

*263. [The questioner (Shri Shanti Tyagi) was absent. For answer vide Col cols. 30—32 *infra*.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question No. 264.

Nationalisation of Bengal Potteries

*264. SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM:†

SHRI KALYAN ROY:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the reply to Starred Question 72 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th October, 1982 and state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to nationalise the Bengal Potteries Ltd. which has already been under the Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware that a recent enquiry has revealed incidence of massive corruption and malpractices and fraud by some of the senior officials and if so, what are the details in this regard;

(d) whether a senior officer dealing with finances was recently found removing many files surreptitiously;

(e) what is the name of the officer and whether he has been chargesheeted or allowed to resign; and

(f) what is the number of new employees and workers recruited during the last six months and the details thereof including their departments and their qualifications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH): (a) and (b) The Industrial Reconstruction Corporation of India Limited (IRCI) which is the 'Authorised Person' for the management of the units of Bengal

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ladli Mohan Nigam.

Potteries Limited, has constituted a Committee of Directors to study *inter-alia* the viability of the unit. A decision with regard to the future disposition of the undertaking will be taken on receipt of the report of the Committee and the recommendations of the IRCI in this regard.

(c) A preliminary report in this regard has been received by the IRCI and the matter is under further verification.

(d) The management has reported that no official files/documents were removed.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

श्री लादली मोहन निगम : सभापति महोदय, असल में आज मैं इस सवाल के जवाब को घूमा फिरा कर देने की कोशिश की गई है। मामला यह है कि बंगाल पोटरोज जो चीनी मिट्टी के बरतन बनाती है उसमें एक लम्बे समय से घोटाला चल रहा है और इसके चलते सरकार ने यह समझा कि इस कम्पनी को ले लें। क्योंकि भगत साहब जो थे वह यहाँ पर वारा-न्यारा करते थे। हुआ यह कि जब से गवर्नमेंट ने इसको टेक ओवर किया है, टेकओवर करते वक़्त करीब-करीब 44 लाख रुपये जो देनदारी के थे उसका सरकार ने भुगतान किया और उसके बाद 162 लाख रुपये सरकार ने और भी दिये। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सही नहीं है कि जिन गन्दगी की वजह से जिन खराबी की वजह से आपने कम्पनी ली थी उसी आदमी को वहाँ पर एक्जीक्यूटिव डायरेक्टर बना दिया? यही नहीं आपको तो भालूम होगा कि हिन्दुस्तान का जो सबसे बड़ा श्यामागार कलकत्ता क्लब

है जिसकी मेम्बरी आज भी लगभग 3 लाख रुपये प्रिमियम की है उसका मेम्बर इन्होंने उसको बनाया और उसका सारा खर्चा यह उठाते हैं और उसके बाद हम उम्मीद करें कि कम्पनी घाटे में न चले यह कैसे हो सकता है। मैं एक ही बात जानना चाहता हूँ इसका जवाब मंत्री जी हाँ या न में दें। क्या यह सही नहीं है कि सन् 1980-81 में फॅक्टरी का उत्पादन करीब 43 परसेंट था जो घट कर 1982 में 29 परसेंट रह गया? यह एक फॅक्टरी नहीं ऐसी कई फॅक्टरियाँ हैं। दूसरी फॅक्टरी भी इसी तरह से हैं जहाँ 59 परसेंट से घट कर 39 परसेंट हो गया।

एक तरफ तो प्रोडक्शन में घटाव आया और दूसरी तरफ खर्चों में बढ़ोतरी हुई। ये सब बातें आपके पास दर्ज होंगी। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि ये बातें सच हैं या नहीं? उसके बाद जो एक्जीक्यूटिव डाइरेक्टर हैं उनके संबंध में आन्तरिक लेखा परीक्षण में, इन्टरनल ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में, अनियमितताएं बताई गईं, लेकिन आप उनके बारे में खामोश बैठे हुए हैं मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि वे अनियमितताएं क्या हैं और जिन लोगों ने ये अनियमितताएं की हैं उनके खिलाफ आपने क्या कार्यवाही की है? 31 जनवरी, 1982 को इस संबंध में मंत्री जी ने कुछ बातें बताई थीं। इस प्रकार से स्पष्ट भूमिका बताने के बाद मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि क्या श्री जी० के० भगत, जिनकी वजह से इस कम्पनी की हालत इतनी खराब हुई और जो सरकार के मर्त्य पड़े हुए हैं, इस आदमी के खिलाफ बय. आपने कोई कार्यवाही की है और क्या आप उसको हटाने जा रहे हैं? इसके साथ-साथ मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो उत्पादन घटा उसके लिए जो लोग जिम्मेदार हैं उनके बारे में क्या आप कोई जांच करेंगे? इसके अलावा आन्तरिक लेखा परीक्षण में जो अनियमितताएं बताई गई हैं, जिन-जिन आदमियों को दोषों

बताया गया है उनके खिलाफ आप कोई कार्यवाही करेंगे या नहीं और यदि कोई कार्यवाही करेंगे तो कब तक करेंगे?

श्री समापति : इसका जवाब पहले होने दीजिए, उसके बाद दूसरा सवाल पूछिए।

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, the Bengal Potteries Limited which was a sick unit was taken over by the Government under the IDR Act and the IRCI was appointed as the authorised person. The IRCI in turn appointed a Board of Management and Shri G. K. Bhagat who has been referred to here just now was appointed as the Executive Director. So far as the performance of the company is concerned, it has not been very satisfactory and it is true....

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : आपकी बगल में श्री नागयण दत्त तिवारी जी बैठे हुए हैं उन्होंने इस बारे में कहा है.... (व्यवधान)।

श्री बोरभद्र सिंह : आप मुझे पहले बोल लेने दीजिए। उसके बाद अपनी बात कहिए। As I have just pointed out, there is no doubt that the performance of the company has not been very satisfactory and this company has been incurring loss year after year. In 1979-80, the company suffered a loss of Rs. 70.56 lakhs. In 1980-81, the loss was Rs. 67.16 lakhs. In 1981-82, it is estimated that the loss would be Rs. 306.21 lakhs and in 1982-83, the loss is likely to be Rs. 380 lakhs. This is from July to June, as the financial year of the company ends in June. As regards the allegations to which the hon. Member has referred, the IRCI, which is the authorised person in respect of this company appointed K. Roy and Company as the financial controller. The financial controller has given a preliminary report on certain irregularities in regard to purchase of coal and coke and sale of insulators. They are being further verified by the IRCI.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : अ. 4 इतना ही बता दीजिए कि जब आपके बड़े मंत्री जो अभी यहाँ पर बैठे हुए हैं उन्होंने 7 अक्टूबर, 1982 को सदन में कहा था कि मार्च तक इसको हम ले लेंगे, उसके बाद आपने क्या कार्रवाई की ?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Sir, the question of nationalisation is under the consideration of the Government.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : मंत्री महोदय ने कहा था कि 14 मार्च तक ले लेंगे ।

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Let me complete my answer.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: You have given an assurance in this House. Mr. Tiwari has given an assurance. Why he is not answering?

SHRI VIRBHADRA SINGH: Please listen to me. If you are not satisfied, you can ask further questions.

Sir, the IRCI has constituted a committee of its directors to go into this matter and the terms of reference of this committee are; to find out the potential viability of the BPI, to make out an estimate of the cost involved in making the unit viable and to undertake a full investigation into the affairs of the company. The decision in regard to the future dispensation of the undertaking will be taken on receipt of the report of the committee and on recommendations of the IRCI in this regard. The report is likely to be received by the end of April. It is only after receipt of this report that we will be able to take any decision in the matter.

श्री लाडली मोहन निगम : पहले जो आश्वासन दिया था क्या वह गलत है ?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Mr. Tiwari had given an assurance, Sir.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: This company was actually under liquidation in 1975. In 1976 the IRCI took it over and Mr. Bhagat took Rs. 8 crores from the Punjab National Bank which was

written off. After it was taken over by the IRCI, the new Board made Mr. Bhagat who was responsible for mismanagement, the chief executive director. The entire control is under him and since 1976, as per the reports given in this House, the Punjab National Bank gave Rs. 8.74 crores and the IRCI gave Rs. 2.25 crores. Nearly Rs. 11 crores have been sunk and the production, as has been stated, is constantly going down. The overhead cost which was Rs. 18.42 lakhs, in 1978-80 has gone up to Rs. 26 lakhs in 1980-81. In factory No. 2 it has gone up from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 8 crores. These are the overhead costs while the production has been continuously declining. And there was no financial controller. After I met Mr. Mukherjee in his chamber and gave a representation, he said that there would be an investigation and the investigation has pointed out all the irregularities. As a result of this what has happened? This financial controller was found taking all the files in the presence of Mr. Bhagat and giving them to the driver. The entire employees of the office have given it in writing. After getting it in writing, they allowed Mr. Deepak, the financial controller, to give resignation and he has come to Delhi to pressurise Shri Narayan Datt Tiwari and others. There was no question of enquiry, etc. Meanwhile the period of takeover has been...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you asking a question? (Interruptions). Then where is the question?

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Is it not a fact that only on the 7th October, 1982, without referring to any enquiry, Mr. Tiwari categorically stated in Rajya Sabha that the period of takeover has been extended up to 14th March, 1983, by which a decision is going to be taken? There was no question of enquiry at that time. How does the question of enquiry come in now? Is it because of the allegations? All the allegations have been proved and they dare not produce before the House what are the irregularities. I have a photostat copy of the letter written

by the Chairman of the Bengal Potteries to Shri Bhagat dated December 3, 1982, in which it is stated; "I express my anxiety about the entire episode and I convey to you my total disappointment of the method, followed which amounts to cheating." This is a challenge of the chairman of the board of the Bengal Potteries. I have given a copy of this letter to Mr. Tiwari, to Mr. Finance Minister. The result is that they gave extension.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalyan Roy, you have said enough. The question is a very short one which you have asked that it was said that by the 14th of March the decision could be taken. Three days have passed and what has been done is the short question instead of all this lecture.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Is it because Mr. Bhagat is very powerful, because he is carrying a lot of influence with the Minister of Industry to scuttle the nationalisation proposal, to handover the entire factory to him?

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI: Sir, I am not aware of the influence of Mr. Bhagat. I do not know him, he has met me once only for a few minutes. (Interruptions)

SHRI KALYAN ROY: He has admitted that he has met him.

SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI: As my hon. colleague has just said, all these matters are being enquired into by the board of directors of the IRCI and they have set up a special committee, a committee consisting of Shri C. R. Sen Gupta, Chairman, Shri Hiten Bhaya and Dr. A. Sitaramaiah, to look into these particular matters. As soon as the report is received, we shall take a decision about the future of this company.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Is there any time limit for the report?

Already 14th of March has been flouted. Your own assurance is already flouted. (Interruptions)

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I would like to know whether there is any time limit. We do not know why suddenly this Committee has been formed by the IRCI against whom there are charges?

श्री लाडलो मोहन निम्न : इस पर
प्राधे घंटे की चर्चा होनी चाहिये ।

SHRI ERA SEZHIYAN: Sir, one submission we want to make. Please allow Half-an-Hour Discussion on this because very pertinent questions have been raised.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will have to write to me about it.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Please allow Half-an-Hour Discussion on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a little late. Please sit down, Mr. Kalmadi. Mr. Kalyan Roy was asking the question and you were supplementing him from behind.

SHRI ERA SEZHIYAN: Please allow Half-an-Hour discussion on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You make a reference. I will consider it.

SHRI P. RAMAMURTI: Sir, it is a very serious question. Many allegations have been made. They have tried to....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You were not here to hear them. You have just come. Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Atomic Power Plants at Madras and Narora

*263. **SHRI SHANTI TYAGI:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the construction of Atomic Power Plants at Madras and Narora will not cost more than their original project estimates; and