

The House may stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed souls.

*The Members then stood in silence for a short while.*

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Contracts to women's cooperative organisations

\*223. SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give more contracts/assignments to Women's Cooperative Organisations on the Railway Stations;

(b) if so, what are the plans; and

(c) since when this scheme has been in operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) Genuine Cooperative Societies of actual workers are given preference in the allotment of contracts for various types of works. No distinction in this respect is made between cooperative societies on the basis of sex.

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

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: The answer is vague and somewhat evasive. I would like to know whether outside the employees of the Railway Administration any women's cooperative organisations have been given contracts or assignments on the railways particularly for canteens and restaurants and if so, how many such cooperatives are working in the railways at present?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: As I have said, the genuine cooperative societies, where the workers are really interested in taking up these ventures are being encouraged and helped.

With regard to the specific question about women's cooperative organisations. One Mahila Sahkari Grahak

Sanstha Ltd., Manmad in Maharashtra had applied for a sugarcane juice stall. It was not considered suitable by a committee of three senior scale officers, who examined the request. The reason was that the Mahila Sanstha had no experience in catering and, therefore, were not considered suitable for this venture. But wherever it has been given contracts or assignments to take up the work of catering or vending or anything else, our policy is to encourage them and help them.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: My question was: whether outside the employees of the railway Administration any women's cooperative organisations have been given contractors or assignments on the railways particularly for canteen, restaurant etc. This has not been replied properly.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: I do not have the specific information; I will supply the same to the hon. Member.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Whether any such applications are pending and if so, since when?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: This is also related to the first question. As I said, I will verify and supply this information also.

श्रीमती प्रमिला दण्डवत : मेरा सवाल यह है कि रेलवे स्टेशनों पर स्टाल्स या कैंटीनों के रिन्यूअल के समय हर बार जो करप्शन होता है, उसे खत्म करने के लिये और प्राइवेट कैंटीन्स में काम करने वाले मजदूरों को रेलवे में लाने के लिये पहले मंत्री ने 70 स्टाल्स को रेलवे द्वारा चलाने का जो सुझाव रखा था, और उस पर काम भी शुरू हुआ था, उसके बारे में आज की सरकार की क्या नीति है ? क्या लोग आगे चलकर वह स्टाल्स को प्राइवेट लोगों को ही देने वाले हैं या रेलवे कैंटीरिंग के द्वारा ही चलवायेगे ? अगर रेलवे कैंटीरिंग द्वारा चलवाने हैं तो उसमें से अब तक कितने रेलवे के पास आये हैं और कितने नहीं ?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: The basic question is one of providing better catering facilities to the travelling

public. As I have already said, if the workers are competent enough to cater to the needs, certainly we will encourage them. If they are not competent enough, and if there are outsiders, we will welcome them and do it.

**श्रीमती प्रमिला बंडवले :** मैंने यह पूछा है कि क्या यह काम रेलवे डिपार्टमेंट के द्वारा चलने वाला है या प्राइवेट होटल तथा कैंटीन वालों को दिया जायेगा ।

**श्री सी. के. जाफर शरीफ :** दोनों के द्वारा ।

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** Are we to understand from the reply of the hon. Minister that women's co-operatives are not competent to run the canteens and other things in the Railways, that they have got not even one which he can Point out to us, and say that it has been given by the Railways? Is it a fact that because women are less prone to embezzlement and to giving less in terms of quantity and quality compared to other contractors, that the Ministry is not helping women's co-operatives? Why is it that he could not Point out even one cooperative of women in the Railways, anywhere in India?

**SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :** It is not so. It is not our idea. I personally feel that women's co-operatives are more competent because they are well trained in catering. As I have said, I do not have the figures; I shall collect the figure and supply to the Hon'ble Member.

**SHRI R. K. MHALGI :** The main question was that; but the Minister was not ready with the reply.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** The main question relates to it.

**SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :** In your answer, you have given several types of contracts.

**SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :** There is one women's welfare organization by name Sharada Udyog Man-

dir, Amravati which has been registered under the Societies' Act, 1860. It has been running one Tea, Coffee Sweetmeat and Fruit Stall at Badnera station of the Central Railway.

**SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :** Do you know that generally, only such co-operatives are given jobs on the Railways whose presidents are the wives of GMs., DRMs. and DSSs; and if any member of the cooperative dares to challenge their authoritarian attitude, they are thrown out?

**SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :** I do not know. If the hon. Member gives any specific instances, I will look into them.

**SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :** There are hundreds of them.

**SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :** You can give them.

#### Spreading of Leprosy in the Country

\*225. **DR. SARADISH ROY :** Will the Minister of HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the spreading of leprosy in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that 1/5 of the lepers in the world are living in India; and

(c) the steps taken by Government for prevention and eradication of this disease thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR) :** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Approximately so.

(c) Under the National Leprosy Control Programme, steps are being taken by the Government for early detection and regular treatment of Leprosy patients in order to contain the disease.