

licences is lower than pooled rates charged by the Railways. But there are many other places where the pooled rates charged by the Railways from their employees are much lower than the rates charged by the local supply authorities.

#### Ghat Drivers

1124. **Shri Assar:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special training is given to Ghat Drivers to drive trains in Ghats;

(b) whether any certificate of training is given to Ghat Drivers;

(c) whether any special Ghat allowance is given to the Ghat Drivers;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether there are any trains in Bhor Ghat on Central Railway running without Ghat Engine and Ghat Drivers; and

(f) if so, names of the trains and reasons therefor?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan):** (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

12.03 hrs.

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

LAY-OFF OF 1135 SKILLED WORKERS IN MESSRS BURN AND CO.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have received notice of an adjournment motion . . . .

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat) rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the hon. Member referring to it?

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** I was going to ask about this adjournment motion.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am trying to ask the hon. Member as to how this is ad-

missible. Firstly, this seems to be State subject. Secondly, if 1135 unskilled workers . . . . .

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** Skilled workers.

**Mr. Speaker:** It is 'unskilled' in my copy

**Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur):** That has been corrected to 'skilled'.

**Mr. Speaker:** 'Unskilled' is written here.

'Un' is scored out, I think

Then, it reads:

" . . . skilled workers of premier engineering firm being laid off resulting in creating a situation where priority . . . . ."

I find that in the original copy itself, it is 'unskilled'.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** It was a bit of carelessness on my part. It was my mistake I apologise for it

**Mr. Speaker:** There is a lot of difference between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' I was wondering whether any company has not the right to put off some unskilled labour also when it does not find them necessary. Even assuming that it is 'skilled', is it contended that no company has got a right to lay them off and take them in from time to time?

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** The position is this . . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** My only difficulty is this. Is the Parliament to take the responsibility of deciding for any particular factory or any concern as to whether, if a few skilled or unskilled workers are removed and then are taken again, we must sit in judgment here and then say they ought not to have sent them away? That is my difficulty.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravarty:** The point is this. It is not only a question of the 1135 skilled workers of Messrs. Burn & Co., a premier engineering works in Calcutta, who have been laid off, but the entire engineering belt in Calcutta, which has the premier fabricating workshops of the country which are carrying out priority projects for the Bhilai, Durgapur and the Ganga bridge projects and wagon-building, is closing down, and every week, a hundred workers are being thrown out, because there is shortage of steel. We have been coming consistently to the Central Government, urging them that there should be some pooling of the available material, and that some sort of steps should be taken by the Central Government to see that our entire plan projects are not stopped or at least the lay-off which they contend is necessary at the moment, and also to see whether there could be some agreement entered into between the labour, the employers and Government. Otherwise, there would be a complete paralysis in the whole engineering belt which is situated in Howrah and Calcutta. That is why it is a matter of urgent public importance, not only for Bengal or Calcutta, but for the whole country. That is why I have raised this particular question. It cannot be solved by the State Government; it cannot be solved by anybody except the Central Government. That is why it has to come before this House.

**The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar):** I sought the permission of the Home Minister in regard to the earlier question on which the House wanted further information. (Laughter).

**Shri V. P. Nayar (Quilon):** This is about steel.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Minister might have waited. There is no hurry for that question.

**Shri Karmarkar:** I thought I might state the position.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would request hon. members to seriously think about this matter. The House is engaged in some other business. Where is the hurry to interrupt that business like this?

**Shri Karmarkar:** I beg to be pardoned. I gave a message to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and when you had a look at me, I thought I was being called.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am really sorry. It is not right. I cannot get along with this work, — whoever might be in charge of this. When I am engaged, and I have taken up some other work, what is the hurry? The hon. Minister might have waited until this was over and then brought it to my notice.

**Shri Karmarkar:** I beg your pardon.

**Mr. Speaker:** The adjournment motion is more serious than the other item. I would like to know from the Minister of Commerce and Industry whether he is prepared to make any statement regarding this adjournment motion.

**Shri Karmarkar:** After I had .... (Laughter).

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order.

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri):** So far as the general question of shortage of steel is concerned, the hon. Member is quite correct in saying that the shortage is there and in certain respects it is serious. But the House is very well aware of the fact that we are trying to get as much steel as possible. But, in that regard too, there is the limitation of the foreign exchange. So, certain restrictions have to be imposed, and we cannot provide adequate quantity of steel to all the industries.

This particular motion is related to a particular firm, a premier engineering firm, Messrs. Burn & Co. in Howrah. I have not got the details

[Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri]

with me. There are two other Ministries also concerned, namely the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Steel. So, if you so like, and the House so desires, I am prepared to make a statement a day or two later, when I have been able to collect all the information.

**Mr. Speaker:** All right. I shall take this up on Monday. The hon. Minister may make a consolidated statement.

12 07 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: STARRED QUESTION ON WITHDRAWAL OF PROSECUTION AGAINST DR. GAITONDE

**Mr. Speaker:** Regarding the question relating to Dr. Gaitonde, I have adjourned it to some other day. So, why can it not wait? If the Minister makes a statement now, the hon. Members may ask supplementary questions.

**The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar):** They can ask.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let this be on some other day.

**Shri Karmarkar:** What I thought was that this being an important question, the House may not be kept in suspense. Therefore, I sought the permission of the Home Minister to give the grounds for the withdrawal of the case, so that there might be no suspense. That was I thought.

**Mr. Speaker:** Very well. The hon. Minister may make a statement now. And if hon. Members want to ask any questions....

**Shri Geray (Poona):** May I say something? This question involves the reputation of one of the foremost of surgeons that we have, and unless

the hon. Minister is prepared to allow us to ask more supplementary questions, I think it may do harm to Dr. Gaitonde who has a very high name, so far as surgery is concerned. He is one of those people who stood foremost in our Goa struggle. Of course, I do not mean to say that because he is a patriot, even if he has done something wrong, it should not be brought up here. But what I would like to press is that before we discuss this, let us bear in mind that his is not here to defend himself, and perhaps, all our discussion may harm his reputation as a surgeon.

**The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** I was not here when this question was raised. So I do not know what happened. But as the House is interested, I should like to say what came to my knowledge because I was somewhat intimately connected with this matter. As soon as this matter came to my knowledge, we appointed a Committee informally of eminent doctors and others to go into all these facts and to report to us what they thought about it. We consulted others too, and the unanimous report of all those people was that it was not fair to bring any charge against Dr. Gaitonde. The police automatically had taken some steps without any inquiry. They started some kind of proceedings. They ought to have really consulted others. As soon as they were consulted, the Home Ministry took steps to consult these doctors and they went thoroughly into this and said that they saw no ground for proceeding in this matter. It was on that basis that it was withdrawn.

**Shri Tyagi (Dehra Dun):** Obviously what the Prime Minister has said is not sufficient ground for withdrawal of the case. If the Committee had said that there was no ground, they must also have mentioned on what ground the case was weak, whether the forceps were implanted in the