

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 27th February, 1997/8th
Phalgun, 1918 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Employment to persons displaced by MRPL

*81 SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the persons displaced by the Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), Mangalore, are agitating for employment to one member of each of the affected families;

(b) whether there was any agreement/understanding between the displaced persons, the MRPL, the Karnataka Government and the Central Government to this effect;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the number of displaced families provided with employment;

(d) whether the MRPL authorities are offering compensation in lieu of employment which has been rejected by most of the displaced persons; and

(e) if so, the steps contemplated by Government to resolve the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM &
NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU):
(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the
Table of the House.

Statement

(a) A section of MRPL displaced person had been agitating.

(b) An understanding was reached among MRPL, the State Government and the displaced families regarding provision of employment to members of the displaced families.

(c) to (e) The Govt. of Karnataka had decided in 1992 that MRPL to provide one job per family imparting the required education and training candidates in accordance with the suitability and eligibility of candidates. Accordingly, a total number of 500 families displaced were to be provided jobs.

However, MRPL informed the State Government that due to most modern automated process technology having been adopted in the refinery and having regard to the employment practices adopted in similar refineries elsewhere, employment opportunities in MRPL was not very huge and also some of the displaced families representatives did not also have the requisite qualification, attitude and experience to take up technical jobs in the refinery.

As per the understanding reached, the State Government in November 1996, has ordered that MRPL will absorb a total of 182 nominees of displaced families, including 75 persons who have already been employed in MRPL, in direct jobs in MRPL. For the remaining 318 nominees of displaced families who cannot be provided jobs directly in the refinery and who are not prepared to accept jobs offered by the MRPL Trust, MRPL shall pay one time cash compensation of Rs. 1.5 lakhs, per family, in lieu of jobs. Out of 182 persons, 96 persons have already been employed directly in MRPL. This issue has thus been resolved and 218 displaced families have already been paid cash compensation.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Sir, an agitation is going on in Mangalore for the last fifty days. 613 families were deprived of their fertile land. The total land involved was 1,620 acres. Out of 613 families, 200 families are Scheduled Castes. The remaining 413 families belong to the backward classes and the minorities.

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All of them are poor people. Their fertile land was acquired and given to the Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited. This company is a joint venture. We have worked hard for setting up this project at Mangalore. At the same time, I must submit that it was not our intention to make the poor people suffer so severely as was done in this case. Out of 613 families, some families have been given jobs. As per the Government order issued by the State Government, each family should be given one suitable job. The contention of the company is that it is not in a position to give a suitable job to them because they are not qualified. In this connection, I may submit that about 80 graduates are there, seven qualified engineers are there and many post-graduates are there. They are not given any job in this company. Sir, the posts of drivers, sweepers, gardeners and the security people were given to the contractors. This was a deliberate attempt on their part to deprive the people of their due. If the company employs them directly, then they have to be given adequate salary and other amenities. An agitation was going on at that time. Even an order was issued by the State Government directing the company that each family should be given a suitable job. If the hon. Minister wants, I can give him a copy of the said order. In spite of all that, the contracts were given to others and the company did not employ them. Though it is a big company only four drivers are employed directly by this company. This is the state of affairs. Now, Sir, my submission is that when an agitation was going on, the company, in collusion with the State Government, sent the agitators to Bellary jail, which is at a distance of 765 kms. from Mangalore, though there is a jail at that place. This has been done only to harass them and to make them suffer. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Sir, I do not take the time of the House. How much time have I taken in the past?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is why I gave you so much time.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: I must place the facts before the House. All the parties started an agitation, cutting across the party-lines. *(Interruptions)*

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: This is not the question.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: They are paying Rs. 1,50,000/- in lieu of the job. But for how many years can they live on Rs. 1,50,000/-? So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is going to implement the orders issued by the State Government. If they are going to do it, is he going to give an assurance to the House that they will give suitable jobs as per the requirement in the order?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, not only the hon. Member and the Central Government but also the State Government concerned are equally concerned with this issue. There was a Government order. The Government of Karnataka had issued a G.O. on 2nd November, 1996. Prior to that there was another Government order dated 29.12.1995. The Government order of 29.12.1995 says that a job will be given to one member of each displaced family. That was the crux of the G.O. at that point of time. Afterwards, a technical committee was formed consisting of four or five eminent technical personnel. That committee went into the details of all these aspects, whether employment should be given or whether alternative arrangement could be made and all these things. That committee interacted with the State Government of Karnataka. Finally, the Government of Karnataka came forward with another G.O., G.O. NO.CJ/36SP/94/Bangalore dated 2nd November, 1996. Clause (2) of this G.O. says that 182 persons of the displaced families have been identified, at that point of time, for giving jobs. "For the remaining 318 nominees of the displaced families, who cannot be provided jobs directly in the refinery and who are not prepared to accept the job offered by

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the Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited Trust, the Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited shall pay one-time cash compensation of Rs. 1.5 lakhs per family in lieu of a job subject to the following terms and conditions". They had put certain terms and conditions. As it is, MRPL has identified 182 persons for giving employment. First of all, we should know how much say the Government has got in that. It is not a public sector undertaking. It is a joint venture company with a paid-up equity of 26% held by HPCL and 26% held by Indian Rayons and Industries Limited. The balance 48% equity is held by the public. Actually, 182 persons have been identified for giving jobs. Out of the balance 318 persons, 218 persons have already collected the compensation. Five persons could not collect the compensation because of disputes within the families and there is an injunction from the court. Eight persons are yet to get a certificate from the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board. Twenty persons are not identified. They seem to be migrated. Sixty-seven families are yet to come to collect the compensation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary. It should be short.

SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARY: Hon. Minister was pleased to say that he did not have much control. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. is under the Minister. It is having an equity share of 26%. Indian Rayons and Industries Limited is having 26% equity share and remaining 48% belongs to the public. This is the state of affairs. Now the question is this. When there is clear order from the State Government, what made the Hon. Minister say that there was no job for these people? Further, they are not only to provide a job for them but also to arrange suitable training to add their skill to that extent. Not a single Scheduled Caste person has taken the money, Rs. 1.5 lakhs. They are saying, "We don't want it; we want a

job". Not a single family of these 200 families has taken it. Others might have come and taken. This is the plight. After considering the plight of the weaker sections, the Minister should at least come forward and say that they will implement it. After all, they are not going to lose anything. I am just coming to the point. Please pardon me, Sir. They have to plant one lakh odd plants in that area. For that, gardeners are required, sweepers are required and drivers are required. For that, is any skill required? Why are you giving it to the contractor? Can't you give it to these people?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. No need to conclude.

SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARY: In view of this, what action are you going to take against this Company? This Company is having 11 years' tax holiday and they are owing the Government about 18 crores of rupees. They have not even paid that. Why can't you pressurise them?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, actually we are giving training to 182 persons, who have been identified for the job, in the Karnataka Polytechnic and elsewhere. Step by step, we are taking them. We are requesting them to go in for training, and definitely, we will slowly be absorbing them, but, at the same time, 218 have already availed of the opportunity of getting cash compensation. Only a few persons are left. Definitely, the matter will be considered at the Board level. I can't do any thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: S.M. Krishna. Before that, I want to announce that the Prime Minister has written a letter to me that he is indisposed today with a very sore throat; so, he would not be coming to the House.

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI: Sir, we wish him early recovery.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will convey it.

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Sir, I only hope that he will recover very fast so that

he can be present here at the time of Budget presentation tomorrow.

Sir, much of the ground has been covered by my distinguished friend from Mangalore. The Companies have the habit of creating contract works instead of directly hiring personnel for their works. In order to lessen the labour force, they have a tendency to subcontract works so that their responsibility or their accountability gets, to that extent, sufficiently reduced. This could possibly be one of the reasons why the Company is taking such a stubborn attitude. Sir, there is already sufficient restlessness in Mangalore which might possibly lead to a law and order situation very soon. Besides this, the more important thing is, a number of new projects are coming up there. A Megha Thermal Power Project of Cogentrix is coming up in Mangalore. A Steel and Pig Iron Steel Plant is coming up in Mangalore. So, what kind of message are we registering with the people of South Canara District? We want to industrialise South Canara. We want to yet provide a number of jobs to the displaced or to the unemployed. Now, is this the way that the Government of India or the State Government going to cope with? I think that the hon. Minister should apply his mind again and, with the good offices of the State Governments, he should try to resolve and drive some sense in the management so that all the other persons who have been deprived of jobs, may be provided.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the Government's approach is very much sympathetic, but, at the same time, we should understand that the equipment available in MRPL is fully automated. Actually, the direct employment opportunities are 622 and additional 210 personnel would be required for expansion of the Refinery from three million tonnes to nine million tonnes. We are going to put up. However, MRPL has assigned to ASCI of Hyderabad to reassess and advise the total direct

employment in this Refinery, but since the equipment is fully automated, there is limited possibility of providing jobs to these people.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: My question arises out of the answer given by the Minister. What is the responsibility of the Government towards achieving social objectives? The Minister says that the Government has no control because it is a joint venture. You have opened up the economy. You are encouraging joint ventures and private ventures. Are you going to remain a helpless spectator? Are you committed to social justice which is laid down in the Common Minimum Programme? Now you cannot say that your powers are limited. If, tomorrow you have to open up the economy to joint ventures and public ventures, in that case, what will happen to your Common Minimum Programme? I want a specific answer to this question. Secondly, there is an agreement between the State Government and the MRPL. When they started this venture, was MRPL not aware that they could provide job opportunities only to 600 people? Why did they agree to provide a job to a member from every family that was displaced? Thirdly, the agreement says that all those people who are not skilled should be trained. What is causing heartburning is that you have employed people for doing menial jobs from outside the district and outside the State. This work could have been done by the local people. According to you only 100 people have been left out. About 280 people have been given compensation and only 100 people have been left out. You have employed 100 people from outside the State. Will the Minister promise that those people who have been employed here as drivers, gardeners and sweepers and are from outside the State will be sent back and the local people who have been displaced will be appointed in their place? I want a specific answer to this question.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the hon. Member is a very senior Member of the

House. The United Front Government is committed to social justice. In this joint venture, we have 26 per cent share in the equity. The MRPL has gone on record that they are committed to developing the area. They have put up shelters and they have purchased land for the purpose of rehabilitation. They have constructed roads. All this has cost them about Rs. 2.52 crores. They have been provided with 90 acres of land. There will be a recurring expenditure of Rs. 3.6 lakhs per year for maintaining these things. School children are being provided with scholarships. They are going to construct bus shelters, banks and Anganwadis ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: How will this help the displaced people?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I am equally concerned. We need technical people. We need technical graduates. This need be taken up at the Board level... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will you replace the unskilled workers brought by the contractors from outside the State with the local people?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: This decision was taken by the Board. We cannot thrust our views on them.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Joint venture does not mean that the local people cannot be employed. This is not the way you should escape... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Everytime here is a new project, the Government enters into all kinds of contracts. It gives assurances to the local people telling them not to resist giving away their land. The Government says, "We will provide all the help that is called for." The reply of the hon. Minister shows that he is trying to escape from his responsibility. He said that it was the joint board which took the decision and he could not do anything. Is that the way how the different projects are implemented and which are going to be located in that

area? Will the people believe that for starting a project they should part with the land on the assurance given by the Government that you are going to have proper rehabilitation and now you are trying to escape the responsibility saying that the joint boards are taking a decision, we cannot do anything in the matter? Let me first understand what exactly is the policy and secondly, if people from outside are going to be employed, what is the responsibility of the joint board? Is it not also answerable? Don't you think that you should ask the joint board even for menial jobs? On what basis are you asking the people from outside to be employed? That means you just don't bother about the agitations, you don't bother about the legitimate demands of the local people. I do not think that with this kind of attitude any kind of project can be gone through in that area. You have to be worried about that. Sir, I would like to have a reply to all these questions.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, to be very frank with the house, actually when the first order was issued by the Government of Karnataka in 1992. The company was not consulted, it was a unilateral G.O. issued by the Government of Karnataka saying that one job would be given to one family. It was unilateral. *(Interruptions)* At some point of time, after very prolonged negotiations and other things whatever job would be available... *(Interruptions)*. In MRPL's Act.. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Is that the condition you put before giving the land? ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: 200 Acres of land also has been given free. The company has taken land from the Government. How can you say 'unilateral' Sir, 200 Acres has been given free. They have taken the help of the Government. *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please allow the Minister to answer.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: It is the moral obligation of the Government of Karnataka to verify whether they can provide jobs. How can they issue Government orders?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: I am sorry to say, you have taken the land of the Scheduled Castes and other poor people who were cultivating it. You are saying that you are not able to give them jobs.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: No, no, that is not the case. That is why MRPL... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: What is the social objective that you are having? Is this the way to answer? You have taken away the livelihood of the Scheduled Caste people, the poorest among the poor.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: No, no this Government is committed to the poorest of the poor. We are also equally concerned with them as you are.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: You are saying that they are not getting jobs. You have got *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Those people have been deprived of their rights. They could not be accommodated. Whatever is possible, let the Minister give a breakup of the figures as to how many people have been employed from the local area. Let him give the figures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hope the Minister will consider all these points. *(Interruptions)*

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Sir, please give an order from the Chair. Sir, please give a direction from the Chair.

SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: He is helpless because they happen to be a joint sector project. The U.F. Government is also a joint sector project with several parties constituting it and he is helpless.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Sir, please give a direction from the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down Shri Karunakaran.

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN: Sir while the Minister was replying to the question, he did not deny the fact that there was a promise given to the land owners. Now the Minister says it is because of joint venture that the Government cannot or could not fulfil the promise. Sir, whether it is a joint venture or even private sector, the promise given by the Government should be implemented. If the Government is in a difficult position, then, if necessary an enactment should be brought. What is the value of the Government promise if that cannot be implemented? I am sorry the Minister should take the responsibility to whatever commitment Government has made and Government should carry them out.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Was it not an assurance given by the sovereign Government to the people of Karnataka? Government of India, I think, is a sovereign Government.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: I have only gone on record saying that this Govt. is committed to social justice, we are also concerned with harijans, socially backward classes and all. But, at the same time, they should not say that they are the only people who are promoting the social cause. Mr. Chairman, Sir, during 1993 there was an agreement with MRPL which assured that MRPL would provide jobs. During the Chief Ministership of Shri Veerappa Moily, there was another meeting at Mangalore which was attended by all concerned parties. This meeting took place on 22.6.1994. In this meeting, a decision was taken to the effect that MRPL would provide jobs on availability and eligibility basis, directly or indirectly, or through other avenues like contract labour. That was the decision taken in that meeting.

and at that point of time. At the same time.... (Interruptions)...

SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Please give us a specific assurance that this problem will be solved. That is all.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let there be a Half-an-Hour discussion on this question.

SHRI T. R. BAALU: No, Sir. Mr. Chairman, Sir, if it is a public sector undertaking, right now I could have given an assurance.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Sir, we request you to allow a Half-an-Hour discussion on this question.... (Interruptions)...

SHRI T. R. BAALU: Sir, if they don't allow me to answer it, I cannot answer it.

श्रीनारायणचिन्मयभाईपटेल: महोदय, हाफ एन आवर डिस्कशन दे दीजिए....., (व्यवधान)

SHRI T. R. BAALU: If it is a public sector undertaking ... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Baalu, this is a very important question. You are referring to the Mangalore Refinery. But this can now happen all over India. Therefore, I am prepared to allow a Half-an-Hour discussion on this. Now, Question No. 82.

*82. [The Questioner, (Dr. Manmohan Singh) was absent. For answer vide col. 31 infra].

Projection of requirement of petroleum products

*83. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the projection of the present and future requirement of petroleum products in the country;

(b) the quantity being produced in the country and that being imported; and

(c) what are the details of the trend of increase in imports and the import bill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) According to Oil Economy Budget for 1996-97, the demand of petroleum products is estimated at 78.4 MMT and demand of petroleum products is estimated at 113 MMT by the end of IX Five Year Plan.

(b) The estimated production of petroleum products for current year is 61.49 MMT and a quantity of 22.06 MMT of petroleum products is proposed to be imported.

(c) The trend of import of crude oil and major petroleum products and the import bill from 1994-95 to 1996-97 is as under:

Quantity : MMT
Value : Rs. crores

Item	1994-95		1995-96 (Provisional)		1996-97 (April-December) (Provisional)	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
Crude Oil	27.35	10316	27.35	11517	25.6	13940
LPG	.592	416	1.12	816	.85	748
SKO	4.24	2405	5.001	3325	3.25	2645
HSD	8.64	4360	12.9	7760	9.71	7179