syllabus is not prepared according to the needs of conditions of our country, and if delay in data collection is not checked, then the work cannot be done effectively. We cannot deny the importance of statistics in the modern age... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This Bill has to be completed before 3.30 P.M.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Please allow me to speak two more sentences.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Alright.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Unless we pay attention towards it, we will not be able to provide advantages of expanding its scope to the people of our country. Therefore, my submission is that while giving reply to my suggestions, some or the other assurance should come before the House; otherwise people will get the opportunity to doubt your intention with which you have brought this Bill. My submission is that do not give them a chance to doubt your intentions.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I must confess that I feel a little shy speaking about this Bill. The reason is that I feel that so much of my life is conditioned by this institution that this is a part of me. Excuse me for this slight autobiographical digression. In fact, there are two biggest influences on me; one was when I was 16 when I joined the Communist movement and then before I could get my postgraduate degree I joined the Indian Statistical Institute. The examinations were over and we were drafted by Prof. Mahalanobis, even before the results were out, into the Indian Statistical Institute. Of course, with the arrogance of the youth, I fought, if I should use that expression against Prof. Mahalanobis, and got promptly dismissed, not once, but twice. Again, my entry into that institution was debarred for five years after I was out of it, though I was hovering around it. Since 1955 however, till I retired, I was an Indian Statistical Institute person. That is how it is so much a part of myself.

Before I speak on the Bill, I think the Minister will agree with me that we cannot begin without paying homage to the person who founded this Institute, that is, Prof. Mahalanobis. We should remind ourselves that it was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who thought that it was for him to pilot the Bill on Indian Statistical Institute being declared as an Institution of national importance. He did not entrust it to anyone else. To the lasting credit of Prof. Mahalanobis, this Institution was there and it should be recognised that thanks to one man, there is at least one field of science where we are recognised on an international plane. The students of Indian Statistical Institute are known the world over. They are teaching in all kinds of universities in the United States at top positions. Statistics as a theory and statistics as applied in a large country like ours through sample survey are two unique contributions to this science, to this field of activity, thanks to Prof. Mahalanobis.

Only a few days ago the Minister was kind enough to name the National Sample Survey Organisation in Delhi, with the Prime Minister's consent, after him. I am happy and am thankful to him that I was called to speak as the main speaker in that function.

What confuses in this Amending Bill, I will come to that later. But before that, let me explain why this Institution of international fame and of national importance has one International Statistical Education Centre where students from all Asian and African countries come to learn statistics from this institution. Let me cite Prof. Mahalanobis who used to say that instead of going abroad, our Institution should be such that people from abroad would think it a privilege to come, study and do research in this organisation. To that level he imagined this Institution to be.

Many stalwarts came there during the period of planning and during the period of formulation of the Second Five Year Plan. Economists from all over the world, the

economists who have later become Nobel laureates have arrived there to help the Indian Statistical Institute and to help Prof. Mahalanobis to prepare what is now famously called as the 'draft of the draft plan'. In that, the approach of Prof. Mahalanobis of the Indian Statistical Institute was that the courses and the subjects that are taught there, must be all those subjects where statistical application is possible. The idea was that unless somebody is a master of one subject, he will not know where statistics, both in theory and in practice, are applied.

Therefore, from the very beginning, there was some opposition in the country also as to whether all these subjects would be taught in the Indian Statistical Institute which is a deemed University but not a full-fledged University. Falling from this idea, there was a Physics Department; Mathematics of course, is the foundation for Statistics and therefore, there is a strong Department of Mathematics. Perhaps this is known to the Minister also. I mentioned this at that time also he is known to be what he is—an erudite person in these matters. One of the first famous international Statistical Journals was called '*Biometrika*', that is, application of statistics in biology and we have a Biology Department there, we have a Sociology Department there, we have an Economics Department there and we have a Computer Science Department there, apart from the Departments of Physics and Chemistry. Of course, statistics is the nodal subject. The degrees offered are M.Stat., unlike M.Sc., or B.Sc.

You have to permit me to say these things, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : My difficulty is ...

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : I will stop here, if you so wish.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No. Please do not lose your patience. This is my request. You need not lose your patience.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : I know there is a difficulty of constraint of time.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The difficulty is that before 3.30 p.m., we have to complete this business. Yours is a very valuable suggestion. My request, that is my humble request, is that let us be brief.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : That is all right. But permit me to point out these things. An hour is allotted for the discussion of this Bill and you are trying to complete it within half-an-hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If we conduct a seminar, we will have more time to speak.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Okay, I will not be defiant of the Chair, Sir.

I will just draw the attention of the House, as a piece of information also, that there is a Geology Department also; and that Geology department is the first in the country to discover the skeleton of dinosaur. It is in a huge room in the Indian Statistical Institute. The parts of the dinosaur

have been collected for the first time in India and it is from Andhra Pradesh through digging operations. There are many firsts in that Institute.

What I want to underline while referring to this is the varied and many-sided approach of the Indian Statistical Institute. Let me just mention in passing that Prof. J.B.S. Haldon was, at one time, teaching there, before leaving for Orissa. Prof. Haldon was teaching for graduate courses as well as post-graduate courses. For the graduate courses, his style of teaching was something unique in the sense that he would teach the students of a particular year, from the morning till the evening. He would teach integrated science and not divided into physics or chemistry or mathematics, etc. It is 'science' that he would be teaching, one whole day for the students of a particular year, another day for another particular year, etc. That is how, he wanted to build the teaching courses.

That could not be persisted upon. But that was a unique approach that was pursued in the Indian Statistical Institute also.

Incidentally, what confuses me is that we were teaching. There were courses of Quantitative Economics. There were courses of Physics. There were courses of Mathematics. The amendment merely says that in place of the word "Statistics", the words "Quantitative Economics" and "Computer Science", etc., should be added.

Now all these courses are there. Research is going on all these subjects. I was telling the Minister that the Indian Economic Service is filled up more by the students of the ISI with M.Stat. degree with specialisation in Quantitative Economics. So, what exactly is the intention of this amendment? All these are there. I contacted the people there. They said, "There is no objection to this amendment. But the clarity is not there." Is it that henceforward the title of the degrees would be changed? Then, what additional facilities would this expansion generate? I want clarification from the Minister.

I will not take much time although I intended to speak for a longer period. But let me, in this connection, mention two other things connected with the Indian Statistical Institute. One is that in the course of development, the payment to the employees took some unique characteristics. Initially, Prof. Mahalanobis did not believe in these pay-scales. Later, when pay-scales were introduced, the structure of the pay-scales in a certain sense was unique and deviated from the Central Government pattern of pay-scales. A battle goes on. The Government representatives in the Council there try to impose a straitjacket saying that you must conform to the Central Government packets and there is resistance from the employees who say, that uniqueness of the Indian Statistical Institute pay-scales should be retained.

15.17 hrs

[SHRI NITISH KUMAR *in the Chair*]

I should point out in this connection the other uniqueness which is generated by the employees. There is only one organisation of the employees which includes everybody except the Director. From the top scientist to the lowest paid employee, all these people are enveloped in that organisation. That is the sole spokesman of all these people intervening in the field of their emoluments and working conditions as well. Therefore, I want to draw the attention of the Minister to be sympathetic in revising the pay-scales of the employees concurrently with the Award of the Pay Commission so that their uniqueness is not disturbed.

The other point I want to make is I went there very recently incidentally, it is a part of my constituency. There is a 10 per cent cut. I have spoken to the Finance Minister also. The Finance Minister does not insist that in research institutions, the 10 per cent cut should be imposed. I want the Planning Minister to remember this point because if at all we have to progress, it is the R&D in other fields and research and study in such areas which should be encouraged and no curtailment should take place in such areas.

The Indian Statistical Institute Library is one of the best in the world. It has the collection of not only statistical material but also of parliamentary debates and other materials relating to it. It is a very rich library and is open on six days of the week. Now regarding the kind of international journals they are having, they are feeling a pinch because of curtailment of funds. I would entreat, while accepting these amendments, that the Planning Minister also assures us that there will be no curtailment in acquiring books and journals for the library.

Lastly, Sir, I want to make an appeal from this House to the employees there also and it is my duty also to do so. I cannot say that the old levels of achievement and old levels of efforts are still continuing in all directions. Statistical Institute is not only situated in Calcutta where the headquarter is located but there is a strong department in Delhi which is in continuous interaction with the Finance Ministry; there are units in Bangalore, Madras, Hyderabad and also in Kerala. Now, all these units should be strengthened. We should make an appeal to all these units from the Parliament also. Those who are engaged in research and teaching there should exert much more than they are doing at present, at least as much as they were doing in their heydays. That is the appeal which should go from this chamber to all employees in the Statistical Institute, if at all they have to raise their level still higher and remain a real pride to the country and in international arena.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would certainly like to welcome the Indian Statistical Institute (Amendment) Bill, 1995 since the way the importance of computer science is increasing, we must have specialists in this field. I think that the I.S.I. Calcutta is of Prime importance and throughout the country it is an institute where statistics is taught. The Bill brought by the hon. Minister will have the words "Statistics, Mathematics, Quantitative Economics, Computer Science and other related subjects to statistics", instead of the word "Statistics" in section 4 of the Indian Statistical Institute Act, 1959. There has been a long standing demand to include these and keeping this in view this amendment Bill has been brought. By adding these words both the national and foreign students will be taught.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my submission to the hon. Member is that definitely he wants to broaden the scope of this institute. It must be pondered over that in this big institute every section of the society should have participation. I think that the poor and the backwards of the country must have special opportunities. Till now, those poor and the backward class people do not have the special opportunity to get themselves registered for admission in this institute. Therefore, my submission to the hon. Minister through you is that this Bill should be amended in such a way that the people belonging to the poor and the backward classes should get special opportunities to get themselves registered. Not only this, the students belonging to the backward class who come in the merit should be provided stipend also. They must be given financial assistance. Free education is must for the student belonging to poor and the backward class, since their economic condition is not sound enough. And they are deprived of higher education. I am also aware of it that in such institutes bungling is committed at a large scale in admission, which must be checked. Fair examination should be conducted and the students who come in the merit must have the facility of registration, stern action is need to be taken in this regard.

In the end, I would like to submit that the O.B.C. people should get reservation in such institutions; there must be the provision of stipend and freeship so that the students of backward classes can have education in it, they can involve themselves in the area of computer and contribute in the development of the nation.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

This is a Bill to which there cannot be any opposition. I welcome it but at the same time I would like to say that this was overdue. This is a prestigious Institute of both national and international repute. I am sorry to say that this Institute has not developed very fast, keeping pace with the changing time and that is why I say that this Bill was overdue.

Through this Bill some new courses are suggested to be introduced but there is one confusion regarding which I would like to have a clarification from the Minister. New courses are sought to be introduced in Mathematics, Quantitative Economics, Computer Science and other related subjects. It is being said that whenever the Institute decides to commence new courses — which they have now decided it has to do so within its limited resources. There will be no support from the Government to commence new courses and the Institute will have to do it within its limited resources. This appears to be a little contradictory. This needs to be clarified. I would suggest that, if necessary, additional funds should be provided to this Institute.

I would now like to give two or three suggestions. As it has been observed, the standard of management has fallen down. There is deterioration in the management and there is scope for improvement. This aspect should be looked into.

On this occasion, we would also like to pay tributes to the services rendered by Professor Mahalanobis. His centenary is just over. In the fitness of things, this Institute should be renamed after Professor Mahalanobis.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Permit me to interrupt. Prof. Mahalanobis was totally opposed to naming the Indian Statistical Institute after him. National Sample Survey is a different matter altogether.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : This is a very prestigious Institute and it has its utility in the planning process. This Institute is confined mainly to Bangalore and one or two other centres. There should be a branch of this Institute at Bhubaneswar, the Capital of Orissa.

With these few words, I support the Bill.

15.30 hrs.

[English]

#### COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

##### Forty-fourth Report

MR. CHAIRMAN : We shall now take up the Private Members' Legislative Business — Motion for adoption of the Forty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

SHRI SANT RAM SINGLA (Patiala) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do agree with the Forty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 9th August, 1995, subject to the modification that para 6 and part (iii) of para 7 thereof, relating to allocation of time to Resolutions, be omitted."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That this House do agree with the Forty-fourth