

LOK SABHA DEBATES

1

LOK SABHA

Thursday, March 26, 1981/Chaitra 5,
1903 (Sukla).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I deeply regret to inform the House of the sad demise of one of our sitting colleagues, Shrimati Sahodrabai Rai, who passed away this morning at Sagar at the age of 62 years.

Shrimati Rai was also a Member of the Second, Third and Fifth Lok Sabha during 1957-67 and 1971-77.

A veteran freedom-fighter, she participated in the freedom movement and suffered imprisonment. She also participated in the Goa liberation movement in August 1955 and was wounded.

An eminent social worker, she fought for Hindu-Muslim unity and Harijan welfare. She was deeply interested in adult education and promotion of khadi.

She was a member of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

2

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Metro Trains in Calcutta

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*536. SHRI MUKUNDA
MANDAL:
SHRI CHITTA MAHATA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to start running Metro Trains this year on an experimental basis;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether coaches for the Metro Rails are ready;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) what is the probable date of completion of the Metro Rails, estimated total expenditure upto completion and the number of people that will be benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF):
(a) to (e). A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b). No, Sir. Only trial runs are proposed to be carried out to test proto-type coaches on Dum-Dum Belgachia section.

(c) and (d). Eight proto-type coaches being manufactured by I.C.F. are likely to be ready by the middle of this year for trial purposes.

(c) The work on the underground railway in Calcutta is being done in two Phases, Phase I is from Dum Dum to Shyambazar and Esplanade to Tollyganj and Phase II is from Shyambazar to Esplanade. The first phase of the project totalling 11.53 kms. is scheduled for completion in 1984-85 and the entire Project by 1986-87, subject to the availability of funds.

The estimated total expenditure to complete the Project at present day price level will be about Rs. 425 crores.

1.32 million commuters are likely to benefit when the first Phase is completed. This number will go upto 1.73 million at the final stage.

SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: I have gone through the statement of the hon. Minister. The question is this. As you know, Calcutta is the most populous city . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Popular.

SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: . . . and at the same time popular also because people from different parts of the country go there and even stay there. Among the other problems, the most horrible problem is the transport system in Calcutta. The purpose of the Metro Rail for Calcutta is to reduce the traffic jam and also to plug the influx of the suburban people into the heart of the city. But delay in the completion of this will add further problems, and the problems will not wait for the completion of the project. In view of this, I want to know from the hon. Minister.

(a) what was the original timetable set for commissioning the Metro Rail stage by stage; and (b) what was the original estimated cost of construction of the Metro Rail.

I also want to know how many times since its inception the cost of the project has been revised. As it

is stated in the statement, the estimated cost now is Rs. 425 crores. So I want to know whether the present estimated cost is likely to further escalate due to inflationary pressures and if so, the details thereof.

Lastly, why certain proposals made by some foreign experts for the Tube Railway were not accepted, when those experts said that the Metro railway will take much more time whereas the tube railway will take somewhat less time? What is the opinion of the Government?

MR SPEAKER: You have taken all the time.

SHRI C. K. JAFFAR SHARIEF: I do appreciate the anxiety of the hon. Member. . .

MR. SPEAKER: But do you appreciate the Member as well or not?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: But let me assure him and the House that sufficient progress is being maintained in completing this work.

Earlier this project was sanctioned in 1972 and actually the work was started in 1973. Based on 1973-74 costs as he was saying the revised cost of the project was Rs. 250 crores. Now at the present cost level, it would be Rs. 425 Crores.

As I earlier said, this work has been taken in phases. Phase I costing about Rs. 184 crores is from Dum Dum to Sham Bazar, a distance of about 3.69 km and Esplanade to Tollygunje, a distance of 7.85 km. likewise .

Phase II costing Rs. 66 crores is from Sham Bazar to Esplanade, a distance of 4.92 km along the Chittaranjan Avenue. This is the progress we have maintained there and there is no delay.

We are quite aware of the problems of the people there. I have myself visited and have seen the things.

I know the local problems. Nevertheless, on our side, I can assure him that we are quite keen to complete it as early as possible.

SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: My second supplementary. Only one minute, Sir.

A few days back, our Urban Development Minister, Shri Prasanna-sur visited Madras and there he found that the coaches for the Metro Railway were not upto satisfaction because there are no standing facilities and the ventilation system in the coaches is not good. In view of these recommendations of the Minister of Urban Development, what action is the Government going to take? Also, may I know whether the target date for the completion of the second phase is still uncertain following the objection of the Planning Commission and if so, the facts thereof—because the second phase is nearly 5 km. ... No, Sir, I will not take more time.

MR. SPEAKER: You have already taken 8 minutes on this question.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: I have already said that the first phase of the project will be opened by 1984-85 and the entire project will be commissioned in 1986-87. There is no question of delay.

He was referring to his Urban Development Minister. I can tell the hon. Member and the House that the Chief Minister of the State is very much satisfied with the progress of the project that we have maintained.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Nihal Singh ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS *rose.*

MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing much more in this question. ... We have already spent 8 minutes. ... No, please. Shri Nihal Singh.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: You are so unkind to Calcutta. ... (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Arif Mohammad Khan.

News Item Captioned 'A Curable Disease made Incurable by Poverty'

*538. **SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN:** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item in the Hindustan Times dated the 24th February, 1981 captioned 'A curable disease made incurable by poverty' which highlights the difficulties in admission of poor patients in the Rajen Babu T.B. Hospital; and

(b) If so, the action taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) The Rajen Babu T.B. Hospital is part of the T.B. Control Programme in the Union Territory of Delhi, in which a total of ten T.B. Clinics/T.B. Centres with a total bed strength of 1539 participate. With the use of potent anti-T.B. drugs, there is growing resort to T.B. treatment on domiciliary basis. Taken together, these facilities for inpatient and domiciliary treatment, would benefit an increasing number of poor T.B. patients.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, my question was whether Government's attention has been drawn to the difficulties which are faced by TV patients while seeking admission in Rajen Babu hospital. Apart from this T.B. hospital there is TB hospital in Kingsway Camp.