

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you know, the financial limits in all statues, regulations as well as in the Constitution have been revised from time to time, keeping in view the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee. This limit of Rs. 500/- which of course applies only to destitute women and women who are unable to maintain themselves was fixed in 1974. Since 1974, by the process of inflation the value of the rupee is roughly about 25 percent of what it was in 1974. In order to allow the ex-wife the same purchasing power that was available to her in 1974, it will be appropriate if this limit be raised at least to Rs. 2000/-, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is not aware of the fact of inflation and therefore why it is unable to introduce an amendment on its own as it has done in many other cases of statutes, regulations and the Constitution.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: I have already submitted and I would like to clarify again that Section 125 is not a Section actually meant for actual maintenance of women. It relates to child, it relates to old and infirm parents, it relates to a destitute woman. I would only see that this Section 125 can be used in all exigencies whether it is parent, child or wife. But in case it is felt that Rs. 500/- is too meagre, well this is a matter which comes under the Code of Civil Procedure and I would pass on this information and the sentiments of the House to the hon. Home Minister.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): Sir, with your permission, for the information of the House, I would like to say that the aspect on which the hon. Members are agitated, I do appreciate their views in this regard. The Law Commission has also suggested to raise the limit of Rs. 500/- a questionnaire has been prepared by the Law Commission to the various States to obtain their view in this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: SHRI VISHNU MODI - not present

Shri Chitta Mahata- not present

Dr. G.S. Rajhans.

### Vacant posts in Railways

\*45. DR. G.S. RAJHANS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of posts lying vacant in the Railways for the last three years;

(b) the reasons for keeping them vacant; and

(c) the steps taken so far to fill up those posts?

[ Translation ]

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD) (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

### STATEMENT

(a) In Groups A & b there is no post lying vacant for three years. In regard to Groups C & D information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) and (c). Vacancies keep on occurring from time to time due to employees demitting service through superannuation, voluntary retirement, medical incapacitation, resignation, removal, death, etc. and creation of new posts. Steps are taken to fill up these vacancies through direct recruitment or departmental promotion depending upon the rules applicable to the particular category and grade. Vacancies in Group D are normally filled, barring certain exceptions, by screening of casual labour and substitutes. Direct recruitment, departmental promotions and screening are all continuous processes and hence there will always be some vacancies at any given point of them.

[*English*]

**DR. G.S. RAJHANS:** Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the Government have received complaints that the claims of casual labourers with long tenure of service are overlooked and those with shorter tenure are made permanent. If it is so, what has the Government done in this regard?

[*Translation*]

**SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD:** The question asked by the learned Member is not related to main question, however I would like to tell him that recruitments in the railways are made in four ways. They are done in four different groups i.e. A, B, C, and D. Recruitments to group 'A' posts are done through the U.P.S.C. Recruitments to group 'B' posts are done by promotion. Recruitment to group 'C' is made by direct recruitment. Recruitment to this category is made by the Railway Recruitment board on the basis of qualification possessed by the candidates. The group 'D' posts are filled in by candidates from among the casual workers after screening their candidature. After screening is over we appoint them to these posts. There is no such information with us that people who have worked less number of days as casual labourers were recruited and the people who have worked for more number of days have been ignored. If the hon. Member has got any such information, he should write to me personally so that I could hold an enquiry into it.

**DR. G.S. RAJHANS:** During the last few years in the Jamalpur Railway Factory neither any new posts were created nor any vacant posts were filled up. There is a feeling among the people that probably the Government wants to close down the Jamalpur Railway Factory. I would like the hon. Minister to tell the truth.

**SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD:** Sir, I would like to clarify regarding Jamalpur Railway Factory that there is neither any proposal to close it down nor of retrenching workers. Of

course, if such a situation arises, we shall make every arrangement to utilise them at other places. If workers of the same category are available there we shall absorb them in other job.

**DR. CHANDRA SHEKHAR TRIPATHI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, though the supplementary question is a very lengthy one, but I would like to confine myself to one point only. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that a number of posts are lying vacant in Parliament including Prime Minister's Secretariat even though deserving Scheduled Caste candidates are available to fill these Vacancies. What are the reasons behind this?

**SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD:** Sir, this question is not related to the railways. Hence, I shall not be able to reply to this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You should not have taken the pains of even standing up.

[*English*]

**SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:** An assurance was given in this very House in the year 1981 that the casual workers in the railways will be gradually de-casualised and will be absorbed permanently in the railways. Yesterday, the Year Book which was given to us along with the Budget papers, it was stated there that still there were about two lakh casual workers in the railways. May I know from the Minister by when all these casual workers will be absorbed in the railways as per the assurance given in this very House?

[*Translation*]

**SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD:** Sir, the hon. Member has pointed out that the number of such casual labourers is about 2 lakhs. Sir, in this connection I would like to make it clear to the hon. Member that recruitment is a continuous process. I appreciate the sentiments of the hon. Member. It is a continuous process and we make regular efforts so that there is no shortcoming in the casual labour system, in Railways.