

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, December 8, 1987/Agrahayana
17, 1909 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Labourers engaged on Contract Basis in N.P.C.C.

*456. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the major portion of the work for the regular and the semi-regular employees in the National Projects Construction Corporation is being got done by labourers engaged on contract basis; and

(b) if so, the total expenditure incurred by the N.P.C.C. every year on the work being done on contract basis?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI): (a) and (b) The major portion of the work is being executed by the regular employees of the NPCC. NPCC have engaged, pending recruitment, about 40 persons on adhoc basis, to perform work

against vacant posts in the regular category of employees. NPCC do not have employees of semi-regular category. The total monthly expenditure incurred by NPCC in engaging these persons is about Rs. 45,000/-

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we appreciate the work done by NPCC within the country and outside the country, but the point is that I have not received reply to my satisfaction. I had asked the question from Shri Vasant Sathe, the socialist, but it seems that the socialist in him is asleep.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI: You awaken it.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rawat knows him inside out.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: It is because I love him very much.

My question was whether NPCC gets all the work done by labourers on contract basis or through piece-meal workers. If so, what is their percentage and the total expenditure incurred thereon? But my entire question has been side-tracked and the reply is that 40 persons have been appointed on ad hoc basis. I had not expected this reply. I therefore, seek your protection and would like to submit that you ask the hon. Minister to reply to my question in to to.

I would also like to know the total value order in hand with NPCC at present and the number of regular and semi-regular employ-

ees engaged therein along with those engaged on contract basis. Has NPCC earned profit ever since it has got work done by the labourers on contract basis? If so, how much profit has it earned?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI: I thank the hon. Member for appreciating NPCC. Besides, I am fully confident that he has been successful in awakening our conscience and we shall reply from the socialistic point of view. So far as work on contract basis is concerned, it is within the ceiling of 50%. At present, it is 5.2%. So we are not violating any rule.

The value order in hand as on 31st March is Rs. 30.690 lakhs. We have these figures at the moment.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: On the one hand, work in NPCC has increased, while on the other hand, the skilled and unskilled workers working there during this period have been retrenched. I want to know from the hon. Minister the justification of this retrenchment when the work of the corporation is increasing? In which department of NPCC has this retrenchment been done? Machines are lying idle as a result thereof. Is the NPCC lending those machines to the contractors on lease basis? What steps are being taken to abolish this system?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI: Sir, it is an uphill task. But retrenchment is being done because NPCC still has a Surplus Staff of 480 employees. First those units were given a chance who had approximately two thousand persons surplus. 570 persons were offered other opportunities. Seventy persons who have qualified have not been appointed. 500 such persons who have not opted for it have been retrenched. Now 480 employees are surplus. At the moment 40 posts are lying vacant. Recruitment for these posts has started. It will be complete within a month or two and thereby all the vacancies

will be filled up.

[English]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Sir, NPCC is a very prestigious organization. This is a public sector organization. Last year, Shri Vasant Sathe himself had rushed to meet the organized labour, along with Mr. Kumaramangalam and myself, and had sorted out an agreement that there shall not be any retrenchment, there shall be no sub-letting of jobs, and that all the machines would be maintained by the departmental labour. Is the Government aware that the new Chairman - I do not want to mention his name - has been continuously violating the terms of agreement, that the workers had brought these things to the notice of the Government, and that 600 workers are sitting in *dharna* in front of the NPCC's office at Delhi? Is the Government aware of these things? If so, what is Government going to do to ameliorate the difficulties of the workers - which are increasing - despite their repeatedly approaching Government of India through Shri Vasant Sathe and the lady Minister also?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI: According to the information that we have, NPCC says that they are not sub-letting; and, therefore, they are not violating any of the rules, regulations or anything.....

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: It is not violation of the rules, but violation of the agreement. Has the agreement been violated, or not?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI: According to the information that we have collected - and I have had several discussions with them - they say they are not violating any of the rules, guidelines or directions.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Why

don't you call a meeting?

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Those who violate rarely admit that they are violating.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: In spite of the assurance given by Shri Vasant Sathe to the delegation led by a Member of Rajya Sabha, Shri Sukhomal Sen that no worker will be retrenched, 600 workers have been retrenched so far; and many more workers will be retrenched—about 1060 are in the list. So, when there is work, and when Government is going to recruit more workers i.e. more employees or more people, why have Government resorted to this retrenchment; why have they retrenched 600 workers who are regular, and not muster-roll workers, who are highly skilled workers; why these regular workers who have been working since 18 or 20 years....

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you repeating?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why have they been retrenched by the management of NPCC? Mr. Sathe, you should reply. It was you who gave the assurance.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): A year back, when there was this problem and some trade union leaders came to me, I had intervened with the management and the trade union, and sorted out the matter. But this is a question of management. After all, no activity can be carried on economically, and we want our public sector units to work economically, and this has been a criticism from this House, viz. that the public sector units are not working economically, and are not viable.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): A year back, when there was this problem and some trade union leaders came to me, I had intervened with the management and the trade union, and sorted out the matter. But this is a question of management. After all, no activity can be carried on economically, and we want our public sector units to work economically, and this has been a criticism from this House, viz. that the public sector units are not working economically, and are not viable. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why should there be retrenchment?

DR. DATTA SAMANT: It is because of your administration.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: There are two reasons. One is too much surplus staff. It is a reality. *(Interruptions)* It is a question of reality. And second is the question of management. I am willing to accept if a charge is made, and if you have any evidence or proof of mismanagement, we will look to it, but if there is an evidence of surplus staff or surplus persons, I cannot ask any public sector undertaking under my Ministry or under the Government to carry on with the surplus staff and continue to lose public money.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What about your assurance? Why did you give that assurance?

(Interruptions)

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I have never given such an assurance. I have never given such an assurance that people will not be retrenched. I categorically deny that any assurance was given that no surplus staff will be retrenched.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Sathe, have you taken action against those people who engaged superfluous staff? In the first instance, why should they employ? It creates difficulties.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VASANT SATHE: It is like this. The earlier management, because there was extra work, had engaged extra people. So, we cannot say that the management which succeeds also must carry on permanently. That is the real sickness., the reason for sickness.

- *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is all right

SHRI VASANT SATHE: As far as these 40 jobs are concerned, only those persons who were there, they will be given the first opportunity

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: They have been retrenched, you know.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri K.P. Singh Deo.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: If I have heard the hon. Minister correctly, he said that there are only 40 vacancies and there are no piece-meal workers. Here is a Diary, 1987 Diary of the NPCC which say that there are 33,000 piece-meal workers apart from 6,000 regular employess.

[English]

So, I would like to know the correct position.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: This is the

diary of 1987. I do not know whether this is correct or the hon. Minister's reply is correct.

[Translation]

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Total workforce is 5464, out of which 3604 are workmen. From where have these 33000 come?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: The figures given to me are these. I do not know about the 30,000 workers. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you replying to others?

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE: What about the diary that he has quoted? What about that document? That document is not a Janata Party publication. That is a genuine publication

PROF. N.G. RANGA: It is not available to him.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bhattam.

SHRI BHATTAM SRIRAMA MURTY: It was stated by the hon. Minister that most of the employees were originally appointed at the time when there was sufficient work and now the work is over and so there was surplus staff. Now, my point is, most of the public sector undertakings, particularly NPCC, are sub-letting, or giving the work to sub-contractor, or appointing sub-contractors, with the result some of the workers obviously have become superfluous. Now, as a result of this, some of the workers who have put in a number of years of continuous skilled service, all those people have come under the axe; they are out of employment and that is really unjust. Will the hon. Minister reconsider and see that the process of sub-

contracting is fully stopped and that all those people who are retrenched are re-absorbed?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I must dis-
abuse the impression that the NPCC is sub-
letting or sub-contracting.

The fact is NPCC secured works valued
at about Rs. 192 crores during the year
1986-87 out of which, the works which have
been sublet amount to about Rs. 10 crores
only, that is, 5.2 per cent. This is the nature
of the work, Sir.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Why?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Let me explain
Ramagundam Rs. 410 lakhs, Rourkela
Steel Plant Rs. 80 lakhs; Rajghat Project Rs.
230 lakhs and Dadri Rs. 1011 lakhs. This is
the typical nature of the work of earth remov-
ing or something like that at the local place.

(Interruptions)

What are we to do? We have to employ

those people. Can you have a permanent
staff to do a temporary nature of work at a
particular place? What are you talking? This
is how our friends have made all public
sector units sick. We will not allow these
things.

(Interruptions)

Telephone Connections in Goa Division

*458. SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Will
the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be
pleased to state:

(a) the total number of telephone con-
nections sanctioned in the Goa Division,
exchange-wise, during the last one year;
and

(b) the number of application pending,
exchange-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI
SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b). A
Statement is given below.

STATEMENT

Sl. No.	Name of Exchange	(a)	(b)
		No. of telephone connections sanctioned during the last one year (1.11.86 to 31.10.87)	No. of applications pending as on 31.10.1987
1	2	3	4
1.	Aldona	2	25
2.	Anjuna	Nil	57
3.	Assonora	Nil	15
4.	Bicholim	Nil	57