

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, May 15, 1990/Vaisakha 25,
1912 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Treatment to Employees of Erstwhile M/s Pearl Investment and Trading Company

*820 SHRI ARVIND NETAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state

(a) whether there was an understanding between the Government and the employees of erstwhile M/s Pearl Investment and Trading Company of Visakhapatnam that consequent upon the latter's merger with M/s Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, those employees would be treated at par with the employees of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited for future promotions and other benefits.

(b) if so, whether that understanding is being honoured; and

(c) if any deviation has been made, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM: The hon. Minister has replied in the negative. In spite of that, may I know from the hon. Minister whether Messrs Pearl Investment and Trading Company of Visakhapatnam had been taken over by the Government. If so, what are the terms and conditions regarding promotions and other benefits of the employees of that company?

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY: The Government has not taken over or nationalised this company, but they have taken over the management of this company. This company was dealing with LPG distribution and it is a very essential service. The LPG distribution lies with the Government. We have taken over the management only and have not taken over the assets and liabilities.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM: The hon. Minister has said that the management was taken over. May I know from the hon. Minister whether all the employees are included in that management? If so, what are the terms and conditions and other benefits of the employees of that company?

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY: The employees are still with the company and we

have no control over the employees of the company. We have taken over the management; we have not nationalised that company. It is for the company to deal with the labourers or its employees.

Visit of Indian Airlines officials to Canada

*821. SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some officials connected with the court of enquiry of the Indian Airlines A-320 Airbus crash in Bangalore visited Canadian Capital as late as on 15th April, 1990 in connection with the enquiry; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Officers travelled on the instructions of the Court of Inquiry.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of A-320 Aircraft has assumed importance as it is becoming 420. I don't know how things are shaping in. As you know, recently the hon. Minister made a Statement that a very important file is missing. The moment this crash took place, the Minister announced a Court of Inquiry. Later on some irregularities were alleged and the CBI came into picture. They had also gone into it and they filed an FIR but nowhere the missing file was mentioned. They have not even pointed it out. The Ramdas Committee has also given an Interim Report and even there also no clue about this missing of file has been given. I would like to know what does this mysterious file contain. Does it contain the terms of sale or what is it about?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, first of all I would like to clarify that I did not make a Statement. In fact, responded to the demand made by the hon. Member that all the papers connected with A-320 Aircraft should be laid on the Table of the House.

Again, I would like to repeat that I did not make a Statement. I merely responded to the demand and I expressed my helplessness to the fact that I am not in a position to lay all the papers on the Table of the House, because one very important and vital file is missing from the records of the Ministry. The FIR itself mentioned about this fact. Some hon. Members were flaunting the copies of the FIR. They had not gone through the contents of the FIR. Had they gone through the contents then possibly they themselves would have turned down their demand for placing all the papers on the Table of the House.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Does the Ramdas Committee also mention about it?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: I have already clarified on a number of occasions that Ramdas Committee was appointed to go into the question of preparedness of Indian Airlines. Last time I had quoted that Ramdas Committee in its Report has said that the rate of induction of this futuristic generation plane was too rapid for Indian Airlines to assimilate and prepare themselves for the safe operation of this aircraft. Even Ramdas Committee is of that view.

About the officers who visited Canada—The first team went there to get DFDR, Decoded at Ottawa—they visited at the instance of the Court of Inquiry. The Court of Inquiry had asked us to make certain investigations on the technical ground. We don't go into the merits of the question. We do as they ask us to do and the Report is submitted to the Court of Inquiry.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: How much more time will the Government take to know what was the actual reason for the crash of this aircraft?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, that exactly is the purpose for setting up the Court of Inquiry. This is not for the Government to tell. Government does not interfere with the functioning of the Court of Inquiry. The Court of Inquiry is headed by a High