

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

Short Notice Question

Monday, April 4, 1977/Chaitra 14, 1899
(Saka)

**Performance of Tea Corporation of
India upto middle of March, 1977**

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

SNQ 2. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:
Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND
CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERA-
TION be pleased to state:

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

WELCOME TO THE PRESIDENT
AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TUNISIA

(a) whether the performance of
Tea Corporation of India is deterio-
rating very fast and whether a loss
is expected this year;

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members,
at the outset, I have to make an an-
nouncement.

(b) how many important posts
have been created recently and how
many of them have tea backgrounds;

On my own behalf and on behalf
of the Hon. Member of the House,
I have great pleasure in welcoming
His Excellency Dr. S. Mokaddem,
President and Mr. Zouhir Fethi,
Vice-President of the National As-
sembly of Tunisia who are on a
visit to India as our honoured guests.

(c) how many management trai-
nees have been recruited and how
those recruitments have been done;
and

(d) how many trips have been
made abroad by its officials and what
is the total cost of the same?

They arrived early this morning
and will be in India till the 7th April.
They are now seated in the Special
Box. We wish them a happy and
fruitful stay in our country. Through
them we convey our greetings and
best wishes to the Parliament, Gov-
ernment and the People of Tunisia.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE
AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-
OPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHA-
RIA): (a) No, Sir. During 1975-76
the company earned a net profit of
Rs. 24.44 lakhs and for 1976-77 the
net profit estimated is Rs. 30 lakhs.
The total turnover is as follows:

MEMBERS SWORN

1974-75	Rs. 136.00 lakhs
1975-76	Rs. 341.00 lakhs
1976-77	Rs. 680.00 lakhs (preliminary estimates)
1977-78	Rs. 1150.00 lakhs (planned)

Shri Vinodbhai B. Sheth (Jamnagar)

Shri Dharmasinhbhai Patel (Por-
bandar)

Shri Motibhai R. Chaudhary
(Banaskantha)

Shri V. P. Naik (Washim)

(b) During the last 12 months, the
following senior level posts were
created.

[Shri Mohan Dharia]

1 post of FA & CAO (Financial Adviser and Chief Accounts Officer) in the grade of Rs. 2000-2500.

1 post of Visiting Agent (Tea Gardens) in the grade of Rs. 1500-2000.

Both these posts have not yet been filled up.

7 posts in the grade of Rs. 1100-1600. All these posts have been filled up.

Of these, persons occupying 4 posts viz., Managers of the 3 Tea Estates and the post of Tea Adviser are persons having over 15 years tea experience.

The 3 other posts created and filled up are administrative posts of Branch Managers. These are occupied by persons having administrative experience.

(c) Management Trainee requirements were advertised in the leading newspapers. Five trainees were recruited on the recommendations of the Selection Committees which interviewed the candidates and one trainee who was Trainee Accountant in Public Tea Warehouse was absorbed in the Management Trainee Scheme.

(d) During 1976-77 a total of 11 business visits abroad were made by the officials of TCI. The expenditure involved was Rs. 2.80 lakhs (approx.) and business was secured for about Rs. 300 lakhs.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Shri Mohan Dharia, the Commerce Minister must make a note that as regards 33 per cent of the tea export done by India, the marketing is entirely in the hands of a few multi-national corporations and for poor Indian consumers, the price has shot up by about 33 to 35 per cent which is going to hit them hard. The reason for the same is the massive collection of money by the erstwhile ruling party for election purposes. I know that the erstwhile Commerce Minister had taken Rs. 3 crores in a seminar from

Duncan Bros. R.P. Goenka. I know the details. After great efforts, this Corporation came into existence. But the multi-national corporations never allowed it to function. And the previous Government had obliged these economic offenders to subvert this corporation. Please give me the details of previous service background and tea marketing experience of the Chairman and Managing Director, Marketing Development Officer and at least six management trainees that you have recruited recently.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I entirely share the anxiety of the hon. Member. It is true that while the export of tea is to the tune of Rs. 270 crores, the exports by the Tea Corporation are hardly of the order of Rs. 3 crores and under the circumstances, massive efforts shall have to be made. However, the House will please appreciate and particularly the hon. Member because he was very much for bringing this Corporation into existence and that Corporation was created particularly for the export of package tea and under the circumstances in the matter of export of package tea which is of the order of Rs. 25 crores, this Corporation within the last three years has done three crores. Even then, I entirely agree that we shall have to make a massive effort in increasing our exports so far the objective is concerned and I can assure the Member that whatever re-structuring is needed, it shall be done so that this Corporation becomes quite efficient and adequate to fulfil the objective.

Regarding the tea prices, as the House may perhaps be aware, the production of tea in Sri Lanka has gone down by nearly 17 million kg. during the last one year. Then the coffee production, particularly in countries like Brazil and Colombia, has suffered. Under the circumstances, there is an increase in the demand for tea. I am not aware whether the prices in the country have gone up because of the huge

funds collected by the Congress Party. However, I must say that during these two months the prices have gone up by about Rs. 6 to 7 per kilogram and there are trends of increasing prices. Therefore, I have convened a meeting today to have a dialogue with the planters and tea packagers. It shall be the endeavour of my Ministry to see that the prices do not increase, on the contrary all efforts will be made so that the prices for internal consumption will be brought down.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: While for 1975-76 the turnover was Rs. 341 lakhs and the net profit was Rs. 24.4 lakhs, according to the statement placed on the Table of the House by the Minister, for 1976-77 the turnover has doubled to Rs. 680 lakhs, but the net profit was only marginally increased to Rs. 30 lakhs. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the wage and entertainment bills for 1975-76 and 1976-77 and also the sale price of packaged tea abroad, as compared to the prices at the last auction in retail prices in those countries abroad.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: This is not a question which is that way concerned with the main one. So, I will require some time to supply the information. But I can say one thing, that this is a new Corporation which is trying to make a dent in the international market. There are four big multi-national companies or combines. Under the circumstances, some expenditure will be very much necessary till the time we create our own mechanism for marketing in foreign countries and to that extent, if some more expenditure is necessary, that should be appreciated.

श्री हुकमचन्द कछवाय : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह बात सत्य है कि बहुत से चाय बागान बहुत पुराने हैं

और उनमें ठीक उत्पादन नहीं होता है, वे घाटे में चल रहे हैं? क्या उनके विकास के लिए कोई धनराशि अलग से रखी है?

दूसरे, क्या विदेशों के अन्दर निगम द्वारा बहुत से ऐसे संस्थान बनाये गये हैं जिससे भारत की चाय अधिक लोकप्रिय हो? क्या यह बात सही है कि भारत से जो चाय जाती है उसमें षटिया किस्म की और अन्य देशों की चाय मिला कर उसको बेचा जाता है जिससे भारत की चाय लोकप्रिय नहीं हो रही है? यदि यह बात है तो इसे समाप्त करने के लिए क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है?

श्री मोहन धारिया : हमारे चाय बागान से ज्यादा ईल्ड कैसे मिल सके और हमारे चाय प्लान्टेशन के नीचे और जमीन कैसे आए, इसके लिए टी बोर्ड और कारपोरेशन की तरफ से कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं। प्रति एकड़ में प्रति साल टी का ईल्ड दो परसेंट बढ़ता है। मगर जितनी ज्यादा जमीन चाय की पैदावार के नीचे आनी चाहिए उतनी नहीं आती है क्योंकि छः सात साल तक चाय से कोई मुनाफा नहीं हो पाता है और लगभग 20 से 25 हजार रुपये प्रति हैक्टेयर पर उसमें इन्वेस्टमेंट करना पड़ता है। इसमें हम इन्सेन्टिव दे सकें इसके लिए हमारी कोशिश रहेगी।

दूसरे देशों में जो चाय जाती है, उसमें जो पोल्युशन होता है, मिलावट होती है, उन देशों में अग़र पैकेट में ज्यादा से ज्यादा चाय जाए, खुली चाय कम जाए तो यह सब काम खत्म हो सकता है और यही हमारी कोशिश रहेगी। टी कारपोरेशन जो पैदा हुआ है वह इसी कारण से पैदा हुआ है।

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: The hon. Minister is an impartial and honest man. Is it a fact that recently during the Janata wave money

[Shri M. Ram Gopal Reddy]

from these different multi-national corporations, has flowed into the funds of the Janata Party to the extent of Rs. 4 crores, and if so, is he going to make any enquiry into it?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: The whole country is aware that it is the Congress Party that was in power, while the leaders of the Janata Party were behind bars. Nobody knew that there would be a Janata wave and that the Janata Party would be occupying these Benches. Particularly there were measures like MISA and even if some persons wished to go against the desires of the Congress Party or its leaders, they had the fear that they might be put behind bars. In the circumstances, any logical and reasonable person will admit that the money, if at all, could only have gone to the Congress coffers and not to the Janata Party; I am not saying that it has, but I am here to repudiate that any such money has come to the Janata Party. (*interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: When you throw a stone, you must be ready to receive one. You cannot have a one-sided privilege.

SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI: I want to know whether extensive purchases have been made through private middlemen and whether this is against the decision taken by the Commerce Sub-Committee and if so, the extent of the private purchases.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: As per my information, it is true that some purchases were made and, therefore, I have convened a meeting this afternoon to see that these purchases go to the consumers at lower prices.

डा० मुरली मनोहर जोशी : भारतीय उपभोक्ता को जो चाय बाजार में मिल रही है उसकी किस्म बराबर गिरती जा रही है

और उसकी कीमत बराबर बढ़ती जा रही है क्या यह सही है ?

भाग ख के उत्तर में कहा गया है कि बहुत से पदों का सृजन किया गया है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इन पदों के सृजन की क्या आवश्यकता थी जब कि जो ट्रेड यह हैंडल कर रही है उसकी मात्रा बहुत कम है, तीन करोड़ है और निर्यात भी बहुत कम होता है ? ऐसी अवस्था में इतने अधिक पदों के श्रीर इतने अधिक वेतन वाले भी पदों के सृजन की क्या आवश्यकता थी ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : चाय की क्वालिटी के बारे में मुझे जरूर एग्जेमिन करना होगा क्योंकि पैकेज टी जो जाती है उसमें कोई इस तरह की गिरावट होने की कोई सम्भावना नहीं है लेकिन बन्द टी में सम्भावना होती है। माननीय सदस्य के पास कोई डिटेल्स हों तो वह मुझे दे दें और मैं जरूर जांच करूंगा।

जो जवाब मैंने दिया है उस में बताया है कि अगले साल के लिए हमने दो गुना व्यापार बढ़ाने का निर्णय किया है। उस के लिए अफसरों की बहुत जरूरत होगी। कारपोरेशन का व्यापार और बढ़े इसके लिए अच्छा इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर होना जरूरी है। इसलिए यह जरूरी था।

SHRI SOUGATA ROY: May I know if the Government is taking over any more sick tea gardens in Darjeeling and Dooars in West Bengal and whether the Government will merely act as a hospital for sick gardens or will also take over healthy gardens owned by monopoly houses like Duncan Brothers and James Finlay?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: At present there is no such proposal before me to take over any tea gardens, but

I can assure the House that if they try to take advantage of the position and exploit the country, whatever measures are necessary for the discontinuance of such exploitation will be taken. We shall not work as it happened in the past.

श्री उष सेन : 1975-76 में जो बिजनेस ट्यूनिशिया के साथ हुआ है उसके बारे में आडिट, कर्मशियल एकाउंट्स ने एक रिपोर्ट लिखी है। उसकी ओर मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ। उस में यह कहा गया है :

“To cope with the above order, Tea had to be purchased from private sources, the total quantity being 162,236 kg. valued at Rs. 13.63 lacs. A quantity of 31,769 kgs. valued at Rs. 2.68 lacs was lying in the stock on 30-4-76. Moreover tea was purchased in bags which had the inherent risk of deterioration in the quality of the goods. An additional charge of Rs. 0.75 paise per bag was to be paid for packing the same in chest. Taking all these into consideration it may be pointed out whether the private purchase in this way was economical and done in the best interest of the company.”

क्या मंत्री जी इस रिपोर्ट के बारे में अपनी राय देंगे ?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I shall require a special notice for it.

श्री लक्ष्मीनारायण पांडेय : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या यह सत्य है जैसा कि उन्होंने कहा कि बाजार में 5, 7 रु० तक चाय के दाम बढ़े हैं और सम्भावना व्यक्त की जा रही है कि और भी बढ़ें क्योंकि पुरानी सरकार से गत मार्च महीने के दूसरे सप्ताह में चाय उत्पादकों के साथ कुछ इस प्रकार का समझौता हुआ है जिस के अनुसार चाय का दाम और भी

बढ़ने वाला है। यदि हां, तो क्या आप ऐसे समझौतों को लागू नहीं करने की दिशा में प्रयत्न करेंगे? अथवा पुराने समझौते को रद्द करने की कृपा करेंगे ताकि चाय के दाम कम हों ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : मैंने तो अभी बताया है कि चाय के दाम ज्यादा न बढ़ें इस पर विचार करने के लिए आज ही मैंने दोपहर में एक मीटिंग बुलाई है और उस में हम जरूर कोशिश करेंगे कि चाय के दाम ज्यादा न बढ़ें। जहां तक दूसरी बात है

I am not speaking of foreign exchange and export, because we want to earn more foreign exchange. I am speaking of the internal consumption.

मैंने तो पहले ही जवाब दे दिया है।

श्री लक्ष्मीनारायण पांडेय : मैंने पूछा था कि पुरानी सरकार के बीच तथा चाय उत्पादकों के बीच कुछ इस प्रकार का समझौता हुआ है कि जिस के अनुसार चाय के दाम बढ़े हैं? और बढ़ने वाले हैं।

श्री मोहन धारिया : मैंने कहा कि ऐसा समझौता रिटन नहीं होता है, कोई चीज रेकार्ड में नहीं है। मगर यह बात साफ है कि 2 महीने के अन्दर 6, 7 रु० तक दाम बढ़े हैं। उस के पीछे कई कारण जरूर होना चाहिए। चुनाव फण्ड की बात होगी ऐसा अनुमान निकल सकता है। इस से ज्यादा मेरे पास और कोई मालूमात नहीं है।

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister, with reference to part (b) of the question asked by Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, whether he is aware—to have people with good background to ensure quality of tea—that the hon. Member Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu himself is an expert tea tester and whether he would like to decide to utilize his knowledge and services in this field? Can he kindly let us know, with

[Shri Vasant Sathe]

reference to the last question which he answered, whether some of the funds which he says are alleged to have gone in the form of funds have also gone to the side of the Government?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Regarding the last supplementary question, I have already replied that there was nothing like that the Janata Party had received this fund and replies to other questions have been given. Regarding the first question, I entirely share the feelings of the hon. Member that Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu is one of the best testers of tea and we would like to have co-operation not only from him but also from others who would like to have the co-operation of the Government.

PROF. R. K. AMIN: May I have the assurance from the Minister concerned whether the alleged corruption charges levelled against the Corporation will be examined and a report thereon be submitted to the House before three months? Secondly, I would like to know from him—that India being a country which is traditionally exporting tea—whether it is necessary for us to receive management training and things like that when sufficient expertise is already available with us? Usually, Sir, it is the habit of the Government institutions to import all sorts of things and unnecessarily spend money thereon. Will the Hon. Minister review the working of the Tea Corporation with a view to cutting down such waste, whatever is the waste, which is already taking place in the Tea Corporation?

Thirdly, is he also taking steps to enter into an international commodity agreement in tea so that we can get higher prices for our exports? And if so, what steps has he taken or what steps has the Corporation taken in this direction?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: No charges of corruption have been levelled so far against the Corporation. So, naturally, there is no question of going into that question.

Regarding the expertise, the House may be aware that there are a few vested interests and big cartels working in the country and outside and they are having their own experts. If we want experts who are not that way related to the vested interests, naturally, we shall have to train our own people who will be loyal to the country and the society. Therefore, to train our own people becomes all the more necessary and, I think, the House will appreciate that this will be a good endeavour.

Regarding the higher export prices to be secured in the foreign markets, certainly, in the interest of the country it shall be our endeavour to do so.

श्रीधरी बलबोर सिंह : मंत्री महोदय ने अभी कहा है कि जो अब तक होता रहा है, वह आगे नहीं होने दिया जायेगा। मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि जो अब तक होता रहा है, उस गड़बड़ को हटाने के लिए क्या कोई हाई पावर कमीशन मुकर्रर किया जायेगा, ताकि इन्क्वायरी कराकर प्रापर एक्शन लिया जा सके ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : मैंने अभी कहा है कि हमारी कार्पोरेशन के खिलाफ उसे कोई चार्ज नहीं हैं।

श्रीधरी बलबोर सिंह : मंत्री महोदय ने अभी कहा कि जो अब तक होता रहा है, आगे नहीं होने दिया जायेगा, वह तो ठीक है, लेकिन जो अब तक हुआ है उसने लिए इन्क्वायरी कराने के लिए क्या हाई पावर कमीशन बैठाया जायेगा ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : इस कार्पोरेशन का जन्म 1971 में हुआ, मगर तीन साल तक

कुछ काम नहीं हुआ, चाहिस्ते चाहिस्ते काम हो रहा है। अब ऐसा नहीं होगा कार्पोरेशन का काम जल्दी कैसे हो, इसके लिए कोशिश होगी। इसके लिए हाई पावर कमीशन बैठाने की जरूरत है, ऐसा मैं नहीं मानता हूँ।

SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU: May I know whether the hon. Minister is considering to take preventive steps so that the tea gardens may not be sinking in future?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: It shall be our endeavour.

11.28 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VERMA): Sir, there are a number of hon. Members who want to participate in the debate on the President's Address. I myself have submitted a long list to you. With your permission, I would like to propose that the House may sit today till 7 or 7.30 P.M. to enable more hon. Members to take part in the debate.

Secondly, the Government would like the entire business of the session to be completed by the 6th evening. If by any chance that is not possible, the House may sit on the 7th also. The Government would like the business to be completed by the 7th evening.

MR. SPEAKER: Apart from extending the time by one hour on the President's Address, if the hon. Members restrict their speeches to 10 or 5 minutes, a larger number of hon. Members can be accommodated. Otherwise, it is very difficult for the Chair, whoever is in it the Speaker or the Deputy-Speaker, to go on ringing the bell and try to accommodate more hon. Members. The new Members will also get a chance. So, we shall sit today till 7 O'Clock.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA (Begusarai): May I submit for your consideration that if you limit it to 5 minutes per Member, it would lead to deterioration in the quality of contribution to the debate? Then, I would also like to submit to you that the House should not sit beyond 6 O'Clock. The session might be extended by two or three days. The hon. Prime Minister had once told us that he would like the session to be extended in order to accommodate more hon. Members to participate in the debates.

MR. SPEAKER: That is what Mr. Varma has also suggested—that it may be extended by one or two days.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: But to sit beyond 6 O'Clock would be difficult.

MR. SPEAKER: All of them have agreed. After all, everybody need not be there: only those who are anxious to speak will be there.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: But, in any case, you should not be pleased to agree with the view that the contribution of each Member should be limited only to five minutes: you should not be a party to that.

MR. SPEAKER: The imposition of a voluntary restriction is what I have suggested, so that other Members may also get a chance.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): I have a submission to make regarding your ruling on the Privilege Motion against Shri T. N. Kaul.

MR. SPEAKER: I will give it when I am ready. Do you want me to give it straightaway here and now? I thought I should take some time.