

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, April, 5, 1990/Chaitra 15, 1912
(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

MR SPEAKER Question No 331 - Shri Manoranjan Bhakta - No Question No 332 Shri Nathu Singh - No, Prof Yadunath Pandey - No Next Question 333-Shrimati Chennupati Vidya - No, Shri Parasram Bhardwaj - No Question No 334- Shri Arvind Netam - Not present Then Question No 335 - Prof Gopalrao Mayekar

Steamer Service Between Goa and Bombay

*335 PROF GOPALRAO MAYEKAR
Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are aware of the continuing difficulties faced by tourists and local passengers for want of proper and adequate steamer service between Goa and Bombay, and

(b) the action taken by the Union Government to ensure proper steamer service between Goa and Bombay ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI K P UNNIKRIISHNAN) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The Steamer Service operated by the two Konkani vessels M V KONKAN SEWAK and M V KONKAN SHAKTI between Bombay and Goa was withdrawn in 1988 to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Defence. The two vessels have since re-delivered to the S C I at Bombay on 31 3 1990

With a view amelioration the difficulties faced by tourists and local passengers in the absence of the Steamer Service, Government of India have taken the following steps

- i) The Konkani vessels M V KONKAN SEWAK (Built 1964) and M V KONKAN SHAKTI (Built 1965) have outlived their normal life and their statutory certificates have also expired. Substantial investment would be required to make them sea-worthy again. Attention of the Ministry of Home Affairs to find a solution on the same lines as in the case of Mainland-Islands passenger shipping services in the Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep sectors in respect of which 100% losses are reimbursed to the S C I,
- ii) It has also been suggested to the Governments of Maharashtra and Goa that they might consider acquiring, singly or jointly, suitable new or second hand

vessels for running the Steamer Service;

- iii) Central Government had also cleared applications from three private parties for acquisition of vessels for operating passenger services between Bombay and Goa. Two of these sanctions for acquisition of four vessels are still valid; and
- iv) The S.C.I. has also been advised to explore the possibility of including in the acquisition programme vessels of the type useful for these coastal operations.

PROF. GOPALRAO MAYEKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the recent visit of the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Nadkarni, it has been reported that he has testified to the fitness of the vessels because they had already undergone major renovations and also repairs before and while in the service of the IPKP. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will consider for the resumption of services at least for the coming two months as the Indian Airlines Services are interrupted, that is instead of three, there is only one flight. In addition, thousands of people cannot be provided with transportation service through bus transport. Considering the urgency and the fitness certificate given by the Naval Staff, whether the Government will consider for the resumption of the services at least for two months.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN : Sir, while I entirely sympathise with the demand of the hon. Member as well as the aspirations of the people of Goa and Konkan, in this case I must submit to you that these two vessels have outlived their normal life and also their certification has expired. Therefore, the question of continuing these vessels will be a very difficult proposition. But we are still considering certain aspects of the requirements in view of the demand from the people of Goa and I also agree with the hon. Member that there is a need for it. But the Ship-

ping Corporation has expressed their difficulties. As I have already explained, we have approached the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Home to subsidize the losses that might be incurred on this.

PROF. GOPALRAO MAYEKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the losses shared by the Government of Goa and Maharashtra and SCI is the major cause of withdrawing these services. If so, I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister that the losses are not due to the shortage of passengers, but mainly because of the mal-administration. Eighty per cent of the passengers are ticketless, the cargo handling also is inadequate and not properly done and the pilferage of the diesel is also a cause for the losses. So, I would like to know whether the Government will assess the possibility of avoiding these losses by tightening the administration and resume the operation at least for two months, considering the urgency due to the inadequate flights of Indian Airlines and inadequacy of road transport to carry thousands of passengers.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: Sir, the loss, according to us, in 1987-88 when 2.10 lakhs of passengers were carried was Rs. 1.82 crores. As for the current estimates, Sir, even if these two vessels are used for 1991-82 it would be Rs. 2.13 crores. I do not subscribe to what the hon. Member has suggested that it is only due to mal-administration. Primarily this is piecemeal in character because we can only operate for 8 months in a year and then there has been a great diversion of traffic to the motor transport industry where the buses run from point to point, as the hon. Member is well aware, in the hinterland. Then the operation costs have gone up, both the general and operation costs, and expenditure on bunkers is going to increase because of oil prices. Earlier, the losses incurred in the operation of Konkan passenger service well reimbursed to the Shipping Corporation of India which has taken over Mughal line which is operating this, 80 per cent jointly by the Central Government — - 25 per cent by Central

Government, 40 per cent by the Government of Maharashtra and 35 per cent by the Government of Goa - the remaining 20 per cent was to be borne by the Mughal line. Therefore, I cannot agree that it is only due to mal-administration, as suggested by the hon Member.

[Translation]

PROF MAHADEO SHIWANKAR : I would like to know whether the Government propose to take some measures to reduce the losses ? Secondly, I would like to know whether the Government have undertaken any review to assess the additional requirement of steamer services between Bombay and Goa. If so, the result thereof.

[English]

SHRI K P UNNIKRIISHNAN : Sir, as I have said, I am entirely sympathetic to this demand. So, the suggestion made by the hon Member can be considered when we decide to resume the service.

Security Expenses on Ministers and VIPs

*336 SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to reduce security expenses on Ministers and other VIPs and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED) : (a) and (b) The security arrangements for the Union Ministers and other VIPs are made on the basis of threat assessment carried out by the concerned security agencies. These arrangements are being reviewed from time to time.

SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Sir, I mainly asked this question because of the

increase in the expenses of VIP security and especially security to the Ministers. We all agreed that enough security is to be given to the Ministers and other VIPs, no doubt. But unfortunately a new culture has developed in our country among the political leaders that a fleet of security personnel around them shows the dignity of the leaders. Unfortunately that became the status symbol. The capacity and the requirement of security personnel was not reviewed properly. I want to know whether there will be a strict security and categorisation for those people from whom special security arrangement is needed. Has the new Government undertaken such an exercise in order to rationalise the security arrangements of the Ministers?

SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED :

Sir, the security is being provided by the Government on the basis of the assessment made by the respective security agencies whether he is a Minister or a public man.

It is not the Government or the individual who is deciding, but it is the security agency which sees the threat perception of public men and then we provide security.

SHRI A VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Sir, while making security arrangements, security personnel are harassing the people, especially in New Delhi. After the new Government came to power, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Ministers are quite different from the Ministers of the previous Government. They are ready to stop before the red signal, etc. But, even now the security personnel are harassing the people, they are stopping the vehicles, they are stopping the passengers who are travelling in scooters and are trying to take the vehicles away from roadside. I would like to know from the hon Minister whether any such instructions are given to the security personnel and if so, what are those instructions?

SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED :

Sir, certain precautionary measures are to be taken while providing security. As I have already said that it is according to the threat perception of any public man and we