

### Railway Catering Department

\*335. SHRI YAJNA DATT SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the deterioration in the quality of food served by the various units of the Railway Catering Department; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH): (a) Complaints in regard to the quality of food served by units of the Railway Catering Department are sometimes made, but there are no indications that the quality has deteriorated recently, or during the past few years.

(b) Railway administrations have been striving, and continue to strive, to improve the quality of food served to the public. Some of the steps taken are: maintaining effective supervision to ensure purchase and supply of good quality of materials, laying down of proper recipes, employment of competent cooks, training of catering staff in the Institute of Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Bombay, at departmentally run hotels at Aurangabad, Ranchi and Puri, and at other selected departmental catering units and surprise inspections of catering units by officers and inspectors.

श्री यज्ञवल्त शर्मा : मंत्री महोदय इस बात को जानते हैं कि जब से सरकार ने केटरिंग के काम को अपने हाथ में लिया है तब से सवारियों को जो भोजन का स्तर है, वह बढ़िया मिल रहा है और उसके साथ साथ सेवा में भी बहुत बड़ी गैर जिम्मेदारी और भ्रसावधानी बरती जा रही है । लोग आर्डर बुक कराते हैं लेकिन उन के ऊपर उनको खाना नहीं मिलता है । कितनी ही बार मैंने भी शिकायत की है । खाने

का स्तर अत्यन्त बढ़िया है । यहाँ तक कि पानी भी कितने ही स्थानों पर नहीं दिया जाता है । जब यह शिकायत बारबार हो रही है तो इस स्थिति के अन्दर मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह जो खानपान विभाग रेलवे का है यह कितने घाटे में जा रहा है ? प्राइवेट कंट्रिक्टर्स इसके अन्दर मुनाफा भी लेते थे और अच्छी सर्विस भी देते थे । मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार इस स्थिति के अन्दर कुछ बदल लाने का प्रयत्न करेगी ?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: The origin of the departmental catering was mainly the complaints that we were receiving about the private contractors. Though this was not a line of activity connected with railway working, yet the railways had undertaken the work of departmental catering with the object of giving better service to the public. As regards the complaint which the hon. Member has made, I would submit that after all we are catering to different sorts of people and to a number of people, and the taste differs from individual to individual. Normally it is expected that we do receive some complaints, but they are mainly in regard to the quality of the cereal supplied. But the railways do not have any direct control on that, because we have to receive the supplies of rice, wheat etc. from the civil authorities. The complaints are mostly based on the quality of rice and chapattis. In spite of that, we are trying our best to improve the quality of the food. It will be our endeavour to see that the service that we render is improved a great deal.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: You must taste it, Sir. It should be laid on the Table of the House.

श्री यज्ञवल्त शर्मा : मंत्री महोदय ने बताया है कि केवल वहाँ पर परीसे जाने वाले भ्रमों, सीरियल्स, के बारे में शिकायत, है हालाँकि मैंने पानी के बारे में भी कहा है कि

वह गदला प्रीर मिट्टी मिला हुआ दिया जाता है। पीछे संसद-सदस्यों की एक कमेटी बनाई गई थी, ताकि वह खान-पान विभाग की जाँच करे प्रीर उस के सुधार के निमित्त कुछ सुझाव दें। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उस कमेटी ने जो सुझाव दिये, क्या रेलवे विभाग ने उन को लागू करने की चेष्टा की; यदि हाँ, तो क्या उस के कुछ अच्छे परिणाम निकले हैं।

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** Recently, a committee of Four Members of Parliament was formed. They have gone into the details of departmental catering as well as catering by contractors, and they had suggested some remedies, and certain remedial measures have been adopted by the Railway Board and they are being implemented gradually.

As far as the earnings from departmental catering are concerned, it is a fact that departmental catering was losing to a very great extent for a long time. But now we have turned the corner and last year we had earned a little profit, and this year we expect a much bigger profit from departmental catering.

**MR. SPEAKER:** At the cost of the quality.

श्री मृत्यंजय प्रसाद : मंत्री महोदय ने कहा है कि रेलवे विभाग दूसरों से भन्न खरीदता है। मैं समझता हूँ कि वह कागज भी दूसरों से खरीदता है। यह देखा गया है कि रेलवे विभाग द्वारा कागज के डिब्बों में गोला खाना भी दिया जाता है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या रेलवे विभाग ने हमेशा के लिये कुछ ट्रेनों में चाली का प्रयोग बन्द कर दिया है, अथवा थोड़े दिनों के लिए ही पैकेट्स में खाना देने की व्यवस्था की है। भाज दास, रसेदार, मोरबदार तरकारी और दही आदि गोला खाना पैकेट्स में खाना पड़ता है। मैं स्पष्ट रूप से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या मंत्री महोदय ने कभी एक पैकेट

ले कर खुद खाकर देखा है कि वह खाना खा सकना है या नहीं।

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** As an experimental measure, we have tried in some of the zones to serve food in packets. Particularly on the Southern Railway, we are now serving *sambhar bhath* and *dhahi bhath* in packets and it has become very popular there.

I am very sorry to hear that the hon. Member had the occasion to get a packet which was cold. But I can assure him that we are trying our best to see that these things do not happen.

श्री मृत्यंजय प्रसाद : मध्यम महोदय, मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं दिया गया है। क्या मंत्री महोदय ने सेंट्रल रेलवे में एक बार भी पैकेट का खाना खाया है ?

**MR. SPEAKER:** He has promised to give the hon. Member good food. Now, Shri K. Lakkappa.

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** The complaint about the deteriorating situation in regard to catering on the railways, is not a thing which is made only now, but it has been there ever since the inception of the railways in India under the Congress rule. Since there are a number of complaints in this behalf, and the food that has been supplied has even contained cockroaches, which are injurious to health . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Non-vegetarian.

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** . . . of the travelling people, and in view of the fact that the hon. Minister has said that a committee has been constituted, may I know whether the committee has already submitted its report, and if so, whether that has been implemented either in part or in full?

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** The Committee has already submitted its report which has been laid on the Table.

**SHRIMATI SAVITRI SHYAM:** To check the deterioration in the quality of the foodstuff, do Government propose to raise the prices of the dishes served in railway canteens? (*Interruptions*).

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** I am very glad the hon. lady Member has made a very correct suggestion. We would like to examine it.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE:** Is the hon. Minister aware that the food, both vegetarian and non-vegetarian, supplied in the Parliament House canteen which is run by the Railway department is better than that supplied to passengers in trains and this is the general feeling of those who travel and those of us who have to take their meals here? Will he try to improve the quality of food served on railways and make it equal to that served to MPs here?

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** To serve food in a running train as opposed to a static station, there are certain difficulties. The hon. Member has mentioned about the food served in Parliament House ....

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE:** Discrimination.

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** There is no discrimination. The food we serve in Parliament House is expensive and the difference is being subsidised by the Parliamentary Affairs Department. Then again we are also very keen to see that we supply mouthfuls to the MPs.

**SHRI PILOO MODY:** Why don't they lower the quality over here? Then there will be no problem.

**SHRI THIRUMALA RAO:** In view of the fact that sambar and rasam are symbols of Dravidian culture, why is it that they have eliminated rasam from the South Indian lines?

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** It has already been reintroduced.

**श्री श्री प्रकाश त्यागी :** रेलवे में पहले जो प्राइवेट कन्ट्रैक्टर्स खाना सप्लाई करते थे, उन्होंने लाखों करोड़ों रुपये कमाए लेकिन अब गवर्नमेंट का कैंटरिंग विभाग लास पर जा रहा है—हाल ही में बड़ा मुनाफा जरूर हुआ है—, जब कि खाना बही है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट को लास होने का क्या कारण है।

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** Firstly, departmental catering is not run at a loss now.

**श्री श्री प्रकाश त्यागी :** अब तक तो लास हो रहा है।

**SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH:** There is a difference in the cost of departmental catering in a dining car and in a static room. The cost of dining car service is definitely much more. Most of the dining cars are run by departmental catering and not by contractors. Another thing is that the food and staff cost and other things in departmental catering are definitely higher compared to that of the contractors.

**SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA:** I do not agree with the hon. Minister when he says that there is difficulty in serving food in moving trains. I will cite the case of the air services. In the air service they supply very nice food.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** No, no.

**SHRI A. SREEDHARAN:** IAC is the worst.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** It is hopeless.

**MR. SPEAKER:** We will amend his question accordingly.

**SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA:** They have not tasted Air India food. I would request them to taste Air India food which is one of the best in the world.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

MR. SPEAKER: We are on railway catering now.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA: I want the railways to come up to the standard of Air India. Is it a fact that MPs expect wonderful food for one rupee . . .

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: What wonderful food?

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA: For one rupee, they expect 10 dishes. It is not possible. Let us have two categories, those who want cheap meals and those who can afford to pay more. May I know whether the Minister will think in terms of cheap and expensive meals to be served to Members of Parliament and also other passengers in the trains?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: We have two systems of food, the regular meal in the thali, and we have also a la carte where the hon. Member can get specific items for specific charges.

SHRI GADILINGANA GOWD: The hon. Minister does not believe what we say here. He only relies upon the reports of his officers. On the 23rd when I travelled from Adoni to Madras a railway officer was also travelling with me. He told me that he found a cockroach in the tea pot. Therefore, I would like to know from the Minister whether he would pay surprise visits to these canteens in cognito.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: I will do that.

#### Circular Railway in Calcutta

+

\*336. SHRI SAMAR GUHA:  
SHRI BENI SHANKER  
SHARMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the report on Circular Railway in Calcutta has been completed; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH): (a) Not yet.

(b) Does not arise.

श्री बेनी शंकर शर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जिन लोगों को सौभाग्य से या दुर्भाग्य से कलकत्ते की सर्वोत्तम रेलों में सफर करने का मौका पड़ा है वे जानते हैं कि वहाँ के लोगों की अपनी आँखों तक पहुँचना एक पुनर्वन्ध का भाँसा है। लोग स्टिब में बैठ घौर बकरियों की तरह ही भरे नहीं रहते बल्कि फुट बोर्ड और ईजन में ट्राइबर के पास तक भरे रहते हैं। यह समस्या 1947 से ही हमारे सामने है। 1947 में सर पदमजी गीनवाल की अध्यक्षता में एक कमेटी बँठी थी। उस ने कुछ सिफारिशों की थीं। उसके बाद कुछ और भी कमेटियाँ बँठीं। प्लानिंग कमीशन ने भी एक कमेटी बनाई थी जिस की रिपोर्ट अभी तक नहीं आई है। हमें कहा गया था कि सितम्बर तक उसकी रिपोर्ट आ जायेगी। तो कलकत्ते में जो यातायात व्यवस्था की कठिनाइयाँ हैं उसको मद्दे नजर रखते हुए क्या मंत्री महोदय सरकार के लोह लाइन कलकत्ते में शीघ्रातिशीघ्र बनाने के लिए बचन देंगे ?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: The Metropolitan Transport Team under the Planning Commission have undertaken a study not only for Calcutta but also for other metropolitan cities like Bombay, Madras and Delhi. This M.T.T. worked in coordination with the Railways and we have given them all the necessary assistance by way of staff, and also according to the suggestion of the MTT a preliminary engineering survey has been conducted and an interim report has been received. We have not yet received the final report to make out the economic viability of the proposition. The scheme that we have received now has indicated a certain line of action, wherefrom the suburban line can start and where it can terminate and