

Monopolies in Newspapers Industry

*72. SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to restrictive practices by the big newspapers belonging to Chains and groups, small and medium newspapers are facing great hardships; and

(b) whether Government contemplate to constitute an Inquiry commission to make inquiries into Monopolies in Newspaper Industry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : (a) In some areas, some small and medium newspapers may be facing hardship due to unequal competition from some big newspapers. Government have, therefore, been following a policy calculated to foster the growth of small and medium newspapers, in the matter of allocation of newsprint import in the matter of allocation of newsprint, printing machinery and issue of Government advertisements.

(b) A departmental study of the ownership pattern of the companies publishing newspapers has been instituted by the Department of Company Affairs.

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL : Sir, you were yourself a reputed journalist for some years, and you know the plight of the small and medium language newspapers in this country. The monopolistic tendencies in the press industry have gone on increasing and the big newspapers belonging to the big business-houses are trying to strangle the small and medium newspapers by their nefarious practices. May I know what concrete steps Government contemplate to take to curb these monopolistic tendencies ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : I have said that the Department of Company Affairs is going into the matter, and as soon as we get their recommendations, we shall see what action we have to take about it. But as far as the small and medium newspapers are concerned, we have taken some

measures such as allocating more newsprint, more advertisements and giving them all the foreign exchange they need for importing printing and composing machinery.

SHRI PILOO MODY : They do not even reply to the letters, let alone the question of giving them facilities.

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL : By giving this meagre help to the small newspapers, we cannot curb the monopolistic tendencies. May I know from Government whether they contemplate to introduce price-page schedule in one form or another and try to levy an advertisement tax on the newspapers on a slab system ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : Regarding the price-page schedule, it is not possible to have it, for according to the Supreme Court's decision in the Golaknath case, we cannot now reintroduce it. Regarding the advertisement tax, we have already sent our opinion to the Finance Ministry.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : Is the hon. Minister aware that the total advertisement revenue in the country is to the tune of Rs. 35 crores, while the advertisements of the Government are to the tune of Rs. 3½ crores. In these circumstances, if specific tax is not levied on the advertisements coming from private industries, how can Government restrict these big monopolistic chains in the country ? Secondly, if the Constitution is coming in the way, may I know when Government will think of amending the Constitution, instead of merely giving these assurances all the while ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : All these questions can be re-examined in view of the new situation.

श्री कूलबंद बर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय, आप के माध्यम से मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि कुछ ऐसे समाचार पत्र हैं, जिनके शासकीय विज्ञापन इन आघार पर बन्द कर दिये गये हैं कि वे साम्प्रदायिक भावना बढ़ाने हैं, जबकि वास्तविकता यह है कि वे अक्षर

शासन की आलोचना तीखे ढंग से करते हैं, इस लिये उनके विज्ञापन बन्द कर दिये गये हैं— क्या मंत्री सहोदय इसका जवाब देंगे ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : This question does not arise out of the main question. But it is not a fact that advertisements are stopped without carefully examining the details of objectionable writings in the newspapers.

MR SPEAKER : Next question, No 73 Raja Kulkarni Is he a Raja or is it just a name.

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI : Just a name only.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN : May I ask a question on the previous question.

AN HON MEMBER . He is a journalist. He may be allowed Mr. Speaker he is a little late. I allow him this time But it should not be treated as a precedent Most of the members are new and I hope by the time they get used to the procedure, it will be all right.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN . The plea that the Constitution is standing in the way of curbing monopolistic trends in newspapers is a false one. Article 269 clearly empowers the Central Government to tax advertisement revenue of newspapers and give a share to the States also The Fifth Finance Commission also recommended that advertisement revenue of big newspapers can be taxed. Just now the Minister also said that she has sent her suggestions to the Finance Ministry. I want to know the particulars of those suggestions I want to know whether there is a will to put such a tax, on advertisement, and whether it is in the offing.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : It is not possible for me to give the details to the hon. member.

Model Rules for Recruitment and Promotion in Public Sector Undertakings

*73. **SHRI RAJAKULKARNI :** Will the Minister of LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT

AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made by his Ministry in formulating and implementing model rules for recruitment, promotion and transfer of employees in all public sector undertakings belonging to the Central Government ;

(b) whether the representatives of recognised Unions have been associated in such formulation and implementation of the model rules , and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to consider the convening of a joint meeting of representatives of Unions and management in the public sector undertakings ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R K KHADILKAR) (a) A Sub-Committee set up at a meeting of the Heads of Public Sector Undertakings has evolved a set of Model Principles to be followed when ordering promotion of industrial workers in Public Sector Undertakings These Model Principles have been communicated to all public sector undertakings for their guidance

(b) and (c) One of the Model Principles provides that the drafting of the promotion procedure or the adaptation of any model promotion procedure in any public sector enterprise must be preceded by the full possible consultations with recognised trade unions or service associations, or, if there are no such recognised unions or associations, with all categories of workers in general

SHRI B K DASCHOWDHURY . What about recruitment ? Shri Raja Kulkarni. Is there a check to find out which of the public sector undertakings have introduced and implemented the model rules formulated for recruitment and promotion and which have not ?

SHRI R K. KHADILKAR : It is expected of them to introduce and follow these rules But in practice, certain deviations have taken place, If he points out particular cases, I will inquire.