

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 11th June, 1980 | the
21st Jyaistha, 1902 (Saka)

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

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Shri A. V. Kunhambu, an ex-Member of this House.

Shri A. V. Kunhambu was born in 1907 at village Karivellur in Kerala and was also educated there. An active political worker, he joined the National Movement in 1930. Shri Kunhambu was associated with several organisations connected with the welfare of peasants and agricultural labour. He was elected to the Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1965 and again in 1967. During his short tenure a Member of this House from April, 1957 to April, 1958. Shri Kunhambu made valuable contribution to the debates of the House specially on agriculture.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Shri A. V. Kunhambu. I request Members to rise in their places and observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved families our sense of profound sorrow and deep sympathy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Storage capacity of the F.C.I. in Southern States

*41. SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to increase storage capacity in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India;

(b) what is the present storage capacity of the Food Corporation of India godowns in the Southern zone;

(c) what are the States where this storage capacity is being increased;

(d) whether it is a fact that in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka the procurement of foodgrains has become greater and there is inadequate storage capacity in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India; and

(e) if so, to what extent the storage capacity in the three States is to be increased during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a)
Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha (Statement I).

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha (Statement II).

(d) and (e) The procurement of foodgrains in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka has not become larger than the storage capacity of the godowns under the control of Food Corporation of India. However, keeping in view the needs of the States in the coming years as also to replace the "Cover-and-Plinth (CAP)" capacity, wherever possible by covered godowns, it is proposed to construct additional storage capacity in the Southern States by the Food Corporation of India as per details indicated in the statement laid on the Table of the Sabha (Statement III). This capacity is likely to be completed by March, 1983. Out of this, about two lakh tonnes capacity is expected to be ready during the current financial year.

Statement I

Present storage capacity available with the FCI in the Southern Zone.

(Figures in lakh tonnes)

State	Covered storage capacity	Open capacity	Total
Andhra Pradesh	12.71	10.87	23.58
Tamil Nadu	7.30	0.63	7.93
Karnataka	2.69	2.21	4.90
Kerala	3.90	..	3.90
Madras Port (Joint Manager Port Operations)	0.73	0.24	0.97
TOTAL	27.33	13.95	41.28

Statement II

States where the Food Corporation of India has planned to take up construction of godowns during the coming year.

S. No. Name of the State

EAST ZONE

1. Bihar
2. N.E.F.A. (including Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh etc.)
3. Orissa
4. West Bengal

NORTH ZONE

5. Delhi
6. Haryana
7. Himachal Pradesh
8. Jammu & Kashmir
9. Punjab
10. Rajasthan
11. Uttar Pradesh

SOUTH ZONE

12. Andhra Pradesh

13. Karnataka
14. Kerala
15. Tamil Nadu

WEST ZONE

16. Madhya Pradesh
17. Maharashtra

Statement III

Additional storage capacity proposed to be constructed by Food Corporation of India the Southern States.

(Figures in lakh tonnes)

S. No.	Name of the State	Capacity proposed to be constructed by March, 1983
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2.47
2.	Tamil Nadu	1.72
3.	Karnataka	0.50
4.	Kerala	1.26
TOTAL		5.95

SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD: Sir, in the statement laid on the Table of the House, it is stated that by 1983, the capacity proposed to be constructed is 2:47 lakh tonnes. As it is, the covered storage capacity is 12:71 lakh tonnes and the open storage capacity is 10:87 lakh tonnes. It is a well-known fact that whatever foodgrains are stored in the open storage capacity there is a lot of pilferage and damage due to rains in the rainy season. Therefore, Sir, valuable foodgrains cannot be wasted. So, is there any proposal before the Government to expedite the construction of storage capacity in a considerable measure?

Sir, we also understand that the procurement has already reached more than one million tonnes mark and with the Nagarjunasagar Project going into stream, we expect that procurement in the next year will be on a much larger scale. Therefore, what are the proposals that are there before the Government for providing necessary accommodation to store these foodgrains?

SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, the hon. Member's view that they will be spoiled by the rains is not correct because there is proper protection from rains. Anyway, the Government has proposed to construct additional godowns. And this year itself we will be putting up godowns. In Andhra Pradesh also, we are proposing to put up godowns.

SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD: May I know from the hon. Minister as to what is the percentage of loss of foodgrains that are stored in open areas?

SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, the question cannot be answered because we require notice for this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Apart from that it will mean how it is stored and where, Shri Raju.

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Sir, the open storage is as high as nearly 6:76 million tonnes. After all when once the

grain is procured, it is of the nation as a whole. It is not of Andhra Pradesh or any part of the country but it is the nation's food. And the open storage is also very high and the Minister takes the responsibility of saying that there is not much risk in the open storage. Shall I straightaway put a question to him? Sir, because of bad storage it is alleged that as much as one-third of the stocks stored is not fit for consumption.

Has it ever been verified? Is the Minister prepared to entrust to a small committee of Parliament with experts to go into the storage aspect of it? Sir, not only a huge sum of nearly Rs. 2,500 crores is involved but the nation's valuable food is also involved. And the working of the Food Corporation of India is not happy and I do not want to go into other details now. I will confine myself only to the storage question. Then, Sir, coming to Andhra Pradesh where rice is produced—it is a granary—as hon. Mr. K. L. N. Prasad has put it, more than one million tonnes of foodgrains are in the open storage. And the programme is to construct a storage capacity of 2:7 lakh tonnes by 1983. Therefore, Sir, let the Minister be serious about it. It is not a mere matter of question and answer. It is a serious matter. The storage problem is an important matter . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want the storage to be examined by a committee?

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Not only the capacity but also how it is stored must be examined.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Sir, I do not agree with the hon. Member that the loss under the CAP is upto the extent of 33 per cent. All precautions are taken to see that there is a minimum loss. It is done on a scientific basis. There is a plinth and then there is a cover, and the foodgrains are properly stored.

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Sir, the hon. Minister has not heard me fully. I did not say about the CAP alone. I said about overall storage and the defective storage. I said the loss is one-third....

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: That is also not correct, Sir. I do not think there is any need for a Parliamentary Committee to go into the matter because we keep fully abreast of the quantity damaged and we take all necessary measures to see that the loss is at the minimum. As regards Andhra Pradesh. . . (*Interruptions*).

SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NANDA: What is the percentage of damage? If you don't agree with him, you can tell this.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: The percentage of damage is negligible; it is very small. That occurs. . . (*Interruptions*). If you want my opinion, the percentage of damage in the FCI godowns is less than the percentage of damage that occurs in private people's houses. But there are certain factors which you cannot fully protect against. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NANDA: Do please tell us what the extent of the loss is. Is it ten per cent, 5 per cent or 2 per cent?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Do they want my opinion or do they want to express their own opinion?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They want information. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL: We want facts and figures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They want information about how much is the extent of damage in terms of percentages. Is that all right?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I cannot give the exact figures here. But, to

my mind, so far as I can recollect, it is not more than 1 per cent or 1.5 per cent of the total and there is no need for a committee to go into it.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN: Is it based on any scientific inquiry?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: This has already been examined. As regards Andhra Pradesh, there seems to be some misunderstanding about the storage capacity. In Andhra Pradesh during the year 1977-78 the total procurement of foodgrains has been of the order of 5 lakh tonnes and it has been 9.44 lakh tonnes in 1978-79. In the year 1979-80, it was only 3.3 lakh tonnes and against that there is the covered storage capacity of 12.71 lakh tonnes, which is much more than the quantity procured in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: If that much is the covered storage capacity then there is no need for having any open storage capacity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When your turn comes, you may ask.

श्री रामानन्द यादव : श्रीमन्, फूड कारपोरेशन आफ इण्डिया का इतिहास एक विचित्र इतिहास है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह एक गोलमाल का इतिहास है। फूड कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया इतने जबर्दस्त घाटे में रन कर रहा है कि इस की कोई इतिहा नहीं है। आप जानते हैं कि पिछली जनता पार्टी की सरकार ने श्री मोरारका जी की अध्यक्षता में एक कमेटी का निर्माण किया था इस कमेटी का काम इसके वर्किंग को जानना था और इस बात का पता लगाना था कि इसमें इतना घाटा क्यों हो रहा है और इसके वर्किंग को किस प्रकार से सुधारा जा सकता है। उस कमेटी को यह भी काम सौंपा गया था कि फूड कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया का जो इयूज स्टोरेज है उसमें फिलफरेज

किस तरह से होती है, इसका पता लगाया जाय और यह देखा जाय कि इसको एक नफे का कंसर्न कैसे बनाया जा सकता है। ये बातें मंत्री जी को मालूम हैं या नहीं, मैं नहीं जानता। मंत्री जी ने कहा कि इसमें किसी प्रकार का घाटा नहीं है, लॉस नहीं है, फिलफरेज नहीं है, लेकिन फिर भी जो यह कहा जाता है कि फूड कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया घाटे में रन कर रहा है, इसका क्या कारण है? आप जानते हैं कि शुरू-शुरू में जब यह कारपोरेशन बना था तो यह सबसे बड़ा सेक्रेण्ड नम्बर का पब्लिक कारपोरेशन था जिसमें काफी मात्रा में लॉस भी हो रहा था। ऐसी स्थिति में मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह स्पष्ट रूप से जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस संस्था में इतना घाटा क्यों हो रहा है? मैं चाहता हूँ कि मंत्री जी जब अपना रिप्लाय दें तो सोच-समझकर दें ताकि हम ठीक इनफार्मेशन गेन कर सकें और इस बारे में जो इनफार्मेशन हम देंगे उससे सरकार को फायदा ही होगा।

श्री सभापति : आप सवाल पृष्ठिये।

श्री रामानन्द यादव : मैं सरकार से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सच है कि सरकार प्राइवेट लोगों को बैंकों से पैसा देकर उनसे खाद्य निगम के लिए गोदाम बनवाती है और क्या यह भी सही है कि फिर सरकार इन गोदामों को प्राइवेट लोगों से किराये पर लेती है जिसके कारण खाद्य निगम घाटे में रन कर रहा है? इसके अलावा मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि (क) भाड़े पर जो गोदाम खाद्य निगम द्वारा प्राइवेट लोगों से अपने उपयोग के लिये लिये जाते हैं उन पर प्रति वर्ष खाद्य निगम को कितना रुपया देना पड़ता है? यह मेरे प्रश्न का (क) भाग है।

(ख) इन बातों को देखते हुए क्या सरकार के पास खाद्य निगम के लिये कोई ऐसी वृहद योजना है जिसके माध्यम से खाद्य निगम स्वतः निजी गोदामों का निर्माण करे और उसमें अपना स्टोरेज करे जिससे कि फिलफरेज न हो सके।

(ग) क्या सरकार इस बात को मानती है कि खाद्य निगम के गोदामों में कम फिलफरेज होता है, वहाँ कम बरबादी होती है बनिस्पद प्राइवेट गोदामों के?

राव वीरेन्द्र सिंह : सबसे पहले आनरेबल मेम्बर ने मोरारका कमेटी के बारे में कहा कि यह कमेटी बनाई गई थी। उसके टर्म्स एंड रेफरेन्स भी तय हुए थे जो कि जनता सरकार ने बनाये थे। लेकिन अभी तक मोरारका कमेटी ने कोई काम ही नहीं किया। इसमें इस सरकार का कोई कंसुर नहीं है।

SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Sir, on a point of personal explanation, I must say that though this Committee was appointed by the Janata Government, as soon as this Government came, the Committee has become defunct. They are not giving any Secretary; they are not giving any room; they are not giving any facility.. (Interruptions). The hon. Minister called me; I went to see him but he was not there. Then I met him in the Central Hall and he told me that he would send for me again so that we can discuss this matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have given enough information.

SHRI SULTAN SINGH: Will the hon. Member tell us, Sir, as to what they have done during the Janata regime?

श्री मनुभाई पटेल : आप किसी दूसरे आदमी को चाहे चेयरमैन बना दीजिये पर कमेटी को फंक्शन करने दीजिए।

श्री सभापति : पहले मिनिस्टर साहब की सुन लें ।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : जनाव, दूसरा सवाल आनरेबुल मेम्बर ने जो उठाया है वह यह था कि फूड कारपोरेशन के गोदामों में कम नुकसान होता है, वहां चोरी कम होती है और प्राइवेट गोदामों में जो किराये पर लिये जाते हैं उनमें चोरी का अंदेशा ज्यादा होता है । तो मैं यह अर्ज करूंगा कि माननीय सदस्य का यह गलत ख्याल है । आनरेबुल मेम्बर प्राइवेट...

श्री रामानन्द यादव : सभी का गलत ख्याल है । केवल मिनिस्टर साहब का ख्याल सही है । क्या आपने एकजामिन किया है ?

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : मैं यह...

श्री रामानन्द यादव : आपने क्या एकजामिन किया है ?

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह रीजन सुनें तो ।
(Interruptions)

इसकी वजह बहुत आमान है ।
(Interruptions)

श्री सभापति : मिनिस्टर साहब को सुनिये ।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : अगर समझना चाहें तो इसकी बहुत आसान वजह है और वह यह है कि जब प्राइवेट गोदामों को फूड कारपोरेशन किराये पर ले लेती है तो उसके ऊपर नियंत्रण फूड कारपोरेशन का वैसे ही होता है जैसे कि फूड कारपोरेशन का अपने गोदामों के ऊपर होता है । तो इसमें कोई भी फर्क नहीं होता है । इसलिये यह अंदेशा बिल्कुल गलत है कि उनमें चोरी का ज्यादा खतरा है ।

एक माननीय सदस्य : किराये में कितना खर्च होता है ? किराया ज्यादा दिया जाता है ।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : मैं अर्ज कर रहा हूँ कि तीसरा सवाल आनरेबुल मेम्बर ने जो उठाया है वह यह है कि फूड कारपोरेशन ने सब जगह अपने गोदाम क्यों नहीं बनाये ताकि सारा स्टोरेज उनमें हो जाय ।

श्री रामानन्द यादव : मेरा प्रश्न है कि क्या इसके लिये कोई योजना है ?

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : योजना तो है । आपने कहा कि क्यों नहीं बनाये ।

श्री रामानन्द यादव : क्या सरकार के पास कोई योजना गोदाम बनाने की है यह मेरा प्रश्न है ?

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : अगर इससे आपको इतमीनान होता है तो मैं अर्ज करूंगा कि योजना है कि इतने गोदाम बने ताकि फूड कारपोरेशन के माध्यम से जितना अनाज हम खरीदते हैं वह उनके अन्दर स्टोर किया जा सके ।

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : श्रीमन्, मंत्री जी बतायें कि जो एक क्विंटल होता है तो क्या वह 97 किलो का होता है या 54 किलो का होता है । अभी हम आये हैं कई इलाकों से घूम करके जहां पर कि फूड फार वर्क में काम हो रहा है तो वहां जो वस्ते दिये गये हैं वे 54 किलो के दिये गये हैं । आफिसर लोग वहां परेशान हैं कि हम 54 किलो से 97 किलो कैसे पूरा करें । उन्होंने आर्डर किया है कि जितना है उतना ही गरीबों में बाटें और उसी हिसाब से बाटें । तो यह मंत्री जी बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि क्या यह सच है अथवा

नहीं कि 97 किलो के बजाय 54 किलो उनको बस्ते में दिया जाता है।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : इस सवाल से इसका कोई ताल्लुक नहीं है।

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : गोदामों से जो गल्ला चोरी होता है, आपके अधिकारी लोग जो चोरी कर रहे हैं यह उससे जुड़ा हुआ है।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : गोदामों का बात पूछी है, चोरी की बात तो पूछी नहीं है। मैं अभी जवाब देता हूँ। (Interruptions)

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : श्रीमन, मेरा प्रश्न बहुत साफ है। पहले मेरे प्रश्न को मंत्री जी समझ लें। मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि गल्ला नुकसान होता है या नहीं होता है। यह हाऊस का कहना है और आम लोगों की भी यही राय है कि बाहर रखने की वजह से चोरी होती है, उसकी आप हिफाजत नहीं कर पाते हैं। आपके पास गल्ला रखने के लिए माकूल गोदाम नहीं हैं। तो उसी के संदर्भ में मैं मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि आपका 97 किलो का एक क्विंटल होता है और आप जो गल्ला फूड फॉर वर्क कार्यक्रम में दे रहे हैं वह 54 किलो से ले कर 60 किलो तक बस्ते में पहुंचता है। इसलिए जो चोरी हो रही है इसकी जानकारी मंत्री जी को है या नहीं है? यदि जानकारी है तो वे क्या उपाय कर रहे हैं?

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : मेरे पास तो आज तक कोई शिकायत नहीं आई। फूड फार वर्क प्रोग्राम के लिए जो भी गल्ला जारी किया जाता है उसमें बोरियों में वजन कम होता हो, यह पहली बार माननीय सदस्य ने कहा है। अगर वे मुझे बताएं कि कहां पर हुआ तो इसकी बाकायदा इन्क्वायरी की जाएगी।

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : इसको मोरारका कमेटी को भेज दीजिए।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : दूसरी बात मैं अर्ज कर चुका हूँ कि गल्ले का नुकसान एक-दो फीसदी से ज्यादा नहीं होता है।

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is enough food storage in Kerala to meet the requirements of Kerala which faces the lean months, the scarcity months, of June, July and August.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Though it does not relate to this question, I am prepared to reply.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: It is related to this question. He has to answer.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: There is enough stock with the Food Corporation of India to meet the requirements of Kerala State and we have been meeting their requirements and demands as and when they have been sent to us. There is no shortage of food in Kerala.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: There is. I question it. There is a standing complaint by the Kerala Government that the Centre is not meeting the demands and the requirements of Kerala State because of the political complexion of the State Government. (Interruptions) I am entitled to an answer from the hon. Minister. (Interruptions) let me have an answer before we proceed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has said there is no shortage.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: I question it. I can prove it. I would like to know: Is he prepared to have a dialogue with the Food Minister of Kerala?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You accept the challenge.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I am always prepared to have dialogue with the hon. Member as well as with the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please discuss it outside. We cannot allow time here for your proof and his reply.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: I am asking a relevant question. I am not making any speeches.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, after this, I will pass on to the next question.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : अभी मंत्री जी ने मोरारका कमेटी का नाम लिया। मोरारका जी ने अपनी हालत बताई है। इससे यह संदेह हो रहा है कि सरकार मोरारका कमेटी को रद्द करके अपनी पार्टी की कमेटी शायद बनाएगी। मैं यह आश्वासन चाहता हूँ कि मोरारका कमेटी को बदला नहीं जाएगा और फंक्शन करने दिया जाएगा। (Interruptions) Does he want to change it? If not, I want a commitment that he will not change it.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Is the supplementary relevant to this question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is irrelevant. The Morarka Committee has been appointed. Mr. Morarka has said that he has not even got a secretary and now you are suggesting that they are going to change it.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: I want a confirmation from the Minister whether he would like to continue with the Morarka Committee or he will change it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It does not arise out of the question of storage.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: He has already referred to the Committee. Had he not referred to the Committee, then it would have been a different matter. (Interruptions) It is relevant.

SHRI MANUBHAI PATEL: The Committee is now in cold storage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fortunately, we have got Mr. Morarka here who can probably throw light on it later on.

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: No, it is not irrelevant. The question is not this. The question is relevant because the Committee is on the point of storage and the Minister has himself mentioned it.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Better you leave it there. Why do you make it a political issue? By making it a political issue.....

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: The question is relevant, it is not irrelevant. The Minister must reply.

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि मोरारका कमेटी ... (Interruptions)

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: The original question did not refer to the Morarka Committee, but in course of the supplementaries when the reference has been made to the Committee, the Member has a right to ask about it, and particularly when a serious allegation has been made by hon. Members I think the supplementary is very relevant and the Minister should be willing to reply to it.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, let me make a submission. The problem is that the Minister himself has referred to it. As per the convention, Mr. Morarka being present here and a Member of this House has parried some problems. The crux of the problem is, Mr. Morarka requires some storage place and also the secretariat for working the Committee. That assurance the Minister has to give, nothing else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, let me make it clear. Already there is

a Committee and the question which is agitating the hon. Members is whether this Committee is going to be allowed to function or not. Is it right?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: There is another point also. In the beginning when Mr. Raju put the question that a parliamentary committee should examine the issue, the reply of the Minister was that there was no necessity of such a committee. He even referred to the existence of the Morarka Committee, but later on when the issue came up, he just happened to remark of his own, as has been suggested, that the Committee did not function at all, at the same time suppressing the fact that no opportunity was provided to that Committee to function. So, it was a two-fold act of omission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is right that when the hon. Minister was asked whether there was any proposal to appoint a parliamentary committee, his reply was, as the record will show, that there is no such contemplation. Then the Morarka Committee's name came up. Now the question is more pointed, is the Morarka Committee going to be allowed to continue?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Sir, the mention of the Morarka Committee was casually made by the hon. Member Yadav and I referred to that also in my reply though it has no connection with the question that is before the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But it has gone on the record now.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Yes, Sir, I am prepared to give whatever information I have. Mr. Morarka said that he has not been supplied with the secretarial staff and all that. All I

can say is, whatever the conditions existed during the Janata regime, when this Committee was appointed, they have not been changed, no staff has been withdrawn by this Government. (Interruptions)

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: It means he is not going to continue it.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: My submission is that this House or an hon. Member putting a question cannot force Government's thinking in this regard by simply asking for an assurance to be given in this House. He can put a separate question to know about the Government's thinking on this particular matter. I will not be able to say 'yes' or 'no' now. I am not prepared to give any assurance in this regard.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, you have to protect our rights.

श्री सुलतान सिंह: मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि...

(Interruptions)

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: He has called me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Advani, the matter has gone on quite enough.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: But, Sir, he cannot evade.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no reply.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: He cannot evade a reply.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: You have to protect us.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: It is a question not merely from the opposition or from my colleague. You yourself have posed the question to him. Is it not the duty of the Government to reply?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have posed the question....

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: So he has to reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have posed the question that there is already a Committee. What is Government's thinking on that Committee and its working? That is the question which is asked.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Sir, that is not the question before us. If a separate notice is given, I will get the information and supply to the House.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, who is to decide—the Chairman or the Minister? You have no *locus standi*. You have to reply and the Chairman has to direct. You reply. You are evading the responsibility. You want to scuttle the Committee. It is totally shameful of the Government. It is just like a coward.

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : यह क्वेश्चन सैपेरेट नहीं है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kulkarni, it appears... (*Interruptions*)

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ...

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : नहीं, नहीं, पहले यह तय हो जाए ।

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: But he can also speak.

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या मुरारका कमेटी पब्लिक ग्रण्डरटेकिंग कमेटी जो दोनों हाऊसेज की कमेटी है, उससे सुपीरियर है या कि उससे नीचे है ? इसके अलावा मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि मुरारका कमेटी पार्लियामेंट ने

एक्वाइंट की थी या कि सरकार ने अपने एक्सीक्यूटिव आर्डर से एक्वाइंट की थी ?

श्री सभापति : यह कमेटी किसने एक्वाइंट की थी ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: The Parliamentary Committee consisting of Members from both the Houses goes into all relevant questions. Even those included in the terms of reference that were set for the Morarka Committee can be considered by the Public Undertakings Committee. In all public undertakings. . .

SHRI SULTAN SINGH: Whether it is a Parliamentary Committee or not?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Morarka Committee is not a Parliamentary Committee. It was set up by the Government and the Government is competent to abolish it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will ask Mr. Morarka to ask the question.

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: Something has been just said by the Minister about the Public Undertakings Committee without knowing the functions of the Public Undertakings Committee and what is expected from that Committee. They are only to go through the accounts—not the storage capacity—audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. (*Interruptions*). Save Mrs. Gandhi from this kind of Ministers.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: You should have first-hand knowledge as to what the functions of the Public Undertakings Committee are.

SHRI SULTAN SINGH: Sir, on a point of order.

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: No point of order in Question Hour.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There can be no point of order in Question Hour.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: There is a point of order. (*Interruptions*). Why not?

Mr. Morarka being Chairman of the Committee, though he is a Member of this House, cannot put a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Morarka can put a question.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: He cannot put any question in this House, being Chairman of that Committee. (*Interruptions*) Putting a question about his Committee will be advancing his own interests.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Will the Secretariat supply to the Minister a copy of the Rules Book? A copy of the Rules Book should be given to him.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, . . .

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: With five persions. . . (*Interruptions*).

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Sir, you will permit me to make a submission. (*Interruptions*) Sir, this is a matter for your consideration and for Mr. Morarka's consideration. No decision, obviously, has been taken whether the Committee is to function or not to function.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Salve, please sit down. Nothing can be heard. So, it is no use all of you shouting together. **बैठ के आगे बिन बजाया** One by one. I was suggesting that Mr. Morarka

may be able to throw light upon the terms of reference and in relation to that of storage.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: This is the Question Hour, Sir. Members can put questions, but the practice in Parliament is that a Member who is interested in a particular matter will not raise it. He is interested in the matter.

श्री रामेश्वर सिंह : बैठिए, बैठिए ।
श्री मोरारका को बोलने दीजिए ।

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any bar for a Member of the Committee putting a question?

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: There is no bar.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: There is a convention . . . (*Interruptions*). Give me half a minute, Sir.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: You please allow Mr. Morarka to put the question. Let us hear him. Sir, you have to protect us. You are not protecting us, Sir. What is the procedure and what are the rules?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If Mr. Morarka puts a questions, I shall rule on it whether that question should be answered or not. But I must hear the question.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: I have a preliminary objection. (*Interruptions*) I must have my right, Sir. You are a Judge. Sir. Please give me half a minute's time. I cannot be denied that right, Sir. (*Interruptions*). Sir, Mr. Morarka. . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot hear you, Mr. Salve. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, is Mr. Salve allowed to challenge your

ruling? You ruled on that: you called Mr. Morarka.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Salve, I allow Mr. Morarka to put the question. I shall rule on the relevance of the question after I have heard him. But let me hear him.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Before you rule, will you hear me, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no argument involved.

SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Sir, it is true that my Committee was not a Parliamentary Committee. The appointment of my Committee was announced on the floor of this House and then, Sir, before the Committee started functioning, they said that the same subject, namely, the Food Corporation of India, is also going to be considered by the Public Undertakings Committee. The question was whether it would be desirable for both the Committees to function together. But, Sir, fortunately or unfortunately the Lok Sabha was dissolved, and with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, the Public Undertakings Committee was also dissolved. So, I received the direction that our Committee could go on and start functioning. A Deputy Secretary was given to me. The Committee started functioning. We had two meetings. We sent a questionnaire containing 371 questions. But soon after this Government came...

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Is it a question?

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: Yes. (Interruptions).

SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Is it not a fact that soon after this Government came, the Minister sent for me? I went to his room. The Minister was not there. Then I met him in the Central Hall. He said that he would inform me again. I repeatedly requested the Food Secretary to

find out what happened. He said that the file was with the Minister, that the Minister was not taking a decision and that it seemed that the Minister did not want the Committee to function, "What can I do?" (Interruptions)

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: The cat is out of the bag now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The relevant question will be, "What arrangements would be made for looking into the storage question which was in the hands of the Morarka Committee?" If you will ask, Mr. Advani, I will ask the Minister to reply. I think, Mr. Morarka, you cannot put the question. Mr. Advani will do so.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, so far as the relevance of the supplementaries are concerned, it depends upon what has been the reply given to the earlier questions. It may be that some earlier supplementary was not quite relevant, and the Minister could have said that it was not relevance (Interruptions)

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Mr. Chairman, how can you do that? You did not allow Mr. Salve and you are allowing Mr. Advani. What a joke is this?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What has happened is..... (Interruptions) Just a minute. Please sit down. I will show you.

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: What did you say? The Chairman did not joke.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Chapter VII deals with the Question Hour. Is there a provision for allowing any personal explanation, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: If you allow this sort of gimmickry, Sir, I have nothing to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Today a lot of time has been spent. Let me explain to you. A lot of time has been spent on it quite unnecessarily. (*Interruptions*).

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: By your allowing them. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Please listen to me.

मुझे यहाँ इंधा का एक किस्सा याद आता है। वह कुछ इस तरह है—

“तुम तो सौ कहलो मिरी इक न सुनो और सुनो।”

मुझे जब याद आ जायेगा तब सुना दूंगा।

यहाँ पर सवाल स्टोरेज का था। उसके दरमियान मिस्टर यादव ने एक क्वेश्चन पूछा कि गवर्नमेंट की थिंकिंग क्या है, क्या कोई कमेटी इस पर बिठायी जायेगी और क्या स्टोरेज के क्वेश्चन को एग्जामिन किया जायेगा। उस वक्त जवाब यह दिया गया कि गवर्नमेंट कोई कमेटी नहीं बैठायेगी। उस वक्त मिस्टर मोरारका ने कहा कि मैं तो यहाँ बैठा हूँ, मैं एक कमेटी का चेयरमैन था और स्टोरेज का क्वेश्चन मेरे सामने है।

श्री रामानन्द यादव : आप भूल रहे हैं, मेरी सप्लीमेंटरी दूसरी थी। राजू साहब ने पूछा था पालियामेंटरी कमेटी के बारे में।

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: He must be listened to.

श्री सभापति : नतीजा यह हुआ... (*Interruptions*)

श्री रामानन्द यादव : मैंने तो मोरारका के लिये कहा था लेकिन पालियामेंटरी कमेटी बनाने के विषय में राजू साहब ने कहा था..

श्री सभापति : वह रेकार्ड में है। मुझे याद है.....

(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, just a moment. You do not have to explain. As the Chairman you use your discretion and you do not have to explain why you used your discretion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am only saying..... (*Interruptions*). I am only giving my reasons for my ruling which I can certainly give. I am saying that the name of Morarka Committee came out in the answers and interpellations. Mr. Morarka being fortunately here has said that he was a member of the committee. The question that was asked was a very simple one: Will the Morarka Committee be allowed to continue or not? (*Interruptions*)

श्री सुलतान सिंह : सर, मैं एक बात जानना चाहता हूँ।

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: Are you a Minister? (*Interruptions*)

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं एक बात जानना चाहता हूँ। आप इस हाउस के चेयरमैन हैं और आडवाणी साहब बड़े सीनियर मेम्बर हैं.....

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: What is this? Is he the Minister?

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट ने यह कमेटी कायम करके क्या ठीक काम किया है? क्या यह कमेटी पालियामेंटरी कमेटी का काम देख सकती है? मेरी बात यह है कि पालियामेंट के दोनों हाउसेज की कमेटी है पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग्स कमेटी और सरकार ने मोरारका कमेटी कायम करके पालियामेंट के प्रिविलेज पर हमला किया है। क्या यह कमेटी काम कर सकती है?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Sir, the question about the Morarka Committee is entirely irrelevant to the question that is put here
(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: No, Sir. (Interruptions).

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Who are you to say that? (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: He is defying the Chair. (Interruptions)

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: This is an insult to the Chair. (Interruptions)

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, I want to bring one thing to your notice. Sir, you asked him not to repeat the question. This is a question from the Chair. He cannot say that. You cannot do that. Don't ask for the relevance of the question or decision of the Chair. (Interruptions) You are a parliamentarian. You must know how to behave. (Interruptions)

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I am expressing my opinion.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: We are here to protect the rights of the Chairman. You cannot say he is irrelevant. The Chairman is always relevant. I demand that he must take back his words. He must take back his words. (Interruptions)

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Mr. Morarka's name was mentioned in this House. That is no sin. However, if there is a specific question, I am prepared to answer. (Interruptions) I am replying. (Interruptions) Sir, you have now pointedly posed a question about the Morarka Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is what has been put.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: You have made it clearer. Now, I am only

saying that the decision of the Government on the Morarka Committee will be conveyed to the Members very soon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we will pass on to the next question.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Has the Minister withdrawn his remarks? Then it will be all right. Has he withdrawn his remarks? (Interruptions) I cannot allow the proceedings to go on. Has he withdrawn the remarks against the Chair?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not know. I think I have not that sense of... (Interruptions). Mr. Minister, I did not quite hear what you had said because there was so much of noise. But if you have said anything which was against the Chair....

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I have not said anything against the Chair. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have not heard it. (Interruptions).

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: No Minister can insult the Chair. The Minister has insulted the Chair.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, has the Minister withdrawn or not the remark he made?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: But what did I say?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: You were accusing the Chair as irrelevant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have not heard it.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, you are presiding over the Chair. If you do not protect yourself, who will?

SHRI ERA SEZHIYAN: Sir, if it is in the record, then you expunge it; if not, the matter ends.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Mr. Chairman, if you do not protect yourself, how do you expect the Vice-Chairman to function? When you are not protecting your own right, how can the Vice-Chairmen protect themselves? Therefore, you direct him to withdraw the remark.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: I simply had remarked that in my opinion they have posed a question which was not relevant to the question here, but since the Chair has asked me to reply, I am prepared to reply. This is what I said in submitting to the Chair's ruling.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: When they say a lot of irrelevant things do the Ministers have to reply to all of them?

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: No, it was the Chair which put the question. The question was put by the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, did you say anything against the Chair?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: No, Sir, never questioned the Chair's ruling.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, he said irrelevant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, I shall have a look at the record and bring this up before long. If there is anything against me or the Chair, I shall bring it up. Now let us proceed with the work. Next question.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, do not go by what they say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not want to be dragged into this.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Are you in a mood to listen about the procedure? In a minute's time I would like to say something about the procedure...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Please. Let us proceed to the next question.

*42. [Transferred to the 17th June, 1980].

Amendment to the Indian Telegraphs Act

*43. **SHRI SAWAISINGH**

SISODIA: †

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABI-BULLAH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Telegraphs Act to make unauthorised diversion of telephone lines a cognizable offence; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE (SHRI KARTIK ORAON): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of the amendments are under finalisation in consultation with the Ministry of Law.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: I would like to know from the honourable Minister what the concrete proposals are which he has put before the Law Ministry to examine and prepare the amendment, and what the necessity was of proposing such an amendment.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: The Telegraph Act, as is well known, is a very old Act. Many things have happened in the course of the past years. We felt therefore that there are certain sections which have got to be amended. One of the provisions we felt needed to be incorporated was about interception in the telephonic lines and cross-connecting lines which, in fact, amounts to theft and misappropriation.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sawaisingh Sisodia.