

LOK SABHA

Thursday, December 10, 1970/Agrahayana 19,
1892 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at two minutes past
Eleven of the Clock.*

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Sir, before taking up questions, I wish to submit that all the IAC flights have been cancelled and all the passengers have been stranded (*Inter-ruption*)

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH : The flight was cancelled at the eleventh hour, I do not know whether this Government is running or not. (*Interruption*). Tomorrow we have to go.

MR SPEAKER : Please do not make it a practice to raise such things in the Question Hour.

Service Conditions of Employees of
Delhi Zoo

*631. SHRI M. L. SONDHI : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that there is considerable dissatisfaction among the employees of the Delhi Zoo over the various matters relating to service conditions ;

(b) the welfare measures taken by the Zoo administration during the last one year ; and

(c) the facilities for medical care, education and cultural advancement provided to the employees of the Zoo and their families ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE,

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI S. C. JAMIR) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) No. Sir. The Government is not aware of any dissatisfaction among the employees of Delhi Zoo over the various matters relating to service conditions.

(b) A recreation club with grant-in-aid from the Ministry of Home Affairs, is already functioning in the Park. A benevolent fund for the benefit of the member-employees is operated upon to meet emergencies. In addition, the Zoo has itself provided necessary lawns and parks where the resident-employees of the Zoo can recreate and relax. The area around the Class IV staff quarters is fenced to enable their children to play about freely.

(c) The staff of the Delhi Zoo who mainly reside within the municipal limits, are governed by the C.G.H.S. Scheme. The staff and their families get all medical facilities either as indoor or outdoor patients in dispensaries and hospitals. The Government of India have granted various facilities like re-imbusement of tuition fees and children education allowance to the employees of the Delhi Zoo. The Welfare Directorate of the Ministry of Home Affairs arranges cultural programmes from time to time.

SHRI M. L. SONDHI : This Government has a well-known intellectual kinship with the animals in the Delhi Zoo. I am not complaining of its treatment to the animals but of its treatment to the human beings who work in the Zoo towards whom the Minister's attitude is as kind and compassionate as that of a man-eating tiger. I would like to know whether it is a fact that no overtime allowance is given to employees, whether uniforms are never given and this year although it is 10th December, no winter uniforms have been issued so far, whether

no festival leave or holidays are granted except for three days in a year, whether employees live in thatched huts and those who have pucca quarters are without water on the first floor and whether workers are charged exorbitantly for food and beverages by the Zoo canteen. If all this is true, will the Minister agree with me that it is time that the whole management of the Delhi Zoo was overhauled ?

SHRI S. C. JAMIR : I personally went down the Zoo yesterday and enquired from the Union whether they had any complaint against the Government. They said that they did not have any complaint whatsoever against the Zoo authorities. Rather they were very grateful to the Zoo authorities for providing water supply even to the jhuggies.

Regarding uniforms, due to the later arrival of the consignment of cloth from D.G.S. and D. the supply of uniforms has been delayed. As soon as we received the consignment we gave orders to the tailors. The uniforms will be provided as soon as possible.

Regarding leave, except three national holidays, that is, 26th January, 15th August, and 2nd October, no other leave is granted because the zoo is not an industry. On this issue, they have submitted an application before the Industrial Tribunal for gazetted holidays. The Industrial Tribunal has declared that this is not an industry and, therefore, they are not entitled to other holidays.

Regarding housing, I have personally inspected all the buildings and quarters. There is good water supply. So, the complaint made by the hon. Member is not correct.

SHRI M. L. SONDHAI : The Minister in his reply is giving the same tranquiliser to you and to the House which presumably was given to the Rhino which made a bid for freedom the other day in the Delhi Zoo.

May I know why is there this invidious distinction between permanent and daily wage workers that the latter in case of accidents occurring during working hours are given no medical facilities and are asked to sign a declaration at the time of appointment that the Zoo is absolved of all responsibility?

May I further know whether in the case of regular employees who meet with accidents,

the hospitalisation and outdoor treatment is at for away Safdarjung Hospital and that no contribution is made towards transport expenses ? If this is true, will the Minister assure the House that this ridiculous position will be ended straight away and uniform treatment meted out to permanent and daily wage workers and transport expenses will be given in future to those under going medical treatment ?

SHRI S. C. JAMIR : The people who are working in the Zoo are entitled to medical facilities as any other staff of the Government. In case of emergencies and serious sickness, we even give them advances to meet the medical expenses.

SHRI M. L. SONDHAI : What about daily wage workers who are made to sign a declaration that even if a tiger eats them up, the Zoo authorities will not be responsible ?

SHRI S. C. JAMIR : We will look into that.

As far as compensation is concerned, I have a long list showing the amounts paid to the workers who have got injured, in their day-to-day work. If the hon. Member is interested, I will give him a copy of that.

SHRI M. L. SONDHAI : What about this invidious distinction between permanent and daily wage workers ? Are you going to stop that ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : So far as the distinction between daily wage workers and regular employees is concerned, I will look into the matter.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : May I know whether it is a fact that because of lack of veterinary facilities in Delhi, the Zoo authorities right from the Director down the lower staff, they are called upon to look after the animals 24 hours in the day and, sometimes, when animals are sick, they have to get up even in the mid-night and attend to the animals and, if so, since Delhi Zoo is under the Central Government, whether the Government have got any scheme or they have thought of giving any special pay or allowance to them ? Further, as regards those employees who do not have the quarters,

may I know whether they have thought of giving some accommodation to them ?

SHRI S. C. JAMIR : As far as the quarters are concerned, we shall look into it. Regarding treatment of the animals, we have a veterinary doctor who is stationed within the campus of the Zoo and he is looking after the animals very well.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : In spite of the veterinary doctor being there, the Zoo staff have to go to attend the animals. The doctor cannot go and attend the animals unless the person who feeds the animals is there. They are called upon to attend the animals all the 24 hours in the day.

MR. SPEAKER : The dissatisfaction is amongst the employees, not amongst the animals.

SHRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : The hon. Minister has said that only three national holidays are given to the workers. Can't the Government think of having more staff and give them, in turn, more number of days' leave ?

SHRI S. C. JAMIR : The existing number of staff is quite adequate.

Government Advertisements to 'Pratap' and 'Vir Arjun'

*632. SHRI BAL RAJ MADHOK : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have stopped advertisements to daily "Pratap" and "Vir Arjun" of New Delhi ; and

(b) if so, the reasons for stopping the advertisements to them ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On account of writings which are likely to cause communal disharmony.

श्री बलराज मधोक : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ क्या यह सत्य है कि 'प्रताप' और 'वीर अर्जुन' दोनों ही इस देश के पुराने

अखबार हैं जिन्होंने भारत के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम बहुत अच्छा योगदान दिया है ? क्या यह भी सत्य है कि वीर अर्जुन के संस्थापक अमर शहीद स्वामी श्रद्धानन्द जी थे और क्या यह भी सही है कि आजादी के बाद इन दोनों समाचार पत्रों का रवैया जनता के प्रति बहुत अच्छा रहा है ? क्या यह भी सही है कि वीर अर्जुन का कभी कन्विशन नहीं हुआ, 'प्रताप' का एक बार हुआ था लेकिन ह.ई. कोर्ट ने उसको भी रद्द कर दिया था ? क्या यह भी सही है कि इन अखबारों को इश्तिहार इसलिए नहीं दिये जाते हैं कि वह सरकार की नुकता-चीनी करते हैं ? क्या यह भी सत्य है कि उर्दू का 'प्रताप' सबसे अधिक बिकने वाला अखबार है और 'वीर अर्जुन' भी बहुत ज्यादा छपता है ? तो इन हालत में उनको इश्तिहार न देने के स्पेसिफिक कारण क्या है ?

MR. SPEAKER : The Members should ask questions and not in the leading form.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : It is very difficult for me to reply to all the enunciations made by my friend.

I would like to say this thing that, by and large, newspapers in this country have a legacy of the Freedom Struggle in which they have generally participated. Sometimes, an unfortunate stage does come when they take a particular type of attitude on communal relations. Then, with a great deal of reluctance we have to deny them advertisements. Therefore, the Government does it with a great deal of hesitation. Even after doing that, we keep on reviewing as their writings continue and if we see any marked change, we do want to restore them on the advertisement list.

श्री बलराज मधोक : क्या यह सही है कि प्रेस कमीशन ने अपनी रिपोर्ट के पैरा 860में कहा है :

"Government would be justified in withholding advertisements from papers, which 'HABITUALLY' indulge in Journalism which is obscene, scurrilous,