

Non-Supply of Wagons to Private Trade for Movement of Essential Commodities

*24. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently issued a directive to stop the supply of wagons to private trade for the movement of essential commodities like pulses, foodgrains, and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: There was a great demand of railway wagons for the movement of foodgrains from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Also there was a great demand of railway wagons for the movement of 7.0 lakh tonnes of fertiliser. I want to know whether Ministry is going to place more wagons in regard to this.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Member has widened the scope of the original question. With your permission I will confine myself only to the original question and in relation to the original question I would like to tell the hon'ble Member that as far as the private traders are concerned we have not at all issued any orders that allotment of wagons to the private food-grain traders should be stopped. All that I want to inform the House is that there are certain priorities that are fixed up. The priorities are that as far as foodgrains are concerned if they are sponsored by the Central Government in that case they get priority 'B'. In the case of pulses sponsored by the centre they get priority 'C'. As far as private traders are concerned the foodgrains get priority 'D' and pulses priority 'E'. I am happy to inform the House that even as far as the movement of foodgrains by private

traders is concerned we have been able to provide to them 4.72 lakh tonnes for three months of the current year which will come to 22.88 lakh tonnes in a year. I will conclude my answer by giving comparative figures: 1975-76, private trade account in terms of lakh tonnes, 14.88, 1976-77 21.59, 1977-78 21.25. For 1978-79, from April to June, for three months the figure is 5.72 lakh tonnes and if multiplied by four, the mathematics will give you the figure of 22.88 lakh tonnes. I do not think that anything more need be done.

श्री कंचर लाल गुप्त : श्री माननीय मंत्री जी ने बताया कि ग्राहबेट ट्रेड के लिए उन्होंने प्रायर्टी तय की है, वह ठीक है लेकिन मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ क्या उनको इस बात का पता है कि दिल्ली में एक बैगन लेने के लिए एक हजार रुपए रिश्वत दी जाती है ? क्या मंत्री जी इसकी इन्व्वायरी करने के लिए तैयार होंगे ? अगर तैयार होंगे तो मैं समझता हूँ इसके लिए सबूत भी मिल सकता है ।

श्री. मधु इंदरवते : मैं माननीय सदस्य को आश्वासन देता हूँ कि अगर वे कोई निश्चित केस हमारे सामने रखेंगे

श्री कंचरलाल गुप्त : इसके बगैर बैगन मिलता ही नहीं है ।

श्री. मधु इंदरवते : माननीय सदस्य कोई कांक्रिट केस बतायें क्योंकि किस-किस को लेकर हों इन्व्वायरी करनी पड़ेगी । जब एक जिम्मेदार माननीय सदस्य हमारे सामने एक केस रखेंगे और सबूत रखेंगे तो जरूर उसकी जांच करवाई जायेगी ।

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Regarding essential commodities, whether moved through government account or private account, the fact remains that essential commodities are very vital to the nation, and foodgrains have to be moved from place to place. For instance, from Andhra

Pradesh, the surplus rice has to be moved either on government account or on private account; so also chemical fertilisers to be provided to the agriculturists. In view of that, may I know whether, so far as essential commodities are concerned, there will be no distinction between government and private and that the same priority will be given so far as movement of essential commodities is concerned, so that it may not involve corruption, as Mr. Gupta pointed out, from private traders for sending essential commodities. May I know whether the Minister will reconsider the matter?

PROF. MODHU DANDAVATE: I do not want to give a false reply. Let it be very clear that, as far as the social responsibilities of Government are concerned, as far as foodgrains under sponsored movement of the Government, which is basically very big, bulk movement, is concerned, since the public distribution system has to be fed, a higher priority will always be given to that—because from the surplus States like Punjab, Haryana and U.P., we have to have a big lead and take them to South and West. No doubt we have given even to the private traders, for the movement of foodgrains, a slightly higher priority compared to other commodities. But foodgrain movement by the Government will always get a higher priority because that is the biggest social obligation.

I will conclude by pointing out one thing. Just as one malpractice has been pointed out, one of the malpractices indulged in by the private traders in foodgrains trade is that they have been utilising our wagons as sheds and keeping all their commodities there when there is dumping of the price. Therefore, we have decided that, if they continue to indulge in this practice to manipulate prices, in that case we will increase the demurrage and auction the accumulated grains.

श्री यज्ञदत्त शर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय,
मेरा प्रश्न संख्या 33 इसी से संबंधित है।

हरयाणा की बात कही गई है जो कि इसी से संबंधित है।

MR. SPEAKER: What can I do? Mr. Arunachalam.

SHRI V. ARUNACHALAM: Owing to inadequate facilities in respect of wagons for transporting salt from Tuticorin to other parts of the country, the salt industry is seriously affected. In spite of repeated demands from the salt manufacturers, the Government is still reluctant to provide wagon facilities to the salt manufacturers. May I know the reason for the abnormal delay? Will the Hon. Minister categorically assure the House that an adequate number of wagons will be provided in future without further delay?

MR. SPEAKER: It does not arise from the question.

SHRI V. ARUNACHALAM: It does Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: No, it does not arise. (*Interruptions*). There are a large number of questions. Now, Question No. 25.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Sir, yesterday also I was not....

MR. SPEAKER: There are 544 Members.

Question No. 25.

Metropolitan Transport Project, Calcutta

*25. SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the West Bengal Government have refused to allow Metropolitan Transport Project to dig under Chittaranjan Avenue in Calcutta unless more money was allotted for the project; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?