

(b) if so, the time since when the scheme has been pending ; and

(c) the reasons for delay in taking a decision thereon ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The preliminary report originally prepared in 1964 had to be revised as a result of various developments such as modifications in the scheme and in the cost estimates, devaluation of the rupee in June, 1966 and devaluation of the Pound Sterling. The expansion scheme has been since approved by Government.

12.01 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED RESUMPTION OF NUN-RUNNING FROM KERALA TO EUROPE

SHRI R. K. SINHA (Faizabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

"The reported disclosure made by the B. B. C. about the resumption of nun-running from Kerala to Europe."

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) : Government have seen press reports about a BBC television programme on alleged resumption of nun-running from Kerala to some European convents. These reports have been contradicted by the Kerala Catholic clergy who are said to have sent the girls. Government are making necessary inquiries in the matter, and the facts will be placed before the House as soon as they are available.

In this connection, Hon'ble Members will recall that similar allegations had appeared in the press some time ago and the matter was discussed in the House. Government had

then promised detailed and exhaustive inquiries into the alleged sale of girls to foreign Church organisations, profiteering from such sales, harsh treatment accorded to the girls and of their use in menial occupations. Our inquiries, which have been completed, show that broadly speaking the allegations are not justified.

I place a copy of our report on the inquiry on the Table of the House. [*Placed in library. See No. LT-1561/72.*]

SHRI R. K. SINHA : The reports that have appeared in the Press say that the girls were sent to Europe *via* circuitous route from Cochin to Bangalore and then to Bombay and then to Athens. One Father Giovanni of Italy is supposed to have said that these girls were treated like menials. An English social worker who was also reported in the B. B. C. had said :

"The tragedy was that these girls could not return home because they would bring disgrace to their families and the convent was the lesser of the two evils for them."

The Kerala Assembly also discussed this and one of the representatives of the Church who was not directly connected with it, said :

"These girls were sent out by agencies and by people who earned a sum of Rs. 25 lakhs in the process. Sometimes, per girl, the earning was Rs. 3,000 and sometimes, Rs. 5,000"

Sir, the statement that has been placed on the Table of the House was made available to me about a minute before the reply of the hon. Minister came and I have hastily gone through it and if the enquiry is correct and exact, it is very good ; but whatever has appeared in sections of the Press needs a thorough probe and enquiry.

On 26th August, 1970 also, assurances were given in this House by the hon. Minister at that time as all sections of this House were exercised over the treatment given to these girls and how they were used for menial purposes. It is all right if they go out of India out of religious exuberance, if they go out in service of the Church, but if they were exploited, and if the recruitment of these girls is done for purposes of making money, because of their poverty, because of the fact of their not being very educated, because of the fact

that they have a lure for foreign travel, if they are sent as menials abroad, it is certainly a matter which should exercise the attention of the Government.

The hon. Minister gave assurances in 1970. The report of the inquiry has been placed on the Table of the House today. I would only appeal to the hon. Minister that it becomes a national disgrace when on the British broadcasting system, Indian character is put on trial. Even if the Indian church or sections of the Indian church are put there in a particular position, that also puts the picture of India in jeopardy in the sense that it implies that there should be such poverty in sections of the people of Kerala that girls would like to opt out even through the clandestine system of sale.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : I have noted his concern which I share, but the inquiries that we have made show broadly that the suspicion that has been raised is not well founded

SHRI JAGANNATHRAO JOSHI : (Shajapur) : What was the agency of the inquiry ?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH : Our own Missions abroad have looked into all these cases, and our investigations show that out of a total of more than 1700 novices sent abroad, only about 40 returned before completion of training, and out of 700 nurse trainees, about 15 returned prematurely. They are at complete liberty to return and these figures indicate that, by and large, the vast proportion of them are generally happy and they like the work for which they have been selected.

I would also like to add a word of caution. Unfortunately, there is some controversy going on in the international community between the various churches, and some of these reports have to be seen in that background.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (शालियर) : अध्यक्ष जी, आज पुनः माननीय मन्त्री ने सदन को आश्वासन दिया है कि भिक्षुणियों को बाहर भेजने के सम्बन्ध में जो समाचार

प्रकाशित हुए हैं उनकी जांच की जायेगी। इसी तरह का एक आश्वासन उन्होंने 1970 में भी दिया था जिसकी जांच रिपोर्ट आज सदन की टेबिल पर रखी गई है। क्या सरकार को जांच करने के लिए दो वर्ष चाहिए? मैं जानना चाहता हूँ आज जो जांच का आश्वासन दिया गया है क्या उसकी जांच रिपोर्ट के लिए भी हमें दो वर्ष तक प्रतीक्षा करनी पड़ेगी? जांच के जो परिणाम निकले हैं, थोड़े से समय में उन सभी को पढ़ना सम्भव नहीं है लेकिन पृष्ठ 10 पर जो कुछ लिखा हुआ है उसकी ओर मैं मंत्री जी का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ :

"Some of the results of its inquiry have been published. The Holy See has suspended further recruitment of Indian girls for foreign convents until such time as adequate safeguards and controls are established in regard to their selection, recruitment and training. Furthermore, the Holy See considers that the training and preparation of Indian girls for a religious vocation can best be provided in India itself."

जब यह विचार है होली सी का तो मन्त्री महोदय बतायें यहाँ से भिक्षुणियों को बाहर भेजने पर रोक लगाये जाने के बाद भी भिक्षुणियाँ कैसे भेजी गई? जब होली सी का यह भी विचार है कि अगर कोई भारत की कन्याएँ ईसाई धर्म के लिए अपने को समर्पित करना चाहती हैं तो वे भारत में ऐसा कर सकती हैं, भारत में दीनों की, दुखियाओं की, पीड़ितों की कमी नहीं है, यदि सेवा का भाव उनमें जाग्रत होता है तो इस देश में करोड़ों नर नारियाँ ऐसी हैं जिन्हें सेवा की आवश्यकता है—इसके लिए भारत की कन्याएँ विदेशों में भेजी जायें इसकी क्या जरूरत है? मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ क्या सरकार, इस तरह के मामले बाहर विदेशों में बार बार न उठायें जायें भारत की प्रतिष्ठा पर लाञ्छन न लगे, क्या चर्च के पदाधिकारियों को यह कहने के लिए तैयार हैं कि उन्हें विदेशों में इस तरह से कन्याएँ भेजने की पद्धति को बन्द करना चाहिए?

[श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी]

यह कोई नहीं कहता कि कन्याएं पैमे के बदले में जाती हैं। कई आकर्षण उन्हें बाहर खींच ले जाते होंगे जिनमें एक ईसाई धर्म का आकर्षण भी हो सकता है। लेकिन जिन फादर पुत्तनपुरा के बारे में चर्चा की जाती है, जिम निर्मला इंस्टीच्यूट का नाम लिया जाता है, जिम के बारे में बार-बार यह कहा जाता है कि विदेशों में लड़कियां भेज कर वह थोड़ा सा रुपया कमा रहे हैं तो क्या इनकी भी जांच की गई?

पिछले डिबेट में 1970 में विदेश मन्त्री जी ने यह आश्वासन दिया था कि सी बी आई के द्वारा अगर आवश्यकता पड़ी तो उमके द्वारा भी इस मामले की जांच कराई जायगी तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सी बी आई की रिपोर्ट है? क्या फादर पुत्तनपुरा जिनकी कि चर्चा की गई और क्या निर्मला सैक्युलर इंस्टीच्यूट के हिसाब की जांच की गई। एक कन्या के भेजने में कितना रुपया लिया जाता है? उस से यह निर्मला इंस्टीच्यूट कितना पैसा बनाना है? क्या इस मामले में गहराई में जाने की कोशिश की गई? विदेशों में भागन का सम्मान दाव पर लगे यह बात हृदय को बड़ा दुःख पहुंचाने वाला है। भारत का प्रधान मन्त्री एक महिला हों और भागन की कन्याएं विदेशों में जा कर फर्न रगड़ें और विदेशों के टेलिविजन पर उनको ऐसी दुर्दशा की स्थिति में दिखलाया जाय तो यह कितने खेद का विषय है। मेरे पास लंदन में पत्र आये हैं कि क्या भारत इसको रोक नहीं सकता है। अब यह तो आज 1972 का भारत है 1970 का भारत नहीं है तो क्या विदेश मन्त्री जी ऐसा कदम नहीं उठा सकते हैं कि यह लड़कियों के बाहर भेजने की पद्धति हमेशा के लिए रुक जाय और जो धर्म भावना से प्रेरित होकर सेवा करना चाहती हैं उन्हें भारत में ही इसके लिए अवसर दिया जाय?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: Some of the points raised by the hon. member have

already been gone into in the course of the inquiry, and if he goes through the report, he will find replies to most of the doubts that he has raised.

About the question whether any money has been made or not, this matter also was gone into in considerable detail in the course of the inquiry and it has been established that the actual expenditure incurred by the clergies who were entrusted with the duty of recruitment was less than the amounts that had been received from abroad, but it has also been established that this excess was utilised for charitable purposes and the organisations that sent money also were satisfied that this was properly utilised for charitable purposes in India.

As for placing a complete ban on these girls going abroad, this is not at present under consideration because enquires show that most of these girls are happy. Most of them are Christians already and if they go abroad and want to adopt this as a profession, I think there is nothing wrong, and we should not be over-sensitive about this.

SHRI JAGANNATHIRAO JOSHI: It was a question of minor girls.

अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह लड़कियां वापस आ कर अस्वच्छता में सारी कहानियां निख रही हैं।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: मैंने पूछा था कि इसकी सी बी आई के द्वारा कोई इनक्वायरी कराई गई?

अध्यक्ष महोदय: जोशी जी का तो इसमें नाम नहीं है।

श्री जगन्नाथ राव जोशी: मैंने कौल अटेशन नोटिस दिया था अब मेरा नाम नहीं आया तो क्या करूं।

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: All investigation agencies including the CBI were involved in this inquiry.

SHRI C. JANARDHANAN (Trichur). I am glad the Minister has placed before the House an exhaustive statement on this issue though it is very late. As a member coming from Kerala, I am more concerned about this issue than many others. My hon. friend, Shri Vajpayee, was very indignant about sending our girls abroad for scrubbing the floors of foreigners. I also share his feeling. But as a communist, at the outset, I should say that I hold no brief for the Catholic Church which has so much ideological difference with us. But you must remember there are two aspects to this question, one, that there is so much educated unemployment in Kerala which we must realise and the other that the Christian community is a dominant community in Kerala and a strong minority in India. As any other religious group, they have the right to go abroad and propagate their views. Of course, our country is secular; we have no state religion; we give freedom to every religion to propagate their views in this land. If the Ramakrishna Mission have the freedom to send their delegates abroad, of course the Catholic Church should have the same freedom to send their nuns abroad to propagate their religion. But the issue is whether there was any complaint from the girls themselves; whether they were maltreated; that is one thing.

Then, the question is whether minor girls were sent abroad from this country against their wishes; whether there were any complaints from the parents of the nuns or the nurses. So many nurses are going. You can see that throughout India, in every State, the nurses are from Kerala. From most other States they would not dare to go. But girls from Kerala serve not only as sisters, not only as nurses but as nuns and servants. You can see that. Is there any complaint from their parents? Is there any complaint from the girls themselves? Is there any complaint that minor girls are sent from here? If it is there, it should be looked into.

About Father Puthenpura and the Nir-mala Institute, I also remember that in 1970 his name was mentioned here, and now, in his statement, the Minister says that there was a surplus amount and it was used for charitable purposes. I should say it must be looked into again, because there should not be any cloud about this issue. Going abroad is all right; they have that freedom; but if there is any trading and profiteering or black

marketing involved in this, it should be looked into, and if they have made any profit on it, and if it is channelised and credited to the charitable institutions, I do not think it is correct. So, that issue should be again gone into. I appeal to the hon. Members and to the Government that these things should not be channelised into an anti-Christian campaign or a tirade. In the context of present-day India, anti-Muslim, anti-Hindu or anti-Christian and such communal propaganda should not be permitted in this land on any issue. So, you must be extra-careful. As a Member from Kerala, I should like to point that out, and I seek an explanation from the Minister.

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: I have noted with satisfaction some comments made by the hon. Member. On the specific points about which he has asked for information, I may be permitted to give brief replies.

First of all, I would like to clarify that no minor girl is allowed to go out. The minimum age is 19 years, and before passport facilities are granted, every care is taken to ensure that the girl is not a minor. The minimum age for this is 19 years.

About the second query raised by the hon. Member, there has been no complaint from the girls or from their parents.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: What about the girls who have come back?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: As I have said, out of 1700 girls, 15 in one category—I have given the numbers—and 40 in the other category have come back. The investigations show that they are generally misfits there, in the sense that they were not perhaps prepared for the rigorous life obtaining there. Therefore, they came back. This type of wastage of people who give up their profession even in our own country is not unknown. Many people are recruited for some such avocations and then there is wastage. They find that the work is either too stringent or is not to their liking, and they leave it. There is nothing unusual in this.

About profiteering and black-marketing, we have made enquiries, and to be fair to them, I must say categorically that there is no evidence at all. What is happening there is, the sponsoring societies which again are reli-

[Shri Swaran Singh]

gious or charitable institutions in Europe, have been sending money liberally, and the understanding is that they have a sort of reliance upon the Indian people who are undertaking that recruitment and preliminary training. The investigations show that whatever is the expenditure is booked as expenditure, and whatever remains, then on the authority from the institutions that sent the money, it is used for other charitable purposes. There is nothing wrong in this

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Daschowdhury - absent ; Shri Indrajit Gupta - absent.

12. 20 hrs.

RE. STRIKE IN SWADESHI COTTON MILLS AND J. K. COTTON AND SPINNING MILLS, KANPUR

श्री एस० एम० बनर्जी (कानपुर) :
अध्यक्ष महोदय ...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप हर रोज खड़े हो जाते हैं, यह गलत बात है। रूत भी इतना नहीं है जितना आप उमका फायदा उठाना चाहते हैं। आप कह लें एक मिनट में। थोड़ा सा ख्याल होना चाहिये। रोज की बात नहीं हो जानी चाहिये।

श्री एस० एम० बनर्जी : आप एलाउ नहीं करते हैं तो मैं बैठ जाता हूँ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप नहीं चाहते हैं तो मैं कह देता हूँ कि वह लीजिये अपनी बात।

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : You are aware that nearly 13,000 textile workers working in Swadeshi Cotton Mills and J. K. Cotton and Spinning Mills in Kanpur are on general strike since the 28th of this month. They demand implementation of the Khadiilkar formula on bonus. As previously pointed out, these workers demanded implementation of the Khadiilkar formula because they were paid only 4 per cent bonus according to the Bonus Act. The remaining 4.33 per cent was not paid, although all the unions unanimously agreed to treat this amount as advance, subject to recovery in case the arbitrator—whether Mr. R. K. Khadiilkar, the Union Labour

Minister or anyone else—gives his award against the workers. The State Labour Minister Mr. G. D. Bajpai had no objection to refer the matter to Mr. Khadiilkar and the workers, union also agreed to this. The employers in all fairness should now pay 3.33 per cent as advance to the workers working in these two textile mills on a fair understanding that if Mr. Khadiilkar pronounces his judgement against the workers then this money will be recovered. As there is no risk involved in it I should urge upon the Union Labour Minister to kindly make a statement so that the workers may reconsider their decision and a negotiated settlement can be reached. In consultation with the State Minister he should direct the employers to pay 4.33 per cent to the workers as advance, subject to recovery. I should like to assure him on behalf of the employees that they will abide his decision.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADIILKAR) : In this connection, I should like to say that trade union leaders, the employers and the State Government have been in touch with me lately on the issue of the implementation of the *ad hoc* formula for the payment of advances in the Swadeshi Cotton Mills Limited and the J. K. Cotton Mills Limited in Kanpur, which has led to the present strike. I, on my part, have been trying to see how best this matter can be resolved quickly in the interest of industrial production and peace.

I have been given to understand—I am glad to say—that the workers are prepared to call off the strike if this issue is referred to the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) for a settlement. In the circumstances I would appeal to the workers to call off the strike immediately so that the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) can enter into discussions with the parties for promoting a settlement.

I am glad that Mr. Banerjee has raised this issue on the floor of the House. The Labour Minister of U. P. as well as the employers were in touch with me. The suggestion of assuming responsibility for arbitration by me is out of question. I discussed it with them and they have said that whatever is the decision of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), that will be binding. So, I should appeal to Mr. Banerjee and through him to the workers that they should call off the