

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 22nd January, 1985/2
Magha, 1906 (Saka)

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Disappearance of Top Secret Films of Defence Installations

- 41. SHRI RAMCHANDRA
BHARADWAJ : f SHRI
J. P. GOYAL;

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that top secret films on the latest radars, submarines, planes and defence installations in the country which were sent for processing to a private laboratory in Bangalore during the past few years are alleged to have disappeared;

(b) if so, how many such films are missing;

(c) what is the name of the private laboratory in Bangalore to which these films were sent for processing;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the case has since been handed over to the C.B.I. for investigation;

(e) if so, what is the outcome thereof; and

(f) what action has been ^{taken} by Government in the matter on the basis of the C.B.I. investigation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) to (c); No Top Secret or Secret film on radars, submarines, planes or other defence installations were sent to any private laboratory for processing during the past few years.

The Armed Forces Film & Photo Division of the Ministry of Defence had, however, been entrusting the processing work of certain films intended

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Rama. handra Bharadwaj.

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for use in training, to M/s Vasanth Colour Laboratories Pvf. Ltd. of Bangalore since December, 1981.

This firm is on the panel of Laboratories for processing of film material of the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, and Broadcasting.

The work on three such films titled "Patrolling", "Characteristics of Terrain (Jungles)" and "Pechora Guided Weapon System", none of which has a Secret or Top Secret classification had not been completed in time by the laboratory. The negatives of these films were, therefore, collected back on 9-4-1984.

It is not correct to say that any top secret or secret film sent for processing is missing or has disappeared.

(d) 'to (f) On the basis of a written complaint filed by the Ministry of Defence, about non-return of the raw films given by the Ministry for making positives, a case has been registered by the State Police on 29-8-84 under Section 406/IPC and is under investigation.

श्री रामचन्द्र भारद्वाज : मान्यवर, उत्तर में कहा गया है कि पिछले कुछ वर्षों में राडारों, पनडुब्बियों, हवाईजहाजों और रक्षा प्रतिष्ठानों से संबंधित कोई भी परम गुप्त या गुप्त फिल्म प्रोसेसिंग के लिये किसी गैर-सरकारी प्रयोगशाला को नहीं दी गई है और फिर इसके दूसरे हिस्से में कहा गया है कि पिछले कुछ वर्षों से यानी 1981 से सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय द्वारा फिल्म संबंधी सामग्री के प्रोसेसिंग का कार्य करने वाली प्रयोगशालाओं की सूची में शामिल हैं और मैसर्स वसन्त कलर लेबोरेटरीज में फिल्मों के प्रोसेसिंग का काम किया जा रहा है। तो सर्व प्रथम मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि अगर प्रोसेसिंग के लिये बाहर दिया जाता है और अगर पिछले कुछ वर्षों से नहीं दिया गया है तो कितने वर्षों से नहीं दिया गया है ? उसको जो पहले दिया जाता था, उसका क्या हाल हुआ ?

दूसरी बात जो इससे जुड़ी हुई है वह यह है कि आगे चलकर जो फिल्म आप वसन्त लेबोरेटरीज को देते हैं तो क्या निगेटिव वापस ले लेते हैं ? अगर रा-मैटीरियल आपको वापिस नहीं मिलता है तो फिर इसमें क्या वह नहीं है कि उस रा-मैटीरियल का इस्तेमाल आप ही के डाकुमेंट्स की नकल करने के लिये कर लिया गया हो । अगर आपके पास प्रवक्ता प्रोसेसिंग का प्रबंध है तो मैं समझता हूँ कि यह काम जो आप प्राइवेट प्रोसेसिंग कंपनियों को देते हैं, उनको देने की आवश्यकता नहीं है ?

श्री पी० बी० नरसिंह राव : श्रीमन्, बात यह है कि प्रश्न में यह पूछा गया है कि top secret films on the latest radars, submarines, planes and defence installations ..."

यह आपने पूछा है। इसका जो क्लैसिफिकेशन है टॉप सीक्रेट, सीक्रेट, रेस्ट्रिक्टेड का इस प्रकार टॉप सीक्रेट में आती हैं वे फिल्में जिनका आपने जिक्र किया है। ऐसी फिल्में नहीं दी गई हैं यह मेरे कहने का मतलब था। इसलिये मैंने कहा कि No top secret or secret film on radars, etc. has been sent to any private laboratory.

इसका मतलब यह है कि ऐसी फिल्में हम खुद अपने पास बनाते हैं, किसी प्राइवेट लेबोरेटरी में नहीं भेजते हैं। यह आपका कहना बिल्कुल सही है कि अगर हमारे पास कलर प्रोसेसिंग की सहाय्यता होती तो हमको कोई भी फिल्म बाहर भेजने की आवश्यकता नहीं होती। अब हमने यह फैसला कर लिया है कि कोई भी फिल्म, रेस्ट्रिक्टेड न भी हो, वह भी हम उनके पास नहीं भेजेंगे। ये हम अपने पास बनायेंगे जब कलर की सुविधाएँ हो जाएँगी। अभी ब्लैक एंड व्हाइट में बना लेंगे। या फिर एक पब्लिक सेक्टर अंडरटेकिंग में यह बन रहा है। उन्होंने कहा है कि हम आपको बना कर दे सकते हैं। वह कैरल में है और वह प्राइवेट नहीं है, पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग है।

The Kerala State Film Development Corporation, Ltd., Trivandrum, which is a public sector agency, is able to handle all contingent processing work on mutually acceptable

terms. All such printing processing work, including that of unclassified nature, will be given to that agency.

उनसे हम बात कर रहे हैं। उन से बात ली होगी तो उनको देंगे, नहीं तो ऐसी चीजें हम खुद ब्लैक एंड व्हाइट में बना लेंगे जब तक हमारे पास रंगीन बनाने की सहाय्यता नहीं होगी।

श्री रामचन्द्र भारद्वाज : मान्यवर, जाम्बो का जो जाल बिछा हुआ है और जिस तरह उच्चासीन अधिकारी इससे संबंधित हैं माननीय राजीव जी के नेतृत्व में उनका भंडा फोड़ हो रहा है। उनके साथ कार्यवाही की जा रही है। ऐसी सूचना मिली है, पत्रों में भी आया है कि वहाँ की सी० बी० आई० इस केश को देखना चाहती थी मगर रक्षा मंत्रालय के कतिपय अधिकारियों की सलाह पर यह काम स्थानीय पुलिस को दिया गया। क्या यह उचित नहीं होता कि सी० बी० आई० इसकी छानबीन करती तो शायद कोई ट्रैक मिलता ?

श्री पी० बी० नरसिंह राव : मेरी सूचना यह है कि सी० बी० आई० ने खुद यह कहा है कि चूंकि राज्य सरकार ने इस पर एक मकदमा दायर कर दिया है, इसलिये हमारा कोई इसमें काम नहीं है। मैं माननीय सदस्य से सहमत हूँ कि सी० बी० आई० का उसमें कोई काम होता तो उनको करना चाहिये था लेकिन उन्होंने खुद कहा है कि हमारी आवश्यकता नहीं रही। —लेकिन माननीय सदस्य की सूचना को मैं लेता हूँ और उसकी एक बार फिर जांच कराऊंगा।

SHRI J. P. GOYAL: I welcome the statement of the Hon'ble Minister that hereafter there will be no film sent to private concerns for processing and his own Department will take up this work. Of course, the Hon'ble Minister has also said that this was not (op. secret. But to me everything ing to defence is secret. The question is, what is the reason why this firm has not returned the film? This news appeared in the Indian Express of 1st September 1984. Since then what action was taken against this firm by your officers in the De-

fence Ministry? Why are they 'not returning it? What action have you taken against the officers of the firm? It is possible that this firm might have divulged it to foreign countries as has 'Happened just now.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: Raw film has since been received from them not fully, but to a large extent. Evidently, they have used this or diverted this raw film for some other work which they were doing. We have lodged a complaint and the case is pending. It is not proper for me to go into details or speculate on the facts of the case because it is under investigation.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: This is a matter connected with espionage. Would the Hon'ble Minister of Defence comment upon, confirm or deny that in the recent espionage that is currently making news and on which two successive statements have been made in the House, the Ministry of Defence have lost the following documents. . .

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: What is it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has the Ministry of Defence lost some documents?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH :

(1) Total projects projected for defence till 1990;

(2) Total modification made to weapon system in combat equipment;

(3) Total plans for the new laser weaponry 'adapted both to ground attacks and aircraft;

(4) Defence plans, aggression plans, including those against Pakistani nuclear installations;

(5) Total brigade command and area level plans for action and counter action in the sensitive border areas including the DI sector in Ladakh;

(6) Counter-intelligence documents; and

(7) Details of the progress of nuclear research at the Defence Research Laboratories as well as at BARC.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just one minute. I will find out whether it is found relevant at the end. I do not want to stop a person when he is making out a point. At the end of it, I will find out whether it is relevant to the question before us. Please go ahead, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH; Sir, it is for you to rule that it is not a relevant question. I would now like to request the honourable Defence Minister to let me know whether any suggestion has come to them in the light of all that has come out now, the espionage episode. Has any suggestion ever come up before the Ministry of Defence for consideration to the effect that all the Central Secretariat PAs and Private Secretaries, who are currently employed in sensitive establishments be replaced by combatants in uniform? If any such suggestion had come up before the Ministry, for consideration, did you accept it or not? If you did not accept it, why did you not accept it?

MR. CHAIRMAN; I am afraid the question does not arise out of the one before us. The question before us is relating to the processing of films and, therefore, I do not think it calls for an answer. Now I will give you another chance if you want to put a question on this particular subject. Yes. Mr. Sukomal Sen.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN; Sir, I would like to know whether any other private laboratory has been engaged by the Defence Ministry for processing the Defence materials and, if so, which are the laboratories. I would also like to know whether, after experiencing what has been going on in Delhi nowadays, after the espionage network that has been uncovered-

thed, the Government is thinking of withdrawing all the materials from the private laboratories that are still with them.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: Sir, I do not have readily with me a full list of the laboratories which we have been making use or have made use of. I know that in the past some laboratories in Bombay were utilised for this purpose. But we found that they had already a heavy work-load and they were not attending to our films promptly. So, we had diverted in 1981, as I said, some of these films to Bangalore, to this firm, easanth Laboratories. Incidentally, this is the only case and this is the first instance of failure on the part of a private laboratory engaged in film processing work on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. Even on this one and solitary instance, we have now taken a decision not to entrust this work to any private laboratory

SHRI SHANKARRAO NARAYANRAO DESHMUKH: Sir I though that the Defence Ministry had its own film processing laboratory, especially for processing colour films. But, if they have got their own laboratories why were not the Alms sent there?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: I have already submitted that neither we nor even the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, that is, their Films Division, have this colour facility at this moment.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, I am really very surprised to note that the De-ence Ministry has been so complacent. Sir in the answer given by the honour-ible Minister, he has said that the film, 'Pechora Weapon System', is not a Top Secret or Secret film. I am very very surprised that a film on the missiles has been entrusted to a private laboratory. You say you have your own laboratory, at that is black and white, and that you don't deal with colour. I do not know why you are having this colour mania, everything in colour, colour TV, and so on. Here also, Sir, a film dealing with a defence missile is going to a private laboratory. I think the Government is keeping back something. I would like to know how the Government has assumed that

the film which has not been returned is raw material. It is raw that it has not been actually filmed. On what basis have you made the assumption that the quantity of film which is missing is raw film and not film which has not (all these vital Defence installations on them)?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO I have already submitted that there is a particular classification of these films: top secret, secret, confidential, restricted and unrestricted. Like that, five or six kinds of classification, are there. And I have said categorically that the first two—top secret and secret—are done in our presence, (interruption) This is meant only for training. That is why it was given to them. It was not classified as top secret or secret.

Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

*42. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO:

SHRIMATI USHA
MALHOTRA;

Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant has been designed adopting a technology which is already obsolete;

(b) if so, what is the cost of production at this plant compared to those based on recent technology; and

(c) whether it is possible to switch over at this stage to the latest technology so as to make this Plant viable and economical?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: I would like to refer to the answer given by the former Minister, Mr. N.K.P. Salve,

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Prof., B. Ramachandra Rao.