

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 22nd July, 1998/31
Asadha, 1915 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock

Mr. Chairman in the chair

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक: सभापति महोदय, मैं नियम 267 के अंतर्गत नोटिस प्रस्तुत किया है। दिल्ली के मुख्य मंत्री ... (व्यवधान) ... माननीय लालू प्रसाद यादव ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री सभापति: मैं आपको मेशन करने के लिए मौका दूंगा।

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक: श्रीमान्, यह इतना महत्वपूर्ण मामला है जिस की वजह से इतना एजेंडेशन है ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री नरेश यादव: महोदय, यह एक मुख्य मंत्री का गैर-जिम्मेदाराना बयान है। यह गंभीर मामला है, इस पर पहले बोलने का मौका दिया जाना चाहिए।

श्री सभापति: देखिए, आप मुझ से मिले थे और मैंने कहा था कि मैं आपकी बात को बहुत महत्वपूर्ण समझता हूँ लेकिन मॅबर्स का जो व्युश्चन राइट है वह नहीं छिना चाहिए। मैं आपको मेशन करने के लिए नंबर-दो पर मौका दूंगा।

श्री बाल कवि बैरागी: महोदय, कल से गुस्से में बैठे हैं सिकन्दर बख्त साहब और अभी तक नहीं हंसे हैं आज इन के गुस्से की चर्चा सारे हिंदुस्तान के अखबारों में है। आप हुजूर थोड़ा सा सहज होकर बैठिएगा। गुस्सा मत कीजिएगा।

श्री सभापति: आप को देखकर हंस जाएंगे।

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Working of C.S.D.

*501. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the officers' chamber in the Canteen Stores Department of the Air Force Station, New Delhi and Sena Bhawan have been segregated from Other Ranks' counter during the recent months surpassing British legacy;

(b) whether it is a fact that Officers have been provided self service counters while Other Ranks have to queue up for a long time in separate counters; and

(c) whether it is a fact that five star like facilities are provided for the Officers of the C.S.D., Air Force Station, New Delhi, while Other Ranks are not provided even the minimum facilities?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Approximately 35,000 serving and retired officers, Junior Commissioned Officers, Other Ranks and Civilians, paid from the Defence Services Estimates, are dependent on the CSD's retail outlets. To avoid congestion and delays of counters, it becomes imperative to have more than one counter. In view thereof, one common counter for selling high value goods has been set up at the CSD canteens. Separate counters have been established for serving Officers, Senior Citizens, Junior Commissioned Officers, Civilian Officers and Other Ranks. These counters have been functioning efficiently. Separate counters have been set up for rendering faster service to all concerned as well as for administrative convenience.

(b) Self service counter is a new practice and it has been started with one of the counters at CSD canteens. It is not entirely correct to say that Other Ranks have to queue up for a long time. During peak hours and in the beginning of every month, there is considerable rush at the counters of the canteens and even officers have to wait for their turn.

(c) No, Sir. all items are made available at all the counters irrespective of the rank or position. All personnel have access to all available goods without any exception.

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir. I am not happy with the answer given by the hon. Minister. My question pertains to the discrimination among the soldiers and the officers. The hon. Minister has said in his answer that separate counters have been set up for rendering faster service.

Sir, the problem is this. After Independence, Government after Government have been trying to remove the imperialistic barriers created artificially by the British rulers in the Armed Forces. But in the last two years, the 'Other Ranks' are being given a shabby treatment in the CSD canteens. I have cited the CSD canteen in the Air Force Station, New Delhi, and in the Sena Bhavan. The soldiers are being treated as untouchables in these canteens. Earlier, separate counters were provided for the Officers, the JCOs., and Other Ranks, in the same enclosure. Now, the Officers' counter is completely separate. They have self-service counters. The soldiers have to queue up for a long time and, moreover, they do not get all the items. That is why my prayer before the hon. Minister, since the hon. Minister is known for his socialist ideology, is that he should order that soldiers should also be provided with all these facilities given to the officers in the C.S.D.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, I would like to submit with great respect that having separate counters does not amount to discrimination. There are separate counters in various areas, wherever any items are sold. In this case, it is not that there is one counter for officers and that there is another counter for other ranks. It is essentially an attempt to see that the movement in the shops is fast and that there is no crowding at any point. In the case of the Air Force Canteen, it is true that there is one queue which is meant for officers, and there are other queues for other ranks who are quite numerous, to buy their goods. This does not, in any way, amount to discrimination. This is not again applicable to all the Canteen Stores. In Delhi you have a total clientele of about 35,000 between the Army Canteen and the Air Force Canteen. These two Canteens cater to about 35,000 customers. But the total number of Stores that we have all over the country is 3,405. There are small Stores, there are big Stores and there are

medium-sized Stores, depending on the station or depending on the Unit. It is not that you have a situation where even in a small Store you have two queues. It is not necessary. This is something which deals with matters of convenience, and it has nothing to do with discrimination.

In so far as the hall is concerned, it could be the same hall, it could be in one hall or there could be two halls. For instance, in the case of the Air Force, there are three halls. To call it a discrimination would be to misinterpret the word.

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: My second supplementary is: will the hon. Minister direct the authorities to constitute a committee giving equal representation to other ranks to monitor and improve the facilities at the C.S.D. Canteen?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, the Canteen Stores Department has an apex committee, of which the Raksha Mantri himself is the Chairman. There is a governing body which looks after the overall management of these Stores at the Unit level.

The Unit official, the Commander of that particular Unit or that particular formation, under whose jurisdiction the Canteen functions, is the authority who looks after it. There is a management committee. These are not Government committees. These Canteens are not managed by any kind of departmental management committee. These Canteens are managed with the funds which are non-public funds, funds which come out of the sale of whatever goods are sold in these shops, and it is those funds which provide for the salaries and other benefits of the persons who are employed therein. Therefore, you do not need a committee where various ranks are involved in the management. The management is done by a managing committee. The goods are purchased at the Central level. From the Central depot, they go to a number of depots in the country, from where they go, as I said, to 3,405 Unit-level shops.

Therefore, to have committees at various levels, that is, at 3,405 levels to look after these depots will be totally out of question. I do not think it is necessary.

SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Sir, I came to know from newspapers, that there are 12,000 Officers' posts, which are lying vacant in the Armed Forces. I would like to know whether the Government is going to undertake any special drive or any special steps...

MR. CHAIRMAN: This question is not related to the main question.

SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: It is a general question, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a question related to CSD only, not to the Armed Forces in general.

SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: Sir, the Government of India has reserved certain products for the small-scale sector, but the procurement policy of the C.S.D. is in violation of the protection given to the small-scale sector. The Department is purchasing all these products from multinational companies and is giving preference to these companies. I would like to know whether the Canteen Stores Department is not bound by the restrictions imposed on the purchase of such goods manufactured by multinational companies, that they should purchase them only from the small-scale sector.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, I am not aware of any restrictions on any goods. I cannot agree with the hon. Member that the Canteen Stores Department buys all its items from the multi-national companies. Whatever items are needed, they are bought from whatever sources they are available. They have been supplying these over a period of time. If the hon. Member has got any specific complaint to make, I am prepared to look into that.

SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: Sir, I have written many times that the products which are reserved for the small-scale sector are being procured from the multi-nationals and then distributed. The contention is that the Canteens are going to sell products which have a market. There are a lot of smuggled foreign goods which are preferred. Is it the intention of the Canteen also to sell these goods through the Canteen services?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, I have not seen the hon. Member's letter. I would certainly look into that letter now that he says there are a number of letters. But, I can assure him that marketing smuggled goods is not the job which we should expect the Army canteens to do.

SHRI M. SANKARALINGAM: Sir, considering the huge number of retired officers, who get goods from the C.D.S. Air Force counters, I would like to know whether the Government has any view to increase the number of counters. I have often received complaints from soldiers that they are not able to get cornflakes refined groundnut oil and other valuable items. They are available only in the Officers' counter and not in the soldiers' counter. If such things happen, would there be any plan to rectify these defects?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, there is no discrimination whatsoever in so far as availability of any item is concerned. All items are available for everyone who is entitled to buy from those stores.

नक्सलवाद की समस्या से निपटना

*502. श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र: क्या गृह मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार ने नक्सलवाद से प्रभावित राज्यों में नक्सलवाद की समस्या से निपटने हेतु कोई रणनीति बनायी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;